CURRICULUM DESIGN FOR TEACHING CITIZENSHIP THROUGH CHARACTER AND DIVERSITY EDUCATION USING ARTS BASED INTEGRATED CURRICULUM FOR ART EDUCATORS

A Thesis
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
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*****

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ABSTRACT

In this thesis I present an arts based integrated curriculum unit that I designed with the goal of improving citizenship within my school community. In this unit, students, parents, teachers, support staff, a local artist and community organizations collaborate through art making processes to explore essential questions about character and diversity education to come to a better understanding of citizenship through active participation and having a democratic voice in decision making. Students become co-creators of curriculum and take ownership for their learning while utilizing available resources. Students use arts based inquiry and translate their knowledge into photography, murals, clay and paper mache sculptures, web pages, iMovies, posters, flyers, and books. Students and teachers rely on reflection to guide teaching and learning and to assist with construction of meanings throughout the curriculum.

This study is designed using current theory of integrated curriculum, arts based inquiry, service learning, community art, constructionist learning theory and directly relates to social issues and interests of my elementary students in grades one through five.
Dedicated to my husband John and my three boys, Joshua, Isaac and Daniel for the support through this lengthy process.
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I am grateful to the entire art education department and visiting professors at the Ohio State University for expanding my views of art education. Contributions from Dr. Mary Sheridan, Dr. Terry Barrett, Dr. Kevin Tavin, Dr. Sydney Walker, Dr. Pat Stuhr, Dr. Vesta Daniel, Dr. James Sanders, Dr. Stout and Dr. Laura Chapman are woven into my thesis and have contributed to my knowledge of theory relevant to art education.

I contribute my depth of knowledge related to my beliefs in art education to the last two years of consistently challenging these beliefs through our lengthy discussions both following classes and at all hours of the day or night with Larrie Habel, a fellow graduate student and art educator.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Study

In this chapter I will provide an overview of my thesis question and propose additional questions directly related to my inquiries. I will present a need for research in this field as it relates to general education, art education and my specific school community. I will provide specific rationale for this need based on my analysis and statistical analysis of my school community as well as establish global need for this type of education.

1.1 Overview of Research Topic and Questions

The overarching question of my thesis is how can I use an arts based integrated curriculum to improve citizenship within my school community? As I address this research question, other important questions follow from it. How can I design arts based integrated curriculum and art making to positively impact student learning and behavior regarding diversity? How can I use arts based integrated curriculum to positively impact student learning and behavior through character education? How can I design curriculum
to bring our school community together to demonstrate the strength found when citizens unite in a democratic society? Will my students develop pride through having voice and being actively involved in visually improving our school? It is through researching these questions that issues of citizenship, character education, diversity and community will be explored as they relate to curriculum.

1.2 Arguments of Need for Citizenship Education

Preparing students to become responsible and knowledgeable citizens has been a purpose of general education throughout history. Teaching citizenship and character have been a focal point of leaders in the field of general education from Horace Mann (1846) and John Dewey (1897) to Andrezjewski (1996) and continue to be a primary focus of many educators today. I believe there is a need to reprioritize what we are teaching and how curriculum design can better prepare our students to become socially responsible citizens. This position aligns with others in the field of general education that have taken interest in progressive education (Bigelow, B., Christensen, S., Miner, B., Peterson, B. (1994), Andrezjewski 1996, Sanders, 1997). Andrezjewski (1996) defines global citizenship as “knowledge and skills for social and environmental justice” and suggests comprehensive learning objectives that are taught throughout a student’s education to develop global citizenship skills. Andrezjewski (1996) proposes the following skills developed by a faculty committee from across disciplines that could serve as a framework to developing global citizenship:
Understanding of a citizen’s responsibilities to others, to society and to the environment:

1. Students will be able to examine the meaning of democracy and citizenship from differing points of view including non-dominant, non-western perspectives.
2. The student will explore the various rights and obligations that citizens may be said to have in their communities, nations and in the world.
3. Students will understand and reflect upon their own lives, careers, and interests in relations to participatory democracy and the general welfare of the global society.
4. Students will explore the relationship of global citizenship and responsibility to the environment.

Understanding of ethical behavior in personal, professional and public life:

1. Students will be familiar with fundamental national and international law, documents and legal issues pertaining to citizenship, democracy and human rights.
2. Students will be able to identify the civic and ethical responsibilities of people in specific fields/careers.
3. Students will be able to compare and evaluate the policies of an intuition, community, state or nation in the context of its stated philosophical and cultural values.
4. Students will be able to examine various social policies and institutions (educational, economic, political, legal, media, military, etc.) in relation to fostering citizenship, democracy, respect for diversity, human rights and the environmental impact.
5. Students will examine the interrelationship of personal and professional decisions/ actions on society and the environment. (p. 3-9)

What I believe to be most significant to my study, and most importantly not often addressed in elementary curriculum, is the need for students to become active participants based on specific student interests in their own local communities as a catalyst for progression into the broader global community. Citizenship is a primary mission of education; but identifying the skills and knowledge necessary for good citizenship and how to design curriculum that promotes participation in a democratic society may not be easily agreed upon. "A 1997 third grade text book, Living in Our World (Boehm et al)
...emphasizes obeying the law as the primary responsibility of citizenship. On eight of thirteen pages relating to citizenship, laws are the focus” (Andrzejewski & Alessio, 1999, p. 3). With people all over the globe faced with problems of suffering, poverty, hunger, homelessness, health problems, and issues such as child labor, combined with environmental issues of deforestation, extinction of species, and hazardous waste it is easy to see that human rights and environmental issues are needs associated with responsible citizenship that must be addressed in education today. Andrzejewski & Alessio (1999) discuss why it is important for students to embrace citizenship responsibilities:

Global problems necessitate going beyond national borders to embracing the concept of global citizenship. By learning how global issues affect individual and community lives, how and why decisions are made which affect the planet and life on it and, most importantly, means by which the future can be influenced, education can prepare students to become socially responsible global citizens.

(p. 5)

These issues are more serious and complex than those of the generations before us and will require informed, knowledgeable and active civic participation. Thus, there is a strong need today for inclusion of issues of global justice, human rights, social and environmental responsibility in our school curriculum. Students need to develop an understanding of responsibility to others, our society and to the environment to become globally responsible citizens.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) set a new focus in 1992 when the board of directors adopted a definition that dictates “social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence” and its primary
purpose was “to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world” (NCSS 1994). The NCSS articulated the importance of teaching character education in a position paper endorsing this focus in 1997. The paper argues that social studies teachers have a responsibility to teach character and civic virtue. John Douglas Hoge (2002) concludes that “because it can be cogently argued that good democratic government is largely dependent on informed, virtuous, and involved public, it seems clear that citizenship education actually needs a character education foundation” (p. 4).

While there is a need to examine global issues, educational initiatives should begin with real life issues identified by and directly connected to students, family, school and local communities as a way to become involved. Character education, moral conversation and classroom discourse that present a postmodern alternative and encourage a democratic environment of hope and confidence, courage, self-respect, friendship, trust, honesty and decency are among suggestions by Nash (1997). Schaps and Lewis (1998) characterize good citizenship to include three basic principles, one is deep regard for self and for others; they are tolerant and appreciate differences. Second, is personal commitment to core values of justice and caring; they share values such as fairness, honesty, kindness, responsibility and compassion. Third, they strive to be civic and considerate in their interactions with others.

I find the most basic fundamentals and understanding of good citizenship to be deficient in the upper class suburban school in which I teach art education. In a parent survey distributed after the first nine weeks of the 2003-2004 school year, comments relating to bullying and aggressive student behavior were the number one most frequent
responses related to concerns in our school. At present 22% of our students are from minority ethnic populations and over 11% of our students are identified with special needs. Conflicts of diversity and acceptance of “otherness” are often the focus of school bullying. Results of the Dublin City Schools 2003 - 2004 State Report Card rate this district as Excellent. The only indicator not met was the Fourth Grade Citizenship standard. Though our school is considered to be highly successful in science, with 92% of our students passing the science subtest of the Ohio Fourth Grade Proficiency Test in 2003-2004, many teachers feel our students are not creating real life connections of how people and nature are interdependent. Our students have not gained a clear understanding of the impact they have on others or on their environment. This is evident in observations made by parents and teachers in regard to student interactions and conduct. Three years ago many of our school attendance boundaries were reestablished causing approximately one third of the students to go to other schools and a similar percentage of students to be reassigned to our building. Of the families reassigned to other schools, those parents held over half of the offices in our PTO and were active volunteers in our school. The school has not felt the same unity as it did prior to the redistricting. Teachers across the school experienced a decrease in parental volunteers in their classrooms. As an active participant on our School Improvement Team (SIT) and the District Multicultural Committee, I became interested in addressing these issues through art education.

In this chapter I presented my thesis question and projected additional investigations directly related to my inquiries that I plan to research in my study. I presented a need for research in this field as it relates to general education, art education and my specific school community at Wyandot Elementary. I impart specific rationale
for this need based on my examination and statistical analysis of my school community, as well as establish a global need for this type of education. In chapter two I will present my theoretical framework and discuss how it relates directly to my ontology and epistemology.
CHAPTER 2

Theoretical Framework

In the last chapter I discuss my overarching thesis question and sub questions I plan to investigate in my research. I demonstrated a need for research in this field as it relates to general education, art education and my specific school community. In chapter two I will present my theoretical framework and relate how my ontology and epistemology will connect to my methodology in this study. I will conclude by revealing how these translate into a visual arts curriculum as I see it.

2.1 Who am I as a Researcher and Writer? What Does my Theoretical Framework Reveal?

Within my theoretical framework, I examine and disclose my ontology, the nature of my concept of reality and my epistemology, my beliefs about the nature of knowledge and their relationship to the selection of methodologies. It is through these beliefs that I
understand my world, my actions are guided, and my discourse is informed. Exposing my theorized paradigm provides and defines a lens to view my research and to understand my positionality as a researcher.

I believe there are multiple realities formed by one’s life experiences in the world. Contextual knowledge and human interactions construct this subjective reality where many truths can be conceptualized and validated. “The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology, (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understanding), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p 35). It is from a postmodern view that I form my beliefs about art education and challenge modernist curriculum design. My philosophy and teaching practices are reflective of postmodern theories and continue to evolve. “Postmodernism may offer the means to move art education from a peripheral, somewhat elitist, modernist position to one that integrates and defines itself as interactive and relational” (Milbrandt, 2001). The unfolding of the postmodern movement is examined by Slattery (2000) and characterizes its emphasis on eclecticism, irony, complexity, multiculturalism, ambiguity, parody, and indeterminacy. Lather (1993) recognizes postmodernisms contradictory ideas and practices. It is the challenge of multiple understandings, truths and hidden voices that draws me into postmodern philosophy. I seek to discover the layers of interpretations that reveal the numerous shapes of differences in our society. This opportunity for reconceptualization, criticality and deconstruction provides empowerment that would not otherwise be accessible. Ellis (1997) questions the usefulness of rigid disciplinary boundaries that separate science, social studies, humanities and the arts in view of a more interdisciplinary curricular approach that presents alternative forms of representation and arts based research.
Postmodernism attempts to evoke understanding through intermingling boundaries such as historical and social contexts to co-produce knowledge while privileging none as superior over another.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) identify the “four major interpretive paradigms that structure qualitative research: Positivist and postpositivist, constructivist-interpretive, critical (Marxist, emancipatory), and feminist-poststructural” (p. 33). As defined by Green & Stinson (1999), my positionality may be defined as an “Interpretivist” researcher because I am interested in understanding the situations from the point of view of those that actually live a specific experience. Communication is viewed as informing each participant, and emphasis is place on discovery on one’s own as the research unfolds. My ontology crosses into “Emancipatory” or “Critical” theory practices as I question the dominant constructions of reality. I have a desire to uncover the inequalities within social constructs, purposely through methodologies and research design. A heightened awareness of injustices is desired to promote thought and provoke a call for action.

Constructivist theory relies on co-construction of meanings. When past and present experiences, communication and knowledge are linked in a meaningful way, then learning is constructed. Chaile & Brittam (1991) describe constructivist learning as:

The learner is actively constructing knowledge rather than passively taking in information. Learners come to the educational setting with many different experiences, ideas, and approaches to learning. Learners do not acquire knowledge that is transmitted to them; rather they construct knowledge through their intellectual activity and make it their own (p11).
I find the following tenets identified by Fosnot (1989) to be important beliefs about how people learn best and they are aligned with constructivist theory.

1. Knowledge consists of past constructions.
2. Constructions come about through assimilation and accommodation.
3. Learning is an organic process of invention, rather than a mechanical process of accumulation.
4. Meaningful learning occurs through reflection, and resolution of cognitive conflict and thus serves to negate earlier, incomplete levels of understanding.

(p. 19-20)

Postmodernism through a constructivists/emancipatory paradigm has many implications for classroom praxis and curriculum design. These viewpoints contrast the traditional positivist transmission model to learning that I was taught to believe were the exemplary, best practices in teaching. The transmission model suggests that the learner is a vessel or recipient of what is to be learned; and the information presented becomes soaked up like a sponge. While constructivist learning is facilitated through inquiry, interaction, and learning becomes intrinsically motivated, the transmission model implies closed-ended instruction, ignores prior knowledge and is externally motivated. Through art education I have the ability to promote inquiry within my students that will challenge them to use the arts as a vehicle for social change. I see art education as a means of social reconstruction where students can explore, increase awareness and effect the social climate for equity of human rights, environmental concerns, and social well being.

The following topics become important in my beliefs for challenging outdated curriculum practices and advocating for change.
2.2  How Does This Framework Affect My Curriculum?

2.2.1  Integrated curriculum.

Curriculum integration is more than approaching issues without the limitations of subject or disciplinary boundaries. Integrated curriculum requires a focus of large themes or issues that are important and of interest to the learners to be identified and selected as topics for study. Throughout the last five decades art education has been influenced by formalist, child centered and discipline-based (DBAE) theory and practice. Gaudelius and Speirs (2002) propose that “issues based framework supports and expands these approaches and offers a more inclusive framework for teaching of art” (p.2). Beane (1997) takes the position that if the students truly want to gain knowledge in an area they have chosen to research through their inquiry, that they will understand this knowledge not through delineated labeled subjects but through a wide view of the real problems. Integration differs from multidisciplinary arrangements that are still bound by subjects but at times become contrived when emphasis is placed on relationships between all disciplines that may or may not exist. As Dewey (1900) warned:

All studies grow out of relations in the one great common world. When the child lives in varied by concrete and active relationship to this common world, his studies are naturally unified. It will no longer be a problem to correlate studies. The teacher will not have to resort to all sorts of devices to weave a little arithmetic into the history lesson, and the like. Relate the school to life, and all studies are of necessity correlated (p. 32).
Integration is a theory of knowledge organization. Domain specific knowledge and skills can be used to explore human ideas, emotions, purposes and problem solving real life issues through art. People have the opportunity to construct meaning when it is in response to their own internal inquiry (Beane 1993) and is united with their past knowledge and experience.

Enduring big ideas have lasting value beyond the classroom McTighe & Wiggins (1999) and may be most significant for developing real-life skills and problems solving. Themes arise from our relationships to topics. Anderson & Milbrandt (2005) demonstrate how trivial topics can be transformed into meaning themes by making personal connections for example, horses to our love of horses, dogs to our fear of dogs or airplanes to our thrill of flying. Walker (2001) refers to big ideas and Walker (In Press) refers to enduring ideas that drive artmaking in much the same way as the topics for integration. Topics suggested by Walker include ideas such as: identity, heroes, power, fantasy, reality, alienation and loneliness, questioning art, human emotions, nature and culture. Anderson & Milbrandt (2005) advocate just three central themes “(1) a sense of self, (2) a sense of place, and (3) a sense of community” (p.11). Beane (1997) presents the idea of first, planning units around a central theme; second, working to identify big ideas and concepts; and then third, developing activities to explore the big ideas. Krug (2002) suggests that teachers and students investigate life-centered issues.

2.2.2 Integrated curriculum and social issues.

Parsons (2004) claims “Integration occurs when students make sense for themselves of their varied learning and experiences, when they pull these together to make one view of their world and of their place in it. It takes place in their minds or not
at all” (p. 776). A primary component to making meaning lies in our ability to make significant connections necessary for understanding relationships between things and people, and understanding those relationships to society. Parsons (2004) presents strong evidence that integrated curriculum is an effective way to construct meaning through inquiry of socially relevant issues. He argues that employees today already must be prepared for complex social issues that deal with ambiguity, problem solving and go beyond disciplined boundaries; and the kind of problems we are challenged with today are changing rapidly.

It is becoming more important now than at any other time in our history to recognize the sense of community as global rather than tribal (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005). Community takes on a broader sense of all people rather than only those who look, act, live and speak like you to embrace the notion of rising above only recognition of our own culture, but through our postmodern ideas recognizing multiple perspectives and multiple narratives using visual means. As our communities grow and populations fluctuate, it can become increasingly important to develop an appreciation for sustaining one’s personal cultural identity while understanding there may be more than one way of living in the world. This may afford opportunities in the classroom for social reconstruction ideas to surface, as inequities are uncovered or environmental issues recognized for the good of a larger group that we all belong to of humankind.

2.2.3 Social and community issues.

Community based art education can take on various definitions and may include many possibilities that can range from public art, or community service projects to specific educational programs. Often the public art involves collaboration between an
artist and a specific population within the community or may function as a tool to address identified issues that may be social, political or environmental (Schwarzman & deNobriga, 1999) and have a very specific function to a community. Contemporary artists involved in community art incorporate cultural research, ethnography, photography, and a variety of methods to gather information about the community (Desai, 2002).

Today educators may feel the need to contemplate community based education when (1) well intentioned citizens try to figure out what they can do to support or reform school art programs; (2) arts administrators seek to advance their enrollment figures; (3) citizens try to eliminate art education from school curriculums; (4) teachers try to figure out how to get students involved in “real world” situations; and /or (5) educators and artists confront important social issues through their artist endeavors (Ulbricht, 2005, pg. 6).

Daniel (2003) has researched integrated curriculum through a case study of the Kwanzaa playground. She attributes success to the fact that this widely integrated project is held together with art. She contends, “It is sometimes difficult to make interesting and meaningful connections between and among disciplines. The difficulty may be due to the absence of a curricular anchor, a central content source, that helps to stabilize the many directions that can characterize the integration process” (p. 1). The Kwanzaa playground links knowledge from history, aesthetics, criticism, activism and focuses on inquiry based learning.

2.2.4 Arts based inquiry.

Arts based inquiry linked with arts based integrated curriculum has the potential to extend meaning and invites personal experience connected through multiple
perspectives to be considered. Mullen in Rasanen, claims, “Art should be considered as valuable a form of knowing as science. Artists express and create meanings that otherwise would not be noticed”(2002, p. 178). In arts based inquiry, the art communicates the knowledge content, so that others can understand it. Instead of knowledge being received through language or written form, the art transforms the knowledge into the experience for the viewer. “Art helps us to re-see, relocate, and connect anew” (Rasanen, 2002, p.177). Art is expressed from a personal standpoint and is heavily self-reflexive though issues may be social or personal and help make meaning of our relationship to our world.

2.2.5 Social issues and service learning.

When the social issues presented through arts based integrated curriculum become service to a community, organization, or population, it can take on the nature of service learning. Service learning takes place when the recipient and the provider mutually benefit from the service work being performed and there is equal focus on serving and learning. Taylor and Ballengee-Morris (2002) stress that the service learning must meet community needs agreed upon by the all participants and recipients, and most importantly requires personal reflection throughout the process. Taylor and Ballengee-Morris (2004) consistently focus on “we” as service-learning is constructed: “we” plan, “we” learn, “we” reflect, “we” trust, “we” hope, “we” care, and “we” imagine (p.12). Direct participation and critical thinking are essential to service learning goals. By nature, service learning requires integrated approaches to address these real community issues. Service learning strives for life long civic participation through habits of activism and a desire for change. “Service learning operates from a social justice rather than a
charitable framework; and intentionally combine reflection, action and analysis” (Variota, 1996, p. 28).

Service learning when combined with art education pedagogy takes on a transformative and socially reconstructive nature. This postmodern view focuses on the transformation of the artist and the viewers. The art requires collaborative participation as a catalyst for interpretation of the work. In Taylor’s (2002) view, these postmodern works function aesthetically, socially and politically.

Service learning in the field of education is often more student-centered than service-centered. In the Beans and Rice program one of the primary goals was to move participants toward a more proactive citizenship. It was used to examine service learning and brings example to the argument that service learning can be an art form in the postmodern sense. Postmodernism and service learning pedagogy in schools can invite the distribution of power where all are active in reconstruction of authority (Shor & Freire, 1987). This reconstruction of power and authority can align teachers and students as mutual learners within the community.

In this chapter I have presented my theoretical framework. I have provided a lens through which to view my research by disclosing my ontology and epistemology. I have established a groundwork that demonstrates how these beliefs translate into my view of visual arts curriculum today in this postmodern era.
CHAPTER 3.

Purpose of Study

In chapter two I disclosed my ontology and epistemology to reveal how they connect to my theoretical framework. I presented theory that I value in my approach to teaching visual arts curriculum. In this chapter I will present the purpose of my study and information about the specific site of my study.

3.1 What Is The Purpose of My Study?

The purpose of my study and project is to explore the ability to improve citizenship through active participation, representation and voice in arts based integrated curriculum in our school community. Students, families, teachers and support staff will become familiar with the diverse population of our school community and experience the strength found when all of the citizens within our school community unite in a democratic society. Diversity and character education are a primary focus and exploration of these ideas crosses boundaries of traditional disciplines and school subjects, as students explore these relationships freely within our community. As Hoge (2002) concluded, character education provides a good foundation for citizen education.
Can these goals be achieved through arts based integrated curriculum? Areas of expected integration through the art making processes will include social studies, Dublin history, math, language arts, and guidance curriculum. Community resources will be utilized. Students will demonstrate their knowledge through arts based inquiries and the creation of family tiles, photography, murals, film, sculptures, web pages and books. Students will be involved with reflective and creative writing as well as oral presentations throughout their investigations.

Diverse learning communities will be organized throughout the process to extend knowledge in a variety of settings. These learning communities will include families, small groups within their class, whole class and, at times entire grade levels. “A community is a place where individuals “communicate honestly with each other,” where their “relationships go deeper than their masks of composure,” and where “openness to risk, an acceptance of human vulnerability, and the ability to live through community” exist (Peck, 1987, p. 4). Learning communities will engage all participants in active learning activities. Co-creators of learning within these communities will at times include the classroom teacher, the art teacher, technology specialist, a student teacher, parents, school volunteers, and visiting artist, Amy Yaich. Activities will engage these communities in identification, inferences, interpretation, decision-making, analysis, synthesis, and problem solving of complex life centered issues associated with good moral character and acceptance of their diverse population. These learning communities will be actively engaged in this large community project requiring cooperation, respect, tolerance, responsibility and teamwork to accomplish their common goals and solve presented problems that arise throughout the process.
3.2 Site for My Study.

My study will be conducted in an elementary school where I have taught for twelve years. The school is one of eleven elementary schools in the district. The district also includes one preschool, four middle schools and three high schools. Our district has experienced increased enrollment for the past 27 consecutive years and now includes 12,755 students. This rapid and continuous growth has required many students within the district to change schools three times throughout their schooling, in addition to the changes that would occur from the natural progression through grades.

Our suburban school district consists of approximately 47 square miles over three counties. The district pupil/teacher ratio is 19:1. The largest class in my building is 24 students. Twenty one percent of the students in our district are culturally diverse. Over 800 speak English as a second language and our students speak 49 different languages. My building has two fulltime English as Second Language teachers who assist our students. Approximately 92% of our graduates continue onto higher education. The district provides outstanding academic, sports and extra curricular activities for students. Students consistently demonstrate proficiency levels that are above average for our state, and the district met 17 of the 18 standards of the state district report card in 2003-2004 and all 18 were met for the 2004-2005 school year. The community has an active arts council that brings a wide variety of visual and performing artists into our community, as well as providing funding for nine public sculptures located throughout the community.

This community enjoys a positive economic outlook and thus has maintained an unemployment ratio of less than 3% over the last ten years. Less than 2% of our students
qualify for free or reduced lunch in the district; and no students in my building meet the criteria. The average cost of a home in our community falls within the top 10% for the state.

3.3 My School Community

My entire school community will be participants in this study. I define my school community to include:

- 587 students grades K-5
- 442 families
- 34 teachers and support staff (including secretaries, lunch cooks, custodial staff, nurses, guidance counselors, special and regular education teachers, motor team members, librarian, and one principal)
- Parent volunteers
- Community resources:
  - Arts Council
  - Local photography studio
  - Education Foundation
  - Community Grant providers
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - Retail store

3.4 Length of Study.

My study was a one-year period of time that began in April of 2004 and concluded in March of 2005. This includes summer break, although I did continue to
work through the summer and some parents also participated in summer preparations.
That period of time does not include any of the time to plan the curriculum unit prior to
dispersing information to students.

In this chapter I have revealed the purpose and goals of my study to improve
citizenship in my school community through arts based integrated curriculum. I have
provide information about the community, school district and my specific school site so
that readers of my thesis might have a better understanding of the socioeconomic
environment this study takes place in.
CHAPTER 4

Methodology

In chapter three I identified the purpose of my study. I gave descriptive information about my school and my school district. I tried to demonstrate the type of suburban setting, which this district is situated. In chapter four I will discuss the methodology I will use to conduct the research in this study.

4.1 What Research Methodology Will Best Represent My Research Interests?

My research will be participatory action research methodology and will focus on a specific case study of a curriculum project in the elementary school where I currently teach. Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) recognize participant action research as a methodology that utilizes varied research approaches and authors stress the relevance of collaborative practices. Participatory action research is valued for its ability to reveal how pedagogical practice and theory converge in real life situations that are complex. Orlando Fals Borda (1979) has written of action research as “investigative reality in order to transform it” (p. 377). I allow my methods used to collect data to emerge from my research.

Under the label of participatory action research, at least seven categories can be identified: participatory research, critical action research, classroom action research, action learning, action science, soft systems approaches and industrial action research.
My research encompasses blurred boundaries between participatory research and classroom action. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) “Three particular attributes are often used to distinguish PR from conventional research: shared ownership of research projects, community-based analysis of social problems, and an orientation towards community action” (p. 337). Social work, health care and education are common sites for action research as are marginalized populations. Kemmis and McTaggart (2003) state that participatory action research is thought to involve cycles of self-reflection, planning change, observing and acting, replanting, and continues in a spiral process although not always in that order.

Participatory actions research (not always by that name) frequently emerges in situations where people want to make changes thoughtfully—that is, after critical reflections. It emerges when people want to think ‘realistically’ about where they are now, how things came to be that way, and from these starting points, how in practice, things might be changed (Kemmis & McTaggart. 2003, p.346).

In classroom action research, teachers use reflexivity to improve their own practice and pedagogy. While I understand that classroom action research privileges the teacher’s learning and knowledge, I believe that it must start with the teacher’s interest and effort, that change is favored and facilitated to allow student and teacher learning to unfold. This does not lead to the conclusion that I believe change can take place in the absence of support from the school community. Quite the opposite is true. Only with strong support and participation of parents, students, administrators and support staff can knowledge and change evolve to support student enlightenment.
A mixed methods approach to data collection will be employed. Case study, ethnographic research, and historical research are methods that I have identified for use at present. Stake (1998) defines case study as “about one thing: one person, one classroom, one curriculum, one case... and you learn by watching (p. 401).” An interpretive paradigm that exposes different perspectives of the phenomena can be useful. Stake (1999) suggests case studies present the ability to go beyond surface understanding and enable readers to negotiate meanings that encompass complexities, unique situations, and nuances of the specific population being studied that may otherwise not be considered relevant in traditional research methods. Case study offers a more collaborative and holistic view with rich descriptions that utilize ‘others’ perspectives to identify issues. It is important to the case study that the research is collected in the natural setting.

Ethnographic methods will be employed to analyze and interpret data to capture an emic point of view through qualitative research. I will be examining everyday life to disclose a specific situation under specific conditions. Hammersley and Atkins (1995) define ethnography as a specific set of methods that:

Involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people’s daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions-in fact collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (p. 1).

Crotty (1998) concludes that rather than ethnography as just a method of collecting data, it is a process that can be implemented to create and represent knowledge about specific individuals, society or culture. Cohen and Rapport (1995) present the acknowledgement that the meaning we make of informants’ words and actions is “an
expression of our own consciousness” (p. 12). “An interlinking of cultural studies and anthropological approaches seem particularly pertinent to an ethnography that incorporates visual images and technologies. This approach recognizes the interwovenness of objects, texts, images and technologies in people’s everyday lives and identities” (Pink, 2001, p. 5-6). Clifford (1986) suggests that ethnographies are fictions and constructed narratives that cannot communicate the whole account of reality, only the researchers version of truths that are partial and edited suggesting that both the presented and not presented accounts illuminate the research. Chaplin (1994) refers to visual representation not simply as a mode of recording data, but a way to examine new knowledge and verbal inquiries of the visual representations stressing the collaborative nature as producers of images and words, between the researcher and the informants as well as the visual and the textual.

Building trustworthiness in this research is my goal. Lincoln & Guba (1985) summarize trustworthiness in qualitative research as achievable through credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These goals sharply contrast with quantitative research goals of using studies of large numbers of participants to establish probabilities, generalizability, validity and reliability. Ethnographic methods such as photography, video, reflective writing in journals, field notes, voice recordings of students, observations, questionnaires and interviews are methods that I have used in my research. Pink (2001) states that the “crisis of positivists arguments and realist approaches to knowledge, truth and objectivity were challenged. These ideas paved the way for the visual to be increasingly acceptable in ethnography as it was recognized that ethnographic film or photography were essentially no more subjective or objective than written tests” (p.1). Visual forms of knowledge representation will be equally
meaningful as written documentation in my research. I will use data collected from arts-based inquiries throughout the students' art making processes from conception of ideas to completion of works. Formal and informal student writing, photography, film, sculpture, web pages and bookmaking will be assessed for evidence of changes in attitude towards learning, community, citizenship, diversity and character education. I will use reflexivity and content analysis to analyze my data to construct knowledge about the epistemology of my students' learning. Denzin and Lincoln (2003) refer to postmodern research to "seek alternative methods for evaluating their work, including verisimilitude, emotionality, personal responsibility, and ethic of caring, political praxis, multivoiced texts and dialogues with subjects" (p.15).

I will attempt to establish credibility or trustworthiness, transferability, dependability and confirmability through my research. Trustworthiness as defined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) refers to a set of criteria that is used to judge the quality of qualitative inquiries. Their focus was on naturalistic investigations and how they could be made noteworthy in the mind of the reader. Their evaluation of trustworthiness shifted to focus on authenticity (1989). Schwandt defines this as "findings accurately represent the phenomena to which they refer and . . . and is backed by evidence" (2001, p. 267). These notions are challenged by objectivism and skepticism partly due to the fact that these accounts are limited to written language, thus the validity is limited by the language system. One's lifeworld and values associated with it present different perspectives to understanding and validity especially when viewed from the perspective of enlightenment or oppression. Schwandt (2001) views these notions of validity from four perspectives. Fallabalism refers to an account that is always subject to error and revision. Contextual validity is viewed in regards to time and place within a specific
community. Radical relativism negotiates perspectives from multiple interpretations where none privilege another; therefore it is meaningless to argue validity. Replacement or displacement of validity deals with issues of culturalism and hidden social agendas.

Transferability may be thought of as the act of reasoning about a phenomenon. Analysis is most commonly viewed in qualitative research by its relevance to a theoretical account the researcher is already supporting. Lincoln and Guba (1989) insist that it's the readers' responsibility to then transfer the information provided through thick descriptions and details provided by the writer. In the Dictionary of Qualitative Research, Denzin (2001) "holds the view that contextual, multivoiced, interactional, and interpretive texts contribute to theoretical understanding by illuminating interpretive theories already at work in the connections that frame the stories that are told" (107).

Dependability is focused on the process of the inquiry. It is the researchers responsibility to be certain that the processes used to collect data are logical, traceable and documentable (Schwandt, 2001). Making the facts visible from analysis and interpretations of the data is confirmability. It is through the process of establishing trustworthiness, transferability, dependability and confirmability that I have come upon issues that need to be evaluated with these methods.

4.2 How Do Issues of Representation Affect My Research?

Representation is a concern that I must thoughtfully address in this qualitative research study. One of the challenges that arises as I begin to evaluate how to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity in my research comes from problematizing the definition used by Schwandt "findings accurately represent the phenomena to which they refer and . . . is backed by evidence" (2001, p. 267). To accurately represent through a
postmodern interpretivist/emansipatory lens is problematic and includes many contradictions, parodies, multiple understandings and voices into the research. Some representation for the qualitative researchers defend their fictional, invented or crafted view of accounts is literal representation of an external reality (Schwandt, 2001). "Many struggle with the idea of fallible representation—seeking to find ways to give evidence or good reasons for their accounts that represent social phenomena without claiming that those accounts are certain or beyond revision" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 227). There are postmodernists who are skeptical of the notion of representation and claim reality cannot be duplicated without losing something in the translation. Deconstructionists' arguments reveal the flaws in representationalism and contend that all postmodern research evoke instead of represent realities.

In my research I desire to present representations that evoke the essence of reality through shared understandings, beliefs and accounts of phenomena by students, parents and myself. While is it not possible to disclose every detail of every situation, it is the researchers reality that is represented in text and what is excluded from the text. This should be viewed with knowledge of the researcher's biases, subjectivity, and positionality to the research and the meanings co-constructed between the writer and reader.

Representation of myself must include the voice of teacher, co-creator of curriculum, learner, facilitator and researcher. Representation of my students must include the democratic voice given to each child, their individual learning styles, their rich cultural contributions acknowledged, their past knowledge (strengths and weaknesses) identified, and considerations of their socioeconomic backgrounds. The certified and classified school employee voices must be represented in terms of analysis
to grade level taught, subject matter, degree of participation and quality of contributions. Representation of parents must include those who entered into this research ready to help facilitate learning, but also the parents that met me with resistance and irritation over the complexity, time requirements and subject matter that I was about to embark upon at the beginning of this study. Representation will pose many challenges as I begin to grapple with issues.

Issues of representation profoundly come to light during the fourth moment in the mid-1980’s during what is identified as the ‘Crisis of Representation.’ Research and writing become more reflexive and pose questions of gender, race and class and older theories of truth and meaning are challenged. Stoller & Olkes (1987) refer to a different type of text due to their discoveries of lies and misleading information being given to ethnographic researchers like him. These new representations are characters in the story, which represent factual accounts. This requires self-reflection where field work and writing blend together. This leads into the fifth moment, a triple crisis. Poststructuralism and postmodernism are embedded in the legitimation and praxis of this discourse.

Denzin & Lincoln (2003) identify two key assumptions for the qualitative researcher. First the “researcher can no longer directly capture lived experience. Such experience, it is argued is created in social text written by the researcher . . . The second assumption makes problematic the traditional criteria for evaluating and interpreting qualitative research” (p. 28). These assumptions challenge thinking about validity, generalizability and reliability. Writers explore ways to represent “other” in their writing. During the sixth and seventh moments ethnographers express these representations through fictional writing, poetry, and multimedia text. These writings are often linked to the needs of a free democratic society (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003).
When exploring issues of representation of children in an educational setting, there are many complexities that have historically guided “otherness.” In readings of early childhood development new patterns of social structures and governmentality, Bloch and Popkewitz (2000) express governmentality in relation to governance of others and governance of the self. They see this as political in terms of “rules for reasoning mentalities that order the affairs of a territory to ensure citizens’ well-being rather than the more conventional notion of the political as a domain or aspect of the state” (p. 8-9). These conceptions of rules of reasoning are associated with the individual and the family to liberal and democratic philosophies. Autonomous or independent is considered having the freedom and ability to care for the “self” in economic, political, religious, or social spheres (Hindess, 1996). Norms for the child were built upon notions of stages of development and measurements of normal growth and thinking that were tied to new political rationalities of self-governing principles. This standardization of normalcy and how differences were understood were socially constructed realities. By the end of the twentieth century, initiatives to insure social welfare practices were to help families develop autonomy. This autonomy was based on a male breadwinner in the home. The assumptions of governmental agency were that if the family were not autonomous it would need social assistance to succeed. Children in these homes are considered “at risk” (Castel, 1991). Schools, government funding and social workers provide programs to support families that are not autonomous. Discourses include messages about the “good” child, parent, mother, father, and family. These discourses and principles of classification separated the notion of family obligations and responsibilities through a gendered responsibilities of citizenship.
While current discourses maintain a constructivist approach in which a responsible person finds his or her own solutions though independent problem-solving strategies and is flexible, "now governing discourses construct the good parent as one who participates in meetings, as one who volunteer in schools or classes, as the parent who regularly attends teacher-parent conferences, who is flexible in time and space, as well as responsive, supportive and involved" (Bloch & Popkewitz, 2000, p. 26). In this educational setting, applying a postmodern view to these conditioned resemblances of normalcy and otherness, representation of the child, family and teacher must breakdown stereotypes and offer a more empowered sympathetic view of the other that reveals the soul of a child.

In conducting action research, I am represented as the writer, researcher, teacher, and co-creator of learning within a variety of learning communities. As writer, representation of self is an important matter to consider.

A writer may interrupt his narration not only with his voice but also with his disconcerting presence. Borges appears in his own work as a mythical intelligence. Nabokov graces his own novels as a figure—a figure at once majestic and ironic, the way Alfred Hitchcock appears in his own films. All of these interruptions and cameo appearances celebrate the art of it all: they remind us that we are as it were in a theater, and that the narrative itself is a conscious and willed artifice. (Dillard, 2000. p 131).

Goodall, (2000) claims that writerly and readerly constructions are intertwined. As the rhetorical construction of the writing, I am embedded into the fieldwork and the story.

Character is an accumulation of clues that add up to construct personal identity. Viewed in this way, character emerges from three positioning coming together. The
fixed position refers to the personal facts that cannot be changed like age, gender, class, nationality, and race. These generally do not change during a study. Character is shaped by these factors and affect perceptions, and beliefs about our personal lived experiences. Subjective positions refer to our real life experiences or history. These subjective accounts may include birth, death, divorce, war, love, illness or experiences that shape our beliefs. Textual positions are the “language choices you make to represent what you see” (Chiseri-Strater and Sunstein, 1997, p. 58.) Choice of humor, irony and metaphors provide a lens to the way the writer takes in the world and give a voice to the fieldwork.

The reader provides an equally important construction to the meanings and interpretations revealed in the text. As the reader interprets the message and places it into context with their own experiences, biases, intellectual ability, and constructs meanings, together they co-create the reality of the text. The reader interprets the character in the story through his own perceptive and paradigm. “Character is how a reader constructs the personal, moral, professional and ethical dimensions of your narrator's active presence and actions in the world” (Goodall, 2000, p. 135). Good ethnographic writing also includes balance between personal and factual information. Character can link the information presented to a personal understanding of a specific situation or phenomena.

4.3 How Does Reflexivity Inform My Research?

Reflexivity is the process of self-reflecting on life experiences in ways that disclose deep connections about ones actions and practice and relationships between and among subjects and researcher. “To be ‘reflexive’ means to turn back on our self the lens through which we are interpreting the world. It ‘implies’ a shift in our understanding of data and its collection—sometimes that is accomplished through detachment, internal
dialogue, and constant (and intensive) scrutiny of ‘what I know’ and how I know it’ (Hertz, 1997, p. vii-viii).

There are often times when divulging self-reflection in written dialogue becomes necessary to the telling of the story and creating meaning that can be understood by others. Goodall (2000) states that “Specifically, there are times when you should account for your own complicity in the evolution of events and the constructions of meaning in, or about an experience in the field” (p. 148).

The results of engaging in meaningful reflexivity can be paramount to understanding action research, and much of qualitative research. It is reflexivity that produces an atmosphere for social change. This social transformation is not just social change but in its complexities includes political, cultural, and cognitive changes. Reflexivity is essential to understanding and shows validity of social phenomena (Schwandt, 2001). Reflexivity is the act of critical self-reflection of one’s own assumptions, biases, control, theoretical predispositions, preferences, methods and the entire process. Critical analysis of social networks between and among participants and the researcher require self-reflection to be understood.

In participatory action research and classroom research the reflexivity becomes a focus of the spiraling process of the study. The knowledge, changes in perceptions, and phenomena exposed during this reflective process lead the researchers decisions on the next action steps in the research. The researcher is committed to observing the results of these actions reflecting on their outcome and replanning again the future actions. This cycle continues throughout the action research to transform thinking of the researcher and participants. In practice, the boundaries between these stages overlap, become blurred and are not as clearly defined as they may appear in print. Because of the collaborative
nature of this process not all participants transform their stance at the same rate. Even though participants may end up at a similar conclusion at the end of the study, like racers in the Indianapolis 500 who are all attempting to finish the race, any individual or group of participants may experience oil slicks, pit stops and even enjoy the position of leader of the pack at any point throughout the race. Just as the racers must respond and react to another’s position on the track to ensure their own progress, the participants being researched react and respond to individuals or groups that are progressing differently than them. This leads to further reflexivity about the observable behaviors of others or other groups in the research. As participants transform their thoughts and practice the consequences of others evaluate one’s actions. Evidence about practice must be collected through internal and external modes, from individual’s performance within the research as well as how others view the practitioners. Reflexivity must focus on the participants understanding of their own knowledge as well as reflexive practices about how they are viewed by others in society.

“Action research is a learning process, the fruits of which are the real and material changes in (a) what people do, (b) how they interact with the world and with others, (c) what they mean and what they value, and (d) the discourses in which they understand and interpret the world” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2003, p. 83).

Participatory action research suggests that practice should be studied dialectically and with reflexivity. “In this view of practice, practitioners regard themselves explicitly as engaged in action that makes history, and they are likely to regard research as process of learning from action and history—a process conducted within action and history, not standing outside it in the role of recorder . . . or controller” (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2003, p.354-355). It is the process of the reflective practice that becomes transformative
through collaborative action. The study of practice is complex and involves layers of understanding varied relationships between groups and related learning communities and objects within these communities. These relationships can be social, material or historically situated. Change occurs throughout study as participants construct new knowledge, learn from their constructions and adapt to their newly acquired knowledge. Change can be observed at the individual and social level and through reflective and dialectical relationships between objective and subjective perspectives. Haberman (1987) poses that viewing practice in this way provides a rich understanding of the complexities of practice and the process of change.

4.4 What Conclusions Have I Reached About My Research Methodology?

Defining my theoretical framework and situating myself holistically and historically in my research provides a lens to view my bias. I have begun to explore issues with my research methodology and methods and will continue critical discourse related to representation, reflexivity and voice through less traditional visual images, photography, and video as well as more traditional forms of observation, writing and interviews. I will persist at challenging my assumptions and construct meaning from my research as it evolves. Thoughtful deliberation of these issues and others that present themselves throughout my research will contribute to establishing a foundation for trustworthiness between myself as researcher, and the co-construction of meanings with readers of my research.

In this chapter I have identified action research as the primary methodology that I will use in this study. I have reported that I will use case study of a curriculum unit as a method of collecting data. The nature of qualitative research compliments my ontology
and epistemology. In the next chapter I will provide a narrative of the curriculum as it unfolded.
CHAPTER 5.

Curriculum Unit Presentation and Analysis of Data

In the last chapter I presented information about the action research that I will use as the primary methodology in this study. A case study of a curriculum that will take place in the school where I teach will provide a site for this research. In this chapter I will provide a narrative and present multiple voices of participants in my school community that are participants in this study.

5.1 How Did The Concept For The Curriculum Unit Projects Begin?

5.1.1 My first class as a graduate student at OSU and Wegman’s Tilted Chair (2002).

August 7, 2003 is day four of a journey that I started and only now realize may never end. The following are excerpts from my journal entries that illuminate this experience from a field trip to the Columbus Museum of Art:

I am a new graduate student in the Art Education Department of The Ohio State University taking my first class since being accepted into the program. I am in class with Dr. Terry Barrett standing before William Wegman’s painting titled Tilted Chair, 2002. As the 16 graduate students in this class stand before a 8’X16’, 4 panel mural, we are told that we will be participating in an activity that we could use in our classrooms with our own students to engage them in critical analysis of a piece of artwork. The class stood overwhelmed while voices commented “WOW”, “They’re Postcards!” “Isn’t that cool the way they’re all painted together,” “That is awesome the way he connected all of those images together”, “There is another one, I couldn’t even tell that was a postcard until I got up close,” “Look how the water over here becomes the sky of this one!” Dr. Barrett allowed us to explore the work for several minutes, a student read the rest of the group the title and we all searched to find the tilted chair. The enthusiasm for the work was oozing with high regards from most all of the graduate students, none of whom had seen this painting newly placed in the museum entrance behind the desk.
Dr. Barrett allowed the comments to taper to a quieter rumble before starting in on our assignment. He started at one end of the line of students and asked us to identify something we saw in the artwork and to listen carefully so that we did not repeat what another student already said. While this activity had the potential to continue for hours with scrutinizing graduate students and such a massive canvas of images embedded in front of us, Dr Barrett gave each student at least 6 turns before bringing the activity to closure. What was ticking in my brain while doing this activity? My friend, and colleague Larrie Habel and I, stood there exchanging ideas about the possibility of doing something like this with our students. Of course the day went on and many other new stimulating ideas flooded my brain throughout the course of the day at the museum.

Over the next several months William Wegman’s *Tilted Chair* painting kept coming back to me. I was impressed with the skill of the artist to be able to make all of those connections with such varied subjects and places as smoothly as he did; where some of the postcards were not even distinguishable until close examination. I was also in awe of the idea of using ready made images, not even his own photographs, to create such a large impressive work of art. Thoughts danced through my mind and kept reoccurring in conversations with my colleagues, and in other circles as well. I was sure I wanted to develop a mural with my students and use Wegman’s *Tilted Chair* to generate ideas with my students. Since my friend Larrie Habel teaches in a neighborhood that is so close to my school, we often wondered about the similarities and differences that would develop in works done by our student populations. She teaches in a Catholic K-8 setting and I am in a public K-5 population. Larrie and I frequently came back to this idea
of creating work based on the concept of painting beyond the boundaries of images to make connections between ideas and images. We were both drawn to the power of the Wegman Mural and the possibilities to make multiple layers of meaningful connections about life with students in the creation of such a work.

5.1.2 Development of the ideas leading to our mural making.

I spent the next several months during the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year putting some of my newly acquired theory into practice. I was excited about introducing many of the new critical analysis and interpretive techniques I learned from my class with Dr. Barrett during the summer. I was reworking units to focus on “Big Ideas” that were emphasized during my summer class with Dr. Sydney Walker. I was incorporating issues related to visual culture that were learned from visiting professor, Dr. Kevin Tavin during this same summer. This was a transitional time in my teaching where change was evident. I was heavily engaged with reflexive practice about my teaching and professional conversations focused on what was occurring in my classroom as a result of the influences of these three specific classes. There had never been such a change in my teaching during my ten years in elementary art education. It was evident that my students were engaged in learning that challenged them above and beyond what I had asked of them in previous years. My students and I were energized by these changes and challenges. Evidence of higher levels of thinking and making insightful connections with depth across curriculum were evident in student responses, critiques, and assessments and art making. During this time I attended the Ohio Art Education Association conference in Toledo, Ohio. I attended a session by Mary Sheridan and Cheryl Knox, two art educators who also attended graduate school at OSU during the last decade. I attended
sessions by these two art educators and several others during March of 2003 at the National Art Education Association Conference in Minneapolis. Being my first national conference I was inspired by and overwhelmed by many of the meaningful curriculum ideas that were presented. I was motivated by the mosaic creation story mural that Cheryl's classes made and by Mary's murals about becoming connected to the ocean so that the whale could get to Pickerington. These examples demonstrated powerful integrated curriculum.

By December of 2003 Larrie and I both decided to move forward with murals for our schools. Winter Quarter I took an independent study with Dr. Walker to do curriculum writing. While doing readings for writing a progressive curriculum guide for Dublin City Schools, I also focused on brainstorming about the subject matter for our Wyandot School mural. I knew there were ways to address important school issues through the making of our murals although our school is not in a community that is underserved, economically deprived, or with a physical environment that was blatantly neglected. It seemed this would be easier to select an important issue if their needs were greater. I knew my challenge was to get to the heart of issues that would make a difference in our specific school community.

5.1.3 School improvement team.

I was new this year to our School Improvement Team (S.I.T.). We surveyed parents in January to get input for areas they felt needed improvement in our building. The S.I.T. members were able to read all of the parent surveys. I found it most interesting that several parents mentioned bullying, and concerns with "other" students' behaviors. The surveys indicated a strong value in focusing on character education in
their homes and in our school. Among our staff, concerns became apparent about a few teachers that were resistant to the increasing demands to change their curriculum and practices to reflect the district's chosen approaches and the implementation of new content standards across disciplines. Some wanted to continue the way things had always been done in the past, instead of changing curriculum and instruction to meet the rapidly changing needs of society to successfully prepare students to be active and responsible citizens in a complex 21st century global community. Parent involvement in our building was lower than prior years due to the recent redistricting of our eleven elementary buildings. Our number of active parent volunteers dropped by 65% across the building. Families were not connected to the school. Our guidance counselor, Mrs. T., had been gradually trying to bring character education programming into our school wide agenda. Her idea was to purchase a readily available character education program complete with posters, banners, and selected curriculum activities to implement. While no one disagreed with focusing on character education as a worthy topic, our principal seemed opposed to purchasing a ready-made character education program. Our teachers and S.I.T. members decided that our school would hold monthly town meetings focusing on a different character trait each month. The whole school would integrate character education into lessons and units as appropriate. In this way we hoped there would be a stronger emphasis on building good character in our students. I came to the conclusion that the mural could help facilitate our school character education goals. My thoughts were that focusing the murals on character education had the potential to engage students in meaningful art making that was going to be connected to our school goals, would be supported by parents and teachers, as well as improve our school appearance. Taking
this in the direction of a service-learning project seemed like a natural step from the already active charity work with which our school is involved.

5.1.4 Charity work of our school.

Our Wyandot families have a history of being actively involved in charity work. During the 2003-2004 school year, students and Wyandot families participated in more than one dozen charity efforts. Our guidance counselor has been instrumental in leading many of the school-wide efforts and most of the classroom teachers have participated with their classrooms individually in efforts to write letters or send items to our soldiers. Our school teamed up with an elementary school in Columbus that has many economically challenged students. Our students sent them school supplies at the beginning of the year and jackets, coats, hats and mittens during the winter months. Students donated money to the American Red Cross. They had a penny drive to benefit Leukemia Research. They participated in the Jump Rope for Heart and earned several thousand dollars for the American Heart Association. Our Taking it to the Streets program collected needed items for the homeless in Downtown Columbus. Staff and Wyandot families participated in a program to donate books to the Dublin Fire Department to distribute to children in need. I thought the mural was the first step towards an attitude more amenable to a service-learning activity and for improving the physical appearance of their own school with their artwork permanently mounted on the school walls. Characteristic of a service-learning project, both the students and the public school would benefit mutually from the mural being in our building.
5.1.5 Multicultural committee involvement.

I served on the Dublin City Schools District Multicultural Committee during the 2003-2004 school year. I was involved in reading about multicultural issues, closing the gaps between achievement levels of minority students and recognition of impact that a teacher bias can potentially have on student expectations and outcomes. I was to keep the teachers in my building informed about multicultural issues as part of my responsibility as a member of this committee. Twenty-one percent of the students in our building are from minority ethnic groups and there are a large range of cultures represented among them. My students frequently come to us with no English language abilities and no parents in the home speaking English. These include students who moved directly from China, Japan, Mexico, Korea, Taiwan, Russia, and France to name a few. I had a strong desire to incorporate multicultural education and global awareness in our mural. I wanted all of the school’s families to be represented to increase their connectedness to our school and for them to start to feel accepted in our school community. Understanding that our diverse population can provide strength to our school community was going to be a desired curriculum outcome. I wanted students to recognize the unique contributions each family brings to our community. When diversity and tolerance of our differences is communicated through student-to-student exposure to a variety of perspectives it provides a deeper understanding of cultural values. As stated by Ballengee-Morris and Stuhr (2001)

Multicultural Education is the most popular term used by educators to describe working with students who are different because of age, gender or sexuality, social and economic class, exceptionality, geographic location, religion, political status, language, ethnicity, and race. The social goals of this approach for all
groups are to provide a more equitable distribution of power to reduce discrimination and prejudice, and to provide social justice and equitable opportunities (p.8).

5.1.6 Mural placement.

Securing such a large space in our commons to place the mural required negotiating. Students and teachers were always complaining about one of the walls in the commons area that was made for stapling things on it. After 18 years, the material behind the wall covering had turned so soft that virtually everything that was stapled to the wall was sure to end up on the floor. The wall was a constant issue for the custodians to try to keep it clean, inconvenience for teachers who had to keep stapling things back up and the students who were generally unhappy because they wanted to see their name up on the wall not the floor. The Physical Education teacher tried to keep the lists of students who had achieved various levels of the new walking club records on display, although despite her best efforts, they were always ending up on the floor. Choosing that wall for a mural seemed like the perfect solution to a problem that impacted the entire school community. The space was typically used by a variety of teachers at different times so I needed to be sure this was not going to become a space issue with other teachers. I sought input from many teachers who regularly used this space prior to any announcement about using this location for our mural.
5.1.7 Formulating a written plan.

During late February of 2004, I decided to put my ideas into a written plan, design a tentative timeline and present my mural ideas to my principal, John Pfeiffer. He and I discussed the timeline and the selected wall. Most of the time when I met with John, I was not really sure I knew if he did or did not like my ideas. However, he did give me permission to use the wall and to begin what I call Phase 1 of my proposed mural project. Phase 1 would include all activities from April 2004 through the opening of the tile mural wall in August of 2004. The following is the information that I presented to Mr. P. No discussion of how to pay for this project came up in our initial conversation.
CHARACTER EDUCATION MURAL

PURPOSE:
To actively engage our entire school community (students, teachers, support staff and families) into a mutual collaboration that will focus on character traits associated with good moral character in our diverse yet democratic community.

GOALS:
1. Students will develop a sense of belonging and citizenship in our school community.
2. This mural will enable all families/groups to contribute a unique representation of that family/group that when compiled with all the others in our Wyandot Community represents the strength found in our diversity.
3. Active involvement in this mural will emphasize to our students that all of us have a voice and can impact our community.
4. The activities leading to the making of the mural will engage students in identification, inferences, interpretation, decision-making, analysis, synthesis, and problem solving of complex life centered issues associated with good moral character.
5. Students will be actively involved with a professional artist and art making processes.
6. All students will use artistic processes of photography, clay tile making and painting to construct this mixed media mural.
7. All teachers will have opportunities to make curriculum connections with our students about Dublin history, public art in Dublin, career education, ecology, climate, environment, architecture, community planning, language arts, as well as character education during the planning, making and for years after its completion.
8. Students, parents, teachers, and support staff will develop pride and ownership in our school community.

TIMELINE:
1. April 2004-
   a. Students will take home information about planning a clay tile that represents their family in some way. This may include ethnic background, cultural depictions, family heritage, or family activities. All Wyandot families will be asked to develop the ideas at home.
   b. Teachers and Support staff will be divided into subgroups and ask to design a tile that represents their group. (Each grade level, cooks, custodians, specials teachers, etc.
2. May 2004- Students will construct the clay tiles in art class, Mrs. Buda will Bisque fire the tiles.
3. May 18, 2004- At the Wyandot Elementary Art Show families and groups will be ask to come paint their tile using Under glazes. Tiles will be laid out on tables by classroom and parent volunteers will assist with painting procedures.
4. After May 18- Students will clear glaze over the tiles and Mrs. Buda will fire the tiles.

5. Summer 2004-
   a. The covering currently over the wall to be used for the mural will be removed and necessary wall preparation will take place (clean & paint) the tiles will be secured to the wall to make a boarder around the area where the mural will be painted next year.
   b. Sharon and parents will secure tiles to the wall to make the frame or boarder around the area to be used for the mixed media mural.
   c. Grants secured for additional funding

6. Fall 2004-
   a. Each family and school community group will be given one disposable camera to take photographs in the Dublin Community that demonstrate exemplary examples of good character. Each family will be ask to return the camera for developing along with a log and brief written statements about why they choose each shoot with the camera.
   b. Teachers will attend a PDT to clearly demonstrates guidelines of the photo taking process, how to access a website that will provide community resources, ideas for locations, tips on photography and the processes that will be used to select photographs.
   c. Photographs will be developed and sent home with students so that each family can narrow the selection down to one photograph per child in the family that will then come back to school.
   d. Each classroom will critique photographs and select 2 or 3 from their classroom that they would like to contribute to the mural.

7. November 2004-
   a. All students will meet with local artist, Amy Yaich about the mural.
   b. Students grades 3-5 will all be given turns actively painting the mural onto the wall.

8. December 2004- the mural is scheduled to be completed by Winter break.
5.2 Phase I of the Mural Processes

5.2.1 Planning phase I of the mural processes.

I had many issues to begin to work out in preparation for the mural to be realized. I started to prepare the necessary written information to go home with students, parents, teachers and support staff. This first communication needed to inform each group about the mural and the tile designs that would be needed. I had no idea if Amy Yaich would come to our school; or if she agreed to come, how I would pay for her fees to work with my students. I had no plan as to how I would get the disposable cameras or pay for the processing. I knew I did not have enough clay left to make all of the tiles necessary and I had no under glazes with which to paint the tiles. I started to wrap up the units that were in progress in preparation for making tiles. The following information went home the first week of April.
Wyandot Elementary Families,

I am very excited about starting our first school wide collaborative mural. The mural will begin with making clay tiles that will be painted, fired and assembled to construct a frame or border around the space that will become our mural next year. The mural is truly a collaborative endeavor that will involve all students and families in our school, teachers and support staff.

I would like your family to design one of the tiles to be used in our mural border! When all the tiles are assembled to construct the border for our mural, it will represent the strength found in our diverse school community.

What should we include in our family tile design?
Your family tile should represent your family in a special way. This may include ethnic background, cultural depictions, family heritage, or family activities. Please draw your design in the space provided on the back of this page. This is the size that your actual clay tile will be. Please return your completed family design by May 10, 2004.

Who will make the tiles?
Wyandot students will construct the actual clay tiles during art time with Mrs. Buda.

When will our family paint the tile?
On Tuesday, May 18 from 6:00-8:00 pm at the Wyandot Elementary art show. Your family is invited to come to the gym that evening and paint your tile with under glazes. Parent volunteers from each class will be assisting with the process.

Then what will happen to the tiles?
The students will apply clear glaze to the tiles and they will be glaze fired. Over the summer Mrs. Buda and some parent volunteers will secure the tiles to make the border around the mural wall. In September your students will bring home more information about the rest of the mural process. All families will also be involved in what goes into our Character Education Mural. This process will begin in September and the goal is to have the mural completed before Winter Break next year.

Volunteer Opportunities?
Many parent volunteers will be needed at the art show, over the summer and throughout next year to make this project and others meaningful to our Wyandot students. Please complete your name and phone number below if you would be interested in volunteering?

_____ May 18, 6:00-8:00 pm during the art show
_____ May 18, 4:00-5:00 before the art show       Name ________________________________
_____ The week before the art show
_____ Over the summer to mount tiles          Phone ________________________________
_____ Next year during the school day

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Our Family Ceramic Tile Design

Wyandot Students names: List all students currently in grades K-5 who attend Wyandot:

Name ____________________________ Grade _______ Teacher ________
Name ____________________________ Grade _______ Teacher ________
Name ____________________________ Grade _______ Teacher ________
Name ____________________________ Grade _______ Teacher ________

Your family tile should represent your family in a special way. This may include ethnic background, cultural depictions, family heritage, or family activities. Please draw your design in the space below. This is the size that your actual clay tile will be. Please return your completed family design by May 10, 2004.
Illustration 2. Family diversity tile drawing.

Illustration 3. Family diversity tile drawing.
Illustration 4. Family diversity tile drawing.

5.2.2 Making the tiles.

Students began making tiles during their art classes. I purchased wooden lath slats for the students to use to help them roll the clay slabs more evenly. I demonstrated this new technique to grades 1-4 since they were familiar with rolling slabs already this year, but had never used anything to control the thickness of the slabs. Since my fifth grades students had been involved in a large painting unit at this time, most fifth grade students did not make clay tiles. Fifth graders were given the option to come in during recess to help with making tiles and 27 students out of 93 came in at least one time to make tiles. Since these were to be family tiles for a community piece of art, I stressed to the children that there was no need to put their names on the tiles. It did not matter who
got which tile to paint because they would all end up in the same mural. This concept was new to the students and it took a little while for them to accept this community-based approach to making art. They were conditioned to putting their name on their pieces and being sure they worked on only their personal work.

Students worked during art classes and during lunch recess times to make the tiles. They were excited to get them made so they could have them ready for the art show. The 3rd and 4th grade classes all worked during one class time and many of the first and second grade classes worked two class periods. Over 100 third through fifth grade student volunteers came in during lunch recesses over a two week period to help make additional tiles, wedge clay, recycle the older clay, and rotate the tiles for even drying. Students wedged clay, rolled slabs with rolling pins on their clay mats, and cut through the clay using wooden tongue depressors as knives. They used a 6"X6" cardboard pattern to try to assure similar size tiles. I covered a countertop with larger clay mats. Students carried their completed slab to the counter and placed their entire slab, still on their mat, onto the counter to start to dry. I would then flip the tiles and peel the mat from the back onto my large mat. This technique kept students from deforming the tiles while they were trying to remove them from the small clay mats. I was impressed by how well even the first and second grade students did with their tiles. Occasionally slabs were too thick and they had to be rolled thinner and recut. We stacked the tiles three to four layers high turning them so that they would not warp or curl too much. I would like to have placed the tiles between drywall sheets to dry under more pressure and a little slower, although space and time were issues.

We made approximately 700 tiles total. Roughly 625 of those tiles ended up being bisque fired. Tiles were removed if they were too thin, too warped, cracked or had
become misshaped as they were handled. During the bisque firing about another 20 tiles cracked. I experimented with a variety of ways to bisque fire and stack the tiles throughout the process. I was generally able to stack 20 tiles high, spiraling them so they were not stacked squarely. Occasionally they still cracked from either the weight or because the tile was warped. I fired tiles right up until the day before the art show.

Illustration 5. Third grade students making clay tiles during art class.

5.2.3 Saint Bridgid mural.

Larrie Habel, the art teacher at St. Bridgid was busy working on developing their school mural with a different emphasis. They were going to connect their mural to documenting the presence of God in their community. While there were many differences in how our mural plans were progressing, it was clear the St. Bridgid mural was going to take far less time to complete that ours at Wyandot. St Bridgid did not make clay tiles. In March they started by taking photographs that documented the presence of God in their community. This also linked to their school goals. Students at St. Bridgid wrote reflections from selected photographs and started painting the mural right onto a
large wall in the school cafeteria. Amy Yaich assisted students painting for three weeks. They incorporated small clay pieces into the final mural. The mural was finished prior to summer vacation in mid June.


5.2.4 Class with Dr. Mary Sheridan integrated curriculum

I enrolled in a class Spring Quarter of 2004 with Dr. Mary Sheridan at the Dublin Arts Center. Class began the first week of April. The mural and tile information were just sent home to families to begin their family tile designs. Mary distributed our syllabus and informed us that we would be reading an integrated curriculum book by James Beane (2002) and that we would be working this quarter primarily on developing an integrated curriculum unit that was based on an important issue that was identified in our school community. We would need to create a collection of items related to our issue and there would be a large final project. Here I was again, looking for issues. Mary provided many examples of issues that may present themselves in a school and/or global
communities. She showed examples from some of the environmental and social issues she worked with at Tussing Elementary in Pickerington. Mary stressed listening to our own school community and identifying concerns specific to our kids. She told us a number of times that if we listened, we would get to know our students better and we would be able to identify concerns with which our students were faced. I value the benefits that are a result of taking the time to listen to my students and respond to their needs, in order to able be to connect with their interest and prior knowledge to make curriculum meaningful.

As we progressed with Mary’s class, I was developing a better understanding of integrated curriculum. My previously understood definition of integrated curriculum was suddenly outdated. It was conceived primarily as an overlapping of learning through more than one discipline at a time. In my art room this most often happened between social studies and art, science and art or at times math and art. This obviously outdated definition of integrated curriculum lacked student identified connections and interests, lacked team planning, lacked parental and community participation. James Beane (2001) describes the dimensions of curriculum integration.

“As it is meant to be, curriculum integration involves four major aspects: the integration of experiences, social integration, the integration of knowledge and the integration as a curriculum design . . . in a comprehensive theory of curriculum integration that is more significant and promising than the curriculum arrangements that are incorrectly identified as “integration in too many current discussions” (p.4).
I was now beginning to conceptualize the learning potential of an integrated curriculum that was student driven, and allowed students to freely explore meaningful connections as they presented themselves in real situations regardless of subject boundaries.

At this point I had every intention of completing my thesis doing curriculum writing for Dublin Schools. I felt that my mural project was going to go on as a way for me to further my understanding and connect theory to my practice. The unit I wrote for Mary’s course was an integrated curriculum that involved utilizing the city park and pond that is located behind my school. The unit would require support of the entire school community as defined as teachers, support staff, students, parents, and establishing a variety of community partnerships. I knew that if this P. O.N.D. project, People Nature, Water and Diversity, was going to be successful, the mural project needed to open the door to these groups. I would need to build the confidence and rapport necessary to gain their support. Suddenly the mural project became more critically linked to the success of not only this mural project but to future curriculum implementation in my building.

5.2.5 Writing team for state visual arts academic content standards.

As a member of the Ohio State Standards writing team, I was troubled by how this type of curriculum could evolve from my students and at the same time, how could I be sure that I was accountable for all of these new standards that were just approved by the state four months prior? As a National Board Certified Teacher and writer of these new State Standards for Visual Art, I feel compelled to set an example for my Dublin colleagues and assist with sharing ways to effectively demonstrate compliance and accountability with these standards. Because of my participation in the writing of the state standards, I was put in a position of authority by my peers in the district and ask to
help the ten elementary art teachers better understand these new standards. I facilitated inquiry within small groups of teachers who examined individual standards and led discussions on their interpretations. We discussed classroom implementation strategies that would be effective in elementary art classrooms. I felt I was being asked to take on a new role as a curriculum leader within my district.

5.2.6 **National Art Education Association conference April 2003.**

Our Curriculum Director asked me to attend the National Art Education Association Conference March 2003 in Minneapolis and then again to go the April 2004 Conference in Denver. I made arrangement to attend and assisted a fellow National Board Certified Teacher in presenting information about the certification process. This was my first experience presenting at any conference. Though I was a little nervous, the session went well. The room was packed with many attendees standing in the space in the back of the room. This success gave me the confidence to write two proposals to present the next year (2004-2005 school year) at the National Art Education Association Conference in Boston and the State Art Education Association Conference in Columbus.

While at the National Art Education Association in Denver, I attended many sessions relating to curriculum writing, visual culture, and integrated curriculum. I was able to see that much of the theory I was learning at The Ohio State University was in fact reflective of most of the national trends in art education. This proved not only to be reassuring, but led to furthering my understanding in these areas. I attended research sessions on these topics and heard first hand about a variety of innovative implementation strategies linking the gaps between theory and practice. I personally needed to see these types of examples to be able to better understand the potential and scope of learning.
possibilities. Seeing meaningful units that provided evidence of success combined with
the professional dialogue between and among art educators from around the country
proved to be motivational. I was driven to raise the level of expectation of my students
and compelled to write more meaningful curriculum that would impact student learning
and my teaching methods.

I was in contact with a wide range of art educators from around the country.
Karen Kakas from Bowling Green University introduced curriculum that focused on “Big
Ideas of Conflict and Caring: Ways to Effectively Teach”. Groups such as the Spiral Arts
Program in Chicago demonstrated curriculum that was progressive, meaningful to
students and dealt with important life centered issues for troubled inner-city middle
school students. I knew that my practices were just beginning to look deeper than my
previously learned Discipline Based Art Education D.B.A.E. instructional practices. I
was only starting to understand how to align meaningful curriculum to meet the current
needs of my students. I found that ideas of constructivist learning were evident
throughout most highly successful and student driven curriculum ideas that were
presented. While I speak positively of the impact the conferences have had on my
growth, I will be honest that there were just as many sessions that confirmed teaching
practices that I felt were outdated curriculum. Examples of such sessions focused on art
principals and elements, a lesson plan that included geometry; focus on specific art
materials and manipulation of it. A few of the sessions resembled cookie cutter lesson
ideas. I did attempt to share information about current trends in art education upon my
return at our next elementary art education meeting, but was hesitant because I did not
feel it was my place to impose my ideas on how curriculum should be taught or as the
only correct way to approach curriculum. After all, we were still in the process of
revising our curriculum guide for Dublin City Schools. At least eight of the ten other elementary teachers in my district, I was sure, were still teaching project based or D.B.A.E curriculum and putting a great deal of time and energy into these units. I had reached a point in my philosophy as an educator that meaningful curriculum had to be more than delivering well researched and planned multicultural based lessons, even when delivered by a National Board Certified Instructor who integrates technology, has a good handle on classroom management and fosters a fair respectful learning environment.

5.2.7 Dublin City Schools summer leadership conference.

During the summer of 2004, I attended the Dublin City Schools Leadership Conference. It was a three-day conference that was led by the Dublin Education Association. Approximately 150 teachers and administrators attended the conference from across the district. Every school had between 3 and 17 attendees from a wide range of subject areas and grade levels. I was the only art teacher. There were four teachers from my building in attendance. Our building and many others within the Dublin City School District participated in book studies and book discussions that focused on Linda Lambert’s book Building Leadership Capacity in Schools (1998) during the prior school year. One focus of this leadership conference was to identifying how to move Dublin to a Quadrant Four School as defined by Linda Lambert in her newer book Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement (2003). She defines a Quadrant Four School as:

- Broad-based, skillful participation in the work of leadership
- Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice
- Poles and responsibilities that reflect broad involvement and collaboration
- Reflective practice/innovation as the norm
- High student achievement (p.13).

A variety of activities followed during the three days including small and whole group participation activities with our building groups and among mixed schools, grades and subjects. One activity focused on analyzing our communication styles. We discussed how these effected our communication and relationships with others of the same or different communication styles. We analyzed school and district specific data to facilitate decisions about our school goals for the upcoming school year and worked in groups discussing chapters of the previously mentioned book. This work carried over to my participation on my building School Improvement Team and as a leader in our Art Curriculum Team.

One primary benefit of this conference for me personally was that I was finally able to more clearly understand my building principal. After identifying and understanding his communication style and my own, I could see why I had been frequently frustrated when I would approach him with a question. I have been able to implement strategies to bridge this gap effectively. Knowing that I fell into a category of a director who makes quick decisions and would be inclined to continue forward to get a job done, now helped me better understand myself. He was identified as a thinker and needed time to think things through and weigh all the pros and cons thoughtfully before responding. Now I understand that because he did not give me an immediate answer to my questions, it did not mean he disapproved, as I had previously interpreted his inaction. I now know to send him an email or note in advance with my ideas, and then set up a time in the future to meet with him about a response. The result has been a more positive professional relationship that supports both of our communication needs.
5.2.8 Preparing for the art show and painting the tiles.

I started preparing for the art show. I approached my principal with a list of


glazes and under glazes I would need for the families to paint their tiles at the art show. I

was willing to use next year’s curriculum money to make the purchases, but I was told it

would be paid out of the principal’s fund. As soon as I received the under glazes, a group

of students volunteered to come in at lunch recess and make under glaze samples for the

art show. Students labeled the bisque fired pieces with an under glaze pencil then

painted three coats of each color onto the small shapes. These were glaze fired and hot

glued to large pegboard panels and displayed in each room where families would be

painting with under glazes. Families were carefully instructed to select their under glaze

colors from what they saw on the samples not based on what the under glazes looked like

in the bottles.

All of my students grades 1-5 saw the under glaze sample boards the week prior

to the art show. Each child was instructed that they were to be the teacher the night of the

art show and they were to teach their parent “What you see is not what you get!” This

statement meant that the color they saw in the bottle might not be the same as what it will

look like when fired. All students knew this prior to the art show and were proud to share

this knowledge with their family.

As I was beginning to create a vision of what the art show would look like, I knew

I was going to need many volunteers to make this happen. Parents were going to be

needed to hang over 2,000 pieces of student artwork prior to the art show. I was going to

need a volunteer at each table for each class in our school so they could instruct parents

with information about painting the tiles. I would need to set up these worktables in the
gym, commons and art room so that families could tour the hallways to see their child/children’s artwork on display and then go to the commons areas to paint their tiles. Volunteers would be needed to greet guests and direct them as to the flow of activities. I included with the information that went home about designing a family tile, that parents consider signing up for volunteer time prior to the art show, hanging work the night of the art show, over the summer or for next year during the school day. I had 58 parents return their tile designs with a volunteer time marked. This number of responses was more than doubled over any other art show volunteer request during my past 10 years in this building.

Students who had not turned in a family tile design were given new sheets to take home as many as four times, until I was confident that all families were included. Teachers and support staff all turned in a design in advance or spoke to me about their ideas directly. I was very concerned about having every family turn in a tile design. I spent hours of time checking off student names and cross-referencing them with brothers and sisters to make sure that all students had a design.

The ideas for the art show kept emerging. Even though every student was going to paint a tile, some students were a little disappointed that there were going to be a few changes this year, from the last two to three years. I generally have student artists in action set up in the gymnasium demonstrating newly acquired skills, techniques, new tools or extensions of learning during the art show. Artists in Action would not take place this year since all the space was needed for painting tiles. These same students would also need to be sure they had time to paint their tile with their families too. Over the past few years students have painted several of my vehicles during the art show as a collaborative work where all family members were encourage to participate. This
included a car, a mini van and a full size van during past years. This was a favorite activity for many students. I felt with the amount of time the tiles would require that there would not be time to clean up after such an activity this year, although I still liked the idea of a collaborative spontaneous artwork. We ended up giving participants a ball of clay and had them add to large clay slabs with holes down two sides of each slab. Later they were bound with colored wires to form a three dimensional school sculpture.

I prepared under glazes for the art show. This required selecting containers so that I was able to put small amounts of under glaze on all 30 tables. I remembered that a third grade science teacher had asked me if I would ever have a use for a large box of specimen containers they were not using with their new curriculum units. These were small but wide containers with lids. I had no concrete idea in mind when I accepted them from her but they seemed like perfect containers to use to distribute under glazes. I printed off 30 copies of every under glaze name. I had my student volunteers come in during lunch recess and tape the names to the containers, stack them by name and set them out on the countertops two days prior to the art show. I had a group of 12 parents coming in right after school the day of the art show, who poured the under glazes out of the pint size bottles into the small containers. These parents also took brushes, water cans, pencils, and all necessary supplies to the worktables.

I used the oldest child in each family as the location for the family tile information. On the tile design sheets I asked for all Wyandot students to be listed on the paper with the tile design. These were then sorted by classroom. I placed the correct number of bisque fired tiles and clipped together the stack of designs for each classroom into five gallon white plastic buckets that were clearly marked with the teacher’s name. I had obtained the buckets at no charge earlier in the year from ReArt, a recycling facility I
joined. This made it very easy to transport the tiles and designs quickly to the tables after school the day of the art show. I made a diagram of how I wanted the tables to be set up so the custodians and parent volunteers would be able to see where things went. Students constructed a sign to mark their classroom worktable.

5.2.9 Teacher tiles.

Many teachers were apprehensive about their drawing and painting abilities. I assured them that everyone would be successful and I would be glad to provide assistance as needed. Four of the teachers used combinations of clip art designs to assist with their arrangement and tile design. It was interesting to see how teachers among specific grade levels referred to one in their team as the “artistic one.” This person was generally the one selected to draw the design and paint their team’s tile.

The fifth grade tile includes a wide range of personal attributes that would be desired, units of study, and specific fifth grade special activities. The character words that bordered the tile include: respect, discipline, responsibility, honesty, trustworthiness, caring kindness, perseverance, and self-discipline. Units of study included work-study, literature circles, the solar system, history, math investigations and science. Special Activities that were represented included a large DI for Destination Imagination. This is a team of students that compete to be on this fifth grade only team of students. They work with an advisor and have the opportunity to compete in local, state and national competitions if not eliminated. This year our team did go to Nationals and placed second. The letters DI on the tile are adorned with the metal the team won. History Alive is an event again for our fifth grade students where actors share stories from the
past through drama and theatrical activities. Camp Wilson is a three-day camp that fifth grade students attend each year to focus on team building and environmental education.

The fourth grade team had chosen to arrange at least three different clip art images together to create their design, but then they asked students to do the painting for them. Each teacher group approached their tile in a different manner. The first grade showed caricature type drawings of each teacher on the team stacked into a pyramid to show their combined strength. The second grade team combined representations from some of their favorite science units, specifically the caterpillar to butterfly depiction. The third grade team was less imaginative and used a large number 3 with school type images. The fourth grade design was not understood by all, but makes light of the age difference of teachers in the team showing the bugs (older teachers) and the chicks (younger teachers). Special area teams most often depicted images of their areas of expertise. They all turned out well.

Illustration 7. Teacher tile, Grade 2 Team.
5.2.10 The night of the art show.

Students, parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins to Wyandot students were present and busy painting tiles. Four hundred and four families of the four hundred forty one families at Wyandot Elementary attended the art show this year. Parents passed greeted participants and handed out directions for painting tiles, see Appendix A, Illustration 80. Though the student art shows have always been well attended, this was a record number of families. Infants were present and toddlers as young as two years old were given paintbrushes to make a contribution to the tile painting. I met many parents that I had not previously met. One of my first grade students came with her aunt. Samantha had shared several situations where she and her aunt have attended art shows, galleries and museums together as well as participating in art making together. They had seen the work of Elijah Pierce and Aminah Robins, about which Samantha wanted to share many details with me. I was glad to see Samantha also brought her father with her to the art show. They both coached and encouraged Samantha to develop the work on their family tile. They contributed but did not take over. I was glad to see they too recognized abilities and interest of a first grader and were supportive of her interest. Samantha is very precise about her problem solving and decisions concerning the outcome of her artwork. I am amazed at her ability to decide that her work is completed and stop even when every one of her classmates is still working. Most of her peers would keep working just because they enjoy the process and the product is not as important. Samantha’s tile depicts images that represent her artistic interest.
Illustration 8. Painting tiles at the art show.

Illustration 9. A family who finished painting their tile at the art show.
Illustration 10. Transferring drawing to tile so it can be painted at art show.

5.2.11 Family tiles.

There have been 458 family tile designs turned in. Eighteen of these are new families that moved to the district at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year and painted their tiles in September. The tile designs demonstrate what our Wyandot families believe is important to share with others in our school community. Families, teachers, staff, students and visitors have been able to learn about our Wyandot community from understandings that they construct when they view our tiles. Images in the family tile designs were coded and sorted by category to create a better understanding for the overall impact of the tiles. Many tile designs included images from multiple categories. The categories and percentages are as follows:
Other 13%
Image of the Family 23%
Family Activities 43%
Cultural Images 35%
Flags 31%

Illustration 11. *Analysis* of images within family tiles.

5.2.12 **Significance of the tile designs.**

The learning started with the construction of knowledge required to create a tile that represented their family culture, heritage or family activities. In identifying these categories and understanding the importance this information had on the learning experiences of students, teachers and families. Here I present select tiles as representational of the types of information students learned.

Illustration 12. Family Tile.
Illustration 13. Family tile.

Illustration 14. Family tile.
The images varied greatly not only in meanings but drawing and painting skill, craftsmanship and authorship. In some families the only members who participated in the drawing of the design and painting of the tiles were the immediate family members of Wyandot students. In other families they brought in their expert artist. Some younger siblings insisted that their older siblings helped with their design and painting. There were several Asian families who brought extended family members with them to assist with the quality of the painted tiles. There was a grandmother (who spoke no English) of one of my Asian students that diligently worked throughout most of the art show painting an exquisite tile. It appeared to me as though she was well practiced in this skill of painting with under glazes. She was adamant about applying them using a layered watercolor technique. While another Asian mother (also non-English speaking) never
used any under glaze color straight from the tubs except for black. She mixed under
glaze colors on the end of her finger then applied them using an extremely small
paintbrush. I tried to question if she had brought her own brush with her as it was so
small and did not look like any I remembered from the art room. I am not sure if she
understood what I was asking but she smiled and said “Thank you!” to me several times
throughout the evening. While there was no contest or set recognition for quality of
painting, several families did introduce me to their “artist of the family.” These included
several grandparents, four or five cousins, two aunts and just one uncle of the
introductions that I recall. Of the families, which just the immediate family was present,
there was often debate over who had the skills to paint specific parts of the designs.
Often jobs or parts of the painting were clearly broken up so everyone painted. I think
the youngest child that I saw painting on a tile was two years old while some even
younger children were given paintbrushes and paper to paint with. This required many
families to work together in ways I believe were not typical of Wyandot families.
Creating art together with their family was new for most of my students; this is especially
ture of the fathers.

One of the primary goals of the tiles was to bring the community together. I
believe the art show did bring our Wyandot community together in a variety of ways.
That special evening on May 18, 2004, between 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm, over 400 families,
and an undetermined number of teachers and support staff, all shared one common goal
of painting their tile design. Many of the students and families who had indicated they
were not going to be able to make it to the art show because of sporting conflicts did end
up attending. Any family who had communicated this conflict of scheduling to me, I
simply responded that they do the best they could to come before or after their games or
if there were cancellations due to rain, to please attend. I let these families know that I
would have their tile and designs on their child’s table regardless. Families were observed
in acts of cooperation, negotiation, compromise and support.

Attendance at the art show exceeded my expectations. There was a severe storm
that evening that produced thunder, lightening and heavy rainfall. Of all of the soccer,
lacrosse, baseball, t-ball and swimming practices and games that were scheduled for that
evening, I only heard of one team that tried to wait out the storm and did not cancel. Our
attendance was outstanding.

5.2.13 Funding and grant writing.

While the PTO and my principal have been supportive of this whole school
project financially and otherwise, I had to obtain additional funding from outside sources.
The project cost was $6169.86. A breakdown of this cost is shown in Appendix A,
Illustration 79. This did not include the cost of the clay that had been purchased for the
2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years with regular art curriculum funds or materials
such as markers, paper, glue, rulers, paint, etc. for planning, posters and related works.
The cost of photocopies and copy paper was not estimated, although over 3600-copied
pages were produced for student handouts, assessments, parent information, invitations,
letters, parent/teacher surveys, and reflective writing. Human resources cost was not
calculated for the numerous teachers, student teacher, supports staff and parents who
contributed endless hours throughout the project.

While I did not understand going into the projects what the total cost would be or
how many grants I would need to write, I was confident that it would all work out and the
funding would be there. The first check that we received for the project was from Wal-
Mart. I had sent them a letter five months prior for funding of our pond project. They
never responded with a phone call or asked for additional information; they just sent a
check in mid September. Of course, no one in the office knew what the check was for.
Upon inquiry they sent it for what they had called a community project. Since this too
was a community project, they gave permission to apply the check to the purchase of the
450 disposable cameras that were needed.

That first check led to writing numerous grants and to a pattern of being
persistent. I wrote a grant for the Dublin Fund and was then invited to presented
information at a later Dublin Fund board meeting. The board was composed of a
number of people from the City of Dublin and business community members from the
Dublin Chamber of Commerce. My principal attended the presentation to show the
support of our school community. During the questions that were asked, one was an
inquiry about if I had written a grant for the Dublin Education Foundation suggesting this
may be a more appropriate source of funding? Since I had not yet done this and I now
needed more money, I did apply for funding with them as well. In the mean time, I got
word that the Dublin Fund had approved my request for $1,500.00 to pay for the visiting
artist, Amy Yaich. I was contacted by the Dublin Education Foundation and invited to
present my project at a board meeting that included the Superintendent of Dublin City
Schools, School Board members, City Council members, parents, and a Dublin City
School teacher. My principal attended and held a large book with photographs that
documented the first phase of the projects as I presented the ideas to the board. He spoke
of the parent and school community support of the project. They had received several
grant requests that they wanted to fund so they awarded only partial funding for all of the
approved projects that met their criteria. I requested $1,500.00 and received $380.00.
This required me to again seek additional funding especially since at this point I had revised my plan to include five murals instead of just one. The artist fee had now doubled from $1500.00 for the original single larger space to the now $3000.00 for the five murals.

I wrote a grant for the Dublin Arts Council. This grant did not involve any presentation, but I did include photos and student work from phase one of the project to demonstrate the learning that was taking place and the quality of work my students were producing. They were supportive of the project. Caroi Argiro of the Dublin Arts Council wrote (personal communication November 2, 2004):

The committee recognizes the importance of your project and spoke enthusiastically about the student and community impact the mural will have.

They appreciated that the project will involve all Wyandot families, and the diverse support you have achieved from staff, funders, school families and the community. They were impressed with the curricular connections being made with the project and felt that tying the project to the “good character” theme was strong.

They awarded only partial funding to all of all grants during that round. I received $400.00 from the Dublin Arts Council.

The PTO agreed to pay for the rest of the artist’s fees from the Artist in Schools Committee funds. Every student was going to be able to work directly with our visiting artist. This residency was very instrumental to our students’ success and the parents valued this opportunity of having their children work with a professional artist for such a long duration instead of just a fifty-minute class period. In most previous years, the Artist in Schools committee financially supported the funding of one artist per grade level.
to come in for a day to work with students for approximately one 50-minute period. This project enabled all students to have repeated contacts with the artist. She was present every art class over a five week period.

When I had conversations with my principal regarding funding, he always commented that he could use the principal’s fund or he would find the money somewhere if needed. On numerous occasions he qualified that he could use the funds in this manner since it was a whole school project and everyone was benefiting. He did end up funding many of the small expenses that are itemized in Appendix A, Illustration 79, but quickly added up. His support came to over $1,000.00 by the time all of the expenses were accounted for and then he paid for the cost of the DVD’s that were purchased in late May, 2005 to burn DVD’s for the video groups to have a copy of their work.

5.2.14 Students sharing tiles with classes.

Immediately following the art show, students shared their tiles with their class. They presented the stories behind their tile designs. The stories from my students across all grade levels demonstrated that there was far more depth, thought and meaning in these tiles than even I was able to interpret from studying their original tile designs. I had eight tiles that seemed to be simple abstract designs. My original assumption being that they resorted to the simpler designs due to their lack of confidence in realistic image rendering. To my surprise, even these abstract designs were embedded with considerable meaning for the students and their families who created them. These designs demonstrated more layers of meanings and complexity of ideas than the realistic tiles.

Ben showed his abstract tile to the class that was primarily a tile that had a line pattern on it. There where four long lines that intersected in the center of the tile and
several curved shorter lines connecting two of the longer straight lines. Ben stood up and confidently said, “This is my family tile. Each of these long lines represents one for members of my family. There are four long lines and four in my family. The two blue lines are for my Mom and Dad and the two red ones are for my brother and me. The short lines that make this pattern and curve to connect the long lines represent the things we do in our family together and things we have in common that connect us. Our lives all cross and depend on each other. The little dots show the other things that we each like to do that make us different from the others in our family.” I was shocked to hear that Ben had a very well planned out and thoughtfully organized tile. I thought it was simply an abstract design until he shared this story with the class.

Illustration 16. Ben’s abstract tile design.
Illustration 17. Painting family tile with Bengal Tiger.

Illustration 18. Fired Bengal Tiger tile.
One specific example that exemplifies the learning that took place was when Roshan was sharing with his class about the Bengal tiger that was painted on his tile. Of course most students who have not lived outside of the United States would not have ever seen an actual bangal tiger except in a zoo, this student who is from Bangladesh, India placed it in his tile for more significant purposes. First he explained, “You have to be really careful that you don’t go far from the villages because of the tigers.” The students in the class could not believe this was a real threat but they continued to ask him numerous questions about living in India. He also emphasized to the classmates that the other reason for the tiger was “a symbol of power and strength” in his country. The questions led to a discussion that included the primary form of transportation there, which was a rickshaw. Most of the students did not even know what this was let alone that there would be communities that would still use this today in this age of technology that they enjoy.

The real significance of sharing the tiles with their classmates was to better understand the families of the students in their class. Learning about the heritage, culture, traditions, and activities of these families facilitated questions and discussions among students that would not have otherwise been generated.

5.3 Summer 2004 Mural Activities

5.3.1 Firing tiles throughout summer 2004.

During the summer I came in to school to fire the clear glazed tiles. I was able to fire only about 28 tiles per kiln load. I have only four kiln shelves and was able to place seven on each shelf. This required approximately 15 kiln loads throughout the summer. Every firing required me to return to school twice more within 2-3 hours for each firing
so the kiln could be turned up from low to medium and then to high. Because I was attempting to work these trips in with my other activities, I needed access to the building during unusual hours that were restricted from general teacher access. Again, this caused me to go to my principal to ask for permission to have an unlimited access or no restricted hours on my FOB. Our building had recently upgraded our locking systems from key entry to an electronic FOB entry. This computerized system could be set to restrict access to the building. I found out the hard way that the teacher FOB’s in all-elementary buildings were set to allow access only from 7:00 am until 10:00 pm. Unlimited access was approved by central office enabling me to complete these firing schedules at the times best suited for my schedule. I was able to meet my goal of having all of the tiles fired by the end of July.

5.3.2 Preparing the wall.

Two custodians assisted with wall preparations to make the space for the mural successful. They were paid overtime wages to stay late the week prior to hanging the tiles to remove the original wall covering, repair and sand the drywall in the area where the mural was about to be placed. They had to remove the fabric-covered wallboards that were designed for stapling and take the wall down to the drywall that was underneath. Our principal agreed to have the janitors stay to complete the work. Since this was above and beyond their normal contracted job description, he would pay the overtime out of the principal’s fund. I came in and painted the wall when they were finished. I was now ready to begin to adhere the tiles to the wall.
5.3.3 Parents mounting tiles

Illustration 19. Photo in local newspaper about parents placing tiles on wall.

Illustration 20. Article in local paper about mural plans.
I had already gathered information on parents who were willing to come in during the summer to mount tiles from the original tile design planning sheets. I choose a date near the end of the summer, which worked with my schedule and then proceeded to call parents who had expressed an interest in helping. On Wednesday, August 18, 2004, five parents met me at school at 10:00 am to help secure the 450 clay tiles to the wall. I was unclear how long this process could take, so I told them we would work from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. At first I was disappointed that only 5 of the 13 parents who said they could assist during the summer were able to commit. It ended up being a good thing because more people would have been on top of each other. I had prepared lunch and beverages for the parents and the children who might come along.

Everyone worked hard and stayed focused. I demonstrated to the parents the basic idea that we would need to spread the adhesive onto the wall with the smooth edge of the trowel then comb the area with the notched edge getting the required thinness of adhesive. Then we would simply press the tiles firmly onto the wall. I demonstrated using the top right corner of the wall. We had two gallon buckets of adhesive, two trowels and two ladders. One mother who had shown up in a dress surprised me as to how quickly she jumped up on the ladder and started off across the top with the adhesive. Another grabbed the other bucket and started smearing adhesive down the right edge of the wall. I explained to the other parents how I had presorted tiles into ones that had mostly white backgrounds and ones that were mostly covered with colors allowing only small amounts of white to show through in their design. I explained to the parents that for the purpose of balance, we wanted to put approximately two white background tiles down and then one mostly colored background tile. Approximately one third of the total tiles had colored backgrounds. We quickly teamed up without much discussion. We
had two groups of parents working towards the same goal of masterfully securing all tiles to the wall without breaking any of the tiles. Two parents on the ground handed up tiles making decisions about the coloring and choosing to place the more warped tiles near the top. We decided they would be less noticeable if they were higher and that they would run a higher risk of being broken if the warped ones were placed lower. The remaining parent and I wiped up excess adhesive drips from the wall, wallpaper and the floor throughout the process and did whatever was necessary to keep things going. I glued three cracked tiles (with the two part epoxy I had on hand, just in case) including the one tile that did fall from the wall during the installation process. When these tiles were placed high on the wall no one noticed the cracks.

The tiles exceeded the original space that I thought would be required to use to mount them. I had not actually expected that we would end up with one tile from every family without using art time to design or paint them. We had already come in four rows from the outer edge of the wall space with tiles. My original idea was for two or three rows, although even after four rows, we still had more tiles. We extended the tiles further to the left continuing over the window and doorway to the left and then down the side of it as well. The tile area was no longer just a rectangle around the mural space. It was no longer symmetrical. This just gave me another reason to follow up with new families moving in to the area to complete a tile, since we had this additional space that needed to be filled to look complete.

The parents worked for the entire three hours with just five minutes to spare. I put food and beverages out for them. They wanted to finish in one day instead of coming back again and decided they would eat at the end after clean up. At 12:55 pm they had completed the wall. The children, who came along with their mothers, had
come and gone, back and forth from the playground several times, and eaten sandwiches, cookies and a few cans of soda. I provided lunch for the custodians that day as well as a thank you for their participation in the project and their willingness to prepare the wall for us.

5.3.4 Family ice cream social and unveiling.

The Friday before school started our PTO sponsored an ice cream social in conjunction with the unveiling, of the tile mural border. It was held at 4:00 on August 27, 2004, our workday prior to the kids arriving at school to start the year. Walk-throughs were scheduled from 3:00-4:00 pm so families could stop in and meet their teachers. This worked out well for teachers because as soon as we announced to come to the commons for the unveiling, the classrooms emptied out immediately. I had covered the wall with paper and placed orange cones around the area to keep people from tearing the paper away from the wall. Mr. P., our principal, and I tore down the paper just after Anna, a learning disabled student diagnosed with Asbergers, played a very loud drum roll for us.

The students and parents quickly scanned the wall attempting to locate their family tile. Several students who had moved on to middle school returned to find their tiles as well. Throughout the ice cream social, families gathered around the wall discussing various tiles and enjoying the discovery of which family created which tile. Families shared their tile with each other and explained the meaning of their family designs. This turned out to be a rather fun seek and find experience for many children and parents alike.
Illustration 21. Family tiles create the frame for future mural.

Illustration 22. Art teacher and principal unveiling the family tiles at the ice cream social.
Illustration 23. Families locating their tiles at the unveiling.

Illustration 24. Families locating their tiles at the unveiling.
5.3.5 **New family tiles.**

On the same day of the unveiling all new families had been invited to come to the art room between 3:00 and 5:30 pm during the walkthrough and ice cream social to paint their family tiles. See Appendix A, Illustration 81. This included new families of all grades including all of the new kindergarten families. This invitation was open to 37 families and 23 showed up to paint their tiles. The rest of the families made arrangements to come to the art room before school during September or meet their child for lunch and paint their tile during the lunch recess time. My goal was to have the tiles completed before the next phase of the murals began but in reality this is an ongoing project every time a family moves in throughout the year. I have since accepted the fact this will never really be finished. I will need to continue to offer all families this opportunity to be part of our Wyandot community and to be represented on our mural wall. It seems to be something the new families are very eager about doing and has become part of the new family tour of the building. See Appendix A Illustration 81 for example of the New Family Letter that went out to families inviting them to the unveiling and to paint their tile.
Illustration 25. New families painting tiles the day of the mural unveiling.

Illustration 26. New families paint their tile the day of the unveiling.

5.4 Fall 2005 Mural Activities

4.4.1 September town meeting.

Character Education was one of the themes our building decided to integrate throughout curriculum areas and across all grade levels. This had become the primary focus of the photography assignment I was about to give all Wyandot Families. At our first S.I.T. meeting after the school year began, we decided to have the teachers conduct the first Town Meeting and introduce each of the agreed upon Character Traits and this would serve as a kick off to the photography assignment and town meetings for the rest of the school year. Thereafter, each grade level would present about a specific trait at the monthly town meeting. The schedule was as follows:
Grade 5  (Oct.)  RESPECT
Grade 4  (Nov.)  CITIZENSHIP
Grade 1  (Dec.)  CARING AND GIVING
Grade 3  (Jan.)  RESPONSIBILITY
Kindergarten (Feb.)  HONESTY & TRUSTWORTHINESS
Sp. Ed.  (Mar.)  PERSEVERANCE
Related Arts (Apr.)  COOPERATION & SPORTSMANSHIP
Grade 2  (May)  SELF-DISCIPLINE

All teachers participated in the town meeting (including one who was sick through a cell phone call) and performed skits that gave examples of how these traits could apply to life at Wyandot. Students enjoyed seeing their teachers on stage acting out the character messages. I did a brief presentation to the school about the Family “Photography Assignment” and told the kids they would be getting their disposable cameras and the photo logs when they went back to their classroom. I had students who volunteered to come in during the lunch recess time help me bag the cameras which came in just two days prior with instructions and placed student identification stickers on them. Thursday so they would be ready to go home on Friday. They were sorted into large white buckets so that the camera went to the teacher of the oldest child in each family. The buckets were delivered during lunch recess on that Friday. Teachers received their cameras on the following Monday.

5.4.2 Arranging for disposable cameras and processing.

While I had received grant funds for the cameras and processing, I was still at this point looking for funds to support the additional time needed with our visiting artist to complete five instead of one mural. My thinking was that if I were able to get a local business to donate the cameras or the processing in return for advertising their name to
our 452 families and at the same time take advantage of the tax benefits for their donations to our schools, that I could use the original funds for the artist fees. I tried local retailers such as Kroger, CVS, and Cord Cameras and found that I was getting nowhere with actual donations of cameras or processing. Rosemary's Portrait Studio was willing to work with her distributors and negotiate a better cost than I was able to get elsewhere, even with Kroger offering to let us purchase them at cost. Rosemary worked with a distributor in New York and was able to get them for us at $4.35 per camera. She could have them to us in one week and she would also print the photos at cost. I made this known to our community that she was supportive of our project. Many of my students have regular portraits taken in her Dublin based studio. This was a win win situation for both of us. I felt as though we also built a rapport so that if I needed photo supplies or processing in the future she would be willing to work with us again.

5.4.3 Taking photographs of “good character” in Dublin.

Families and teachers were given the following information along with their cameras and photograph log. Students and families had from Friday, September 24, until Monday, October 18, 2004 to complete taking the 24 photographs. This allowed 24 days to complete the assignment as a family regardless of the number of children in the family. Teachers did not receive their cameras until Monday, September 27, but still had the same due date of October 18 for the cameras to be processed.
Who is involved? Every family, teacher and support staff member of our Wyandot School Community is expected to be actively involved in this collaborative project.

What do we need to do? Each family is being given one disposable flash camera, this information packet and a Photograph Log is attached to this information. Please put your name on the camera after it is opened. As a family you will decide what to photograph, and record each photograph with information on the “Photograph Log” provided.

What do we take photographs of? All of the photographs should document evidence of “Good Character” in our Dublin Community. Some examples may include:

RESPECT - Treat others with respect: follow the Golden Rule - Be tolerant of differences - Use good manners, not bad language - Be considerate of the feelings of others - Don’t threaten, hit or hurt anyone - Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

CITIZENSHIP - Do your share to make your school and community better - Cooperate - Get involved in community affairs - Stay informed; vote - Be a good neighbor - Obey laws and rules - Respect authority - Protect the environment

RESPONSIBILITY - Do what you are supposed to do - Persevere: keep on trying! - Always do your best - Use self-control - Be self-disciplined - Think before you act — consider the consequences - Be accountable for your choices

HONESTY / TRUSTWORTHINESS - Be honest - Don’t deceive, cheat or steal - Be reliable — do what you say you’ll do - Have the courage to do the right thing - Build a good reputation - Be loyal — stand by your family, friends and country

PERSEVERANCE - is being persistent in pursuit of worthy objectives in spite of opposition, difficulty, injuries, handicaps or discouragement, and exhibiting patience and the fortitude to try again when confronted with mistakes or failures

COOPERATION (SPORTSMANSHIP) - Play fair, take loss or defeat without complaint, or victory without gloating - Treat others as you wish to be treated - Respect others and one’s self - Impose self-control, be courteous, and gracefully accept results of one’s actions

SELF DISCIPLINE - is demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose, regulating yourself for improvement and refraining from inappropriate behaviors, maintaining self-control at all times, and doing your best in all situations
GIVING / CARING - Be kind - Be compassionate and show you care - Express gratitude - Forgive others - Help people in need

DIVERSITY - Ethnic variety, as well as socioeconomic and gender variety, in a group, society or institution

ACCEPTANCE - willingness to treat someone as a group member, agreement written or verbal, tolerating without protesting

TOLERANCE - the acceptance of differing view of other people for example religious, political, fairness toward people who are different or hold different views

PATIENCE - ability to keep waiting without becoming annoyed or upset - to stay calm in difficulties - ability to tolerate without complaint or loss of temper

COURAGE - is having the determination to do the right thing even when others don't; the strength to exhibit fairness, to be courteous, to gracefully accept the result of the contest, to attempt difficult things that are worthwhile

FAIRNESS - Play by the rules - Take turns and share - Be open-minded; listen to others - Don’t take advantage of others - Don’t blame others carelessly

What do photographs of “Good Character” look like? Each family may interpret these differently, which is why we are asking such a large population as our entire school community to complete the same assignment. This will help us recognize the strength we create when we unite and respect various viewpoints within our community and they are represented equally.

Creative documentation of “Good Character” in the Dublin Community is strongly encouraged! Stretch your imagination to its fullest to find a variety of different kinds of photographs to take. A few examples that could be included are listed below although there is no list of correct answers. This list is just to get you started. Please find ways to extend this list to fit your family’s understanding of our Dublin Community. I would also challenge every family to take this opportunity to utilize one or more of the Resources provided or other community resources to help extend your family’s understanding and knowledge of the community we live in.

Possible photo opportunities:
1. Historical sites, artwork, buildings, or places where a person or group of people associated with the site is known for being a strong community leader and displaying one or more of our above traits. (Many of the Dublin School Names are associated with these types of people.)
2. A photograph that documents the charitable work of a person, group, or organization in our community.
3. A family member or group actively doing deeds that benefit our community.
4. Dublin Arts Council’s “Art In Public Places”
5. Parks, nature preserves, green space, farms, gardens that are being or have been aided by man to protect or preserve them for the enjoyment of animals, a healthy environment or others.
6. Don’t just take photographs of people doing things, what other evidence of good character can be found without photographing a person?

Photo Tips:
1. Look carefully at all of the area inside the viewfinder before taking the picture. You may need to get closer, farther, move right, left, up or down to get rid of extra things in the photograph that you do not really want in your photographs.
2. Get close enough to the subject of your photograph to be able to tell what you think is important to see in the photo.
3. Take photographs from interesting angles. Try aiming the camera lens up, down, diagonal from or between the subject/s of your photograph.
4. Take indoor and outdoor photographs. Indoor photographs should always use a flash.
5. Get very close up to some things, or even photograph just a part of them.
6. Outdoor photographs will turn out better if the lens is not pointed directly into the sun.
7. It is OK to try a few different and interesting shots of the same subject matter.
8. Make sure everyone in the family has a chance to take some pictures.

Returning the cameras: All cameras must be returned in the bag it was in when your family received their camera. Students will not be given a second camera. The cameras and the photo logs are due at Wyandot on MONDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2004 by the end of the school day. Cameras may not be accepted if the photo log is not returned with the camera. We will have the film processed and prints made. Information will be coming home about the next phase of our process when the family photos are processed.

THE CAMERAS HAVE BEEN FUNDED THROUGH A GRANT FROM THE DUBLIN FUND. Special Thanks to the Dublin Fund and the Dublin City Chamber of Commerce.

Phase One: “Family Diversity Tiles”
This phase is almost completed. If your family has not yet designed and finished painting a family tile please contact me ASAP to set a time. Many new families and kindergarten families that do not have older siblings still need to do this. The art room will be open and supplies ready for families or just your child to complete their tile on Friday mornings before school from 7:30am-9:00am, and during your child’s lunch recess on Fridays during the entire month of October. Please be sure the tile is completed during October.
RESOURCES:

Local Dublin Community Resources:


2. www.dublinvisit.org Dublin Community Website has Dublin History, and a Walking tour of Historical sites in Dublin.

3. http://www.dublin.oh.us/ This website can provide links to Dublin City Parks and other information about Dublin.

4. http://www.ohiowildlifecenter.org/ Ohio Wildlife Center is an organization that helps protect birds and animals in our Dublin community and offers education to community members.

Character Education Resources:

5. http://www.charactered.net/ This site provides student, parent and Teacher information, lessons and activities.


7. www.charactercounts.org/ This is a site that provides educational reading and activities related to teaching good character.

8. www.pearlsoup.com/ is a great site for stories that demonstrate specific character traits.

9. www.wcps.net/athletics/sportsmanship/ This site provides information about good sportsmanship.

10. http://www.ethicsusa.com/ The National Character Education Center provides information about character education and many other helpful sites that are linked from this site.
5.4.4 Parent responses to photograph assignment.

Because students were given over three weeks to complete taking twenty-four photographs with their family, I never felt this assignment was asking too much. I was confident that they were given more than enough time. I also felt strongly that all of my students were capable of doing this assignment with some guidance and direction from their parents. I was expecting this would become another family activity much as the tiles did.

When I had conversations with students during this time, I had students who told me about a photograph they had taken they were excited about. Many students grasped the creative nature of this assignment, used this opportunity to show others activities they were part of that helped build “Good Character” or of an event that they felt was really stretching their understanding of a trait. I knew from my conversations with students that they for the most part were not having an issue with the assignment.

Four parents who approached me about the photo assignments took me back. One parent came to my room at about 8:55 in the morning on Wednesday, September 29 and told me this assignment was beyond the comprehension of her children. It was too difficult and she herself did not feel she could do it. “How am I supposed to take pictures of things like honesty, trust, and self discipline?” She said, “This is very difficult to do.” I responded by letting her know that I was glad to hear that she found the assignment challenging because that was the purpose. I wanted to cause families to think, question these definitions and stretch their current understandings of these character traits. By grappling with what they are, and what they are not, through discussions with their family that her children will have a much better understanding of how these traits can be
identified in our community. While I held my ground with the importance of the assignment, I was respectful and allowed her to maintain dignity throughout the conversations while expressing my belief that her children were capable of doing this. I offered a few suggestions and encouraged her to explore others. On three other occasions I had parents tell me the assignment was difficult. All three times I again responded that this was a good thing and that I did not expect it to be easy, but certainly attainable for all of my students and their families.

On the positive side I had several more parents stop to tell me they had the opportunity to explore with their children in ways they would not have otherwise explored. Some were quite proud of their accomplishments and some just told me the stories associated with getting the picture. Several had explored areas of the community where they had not been, such as some of the art in public places sculptures. One family explored the history and purpose of the frog sculpture in the center of downtown Dublin to discover that it represented the Annual Kiwanis Frog Jumping competition that yearly raised thousands of dollars for charity. In fact, it aroused so much interest for the family that after researching it they are already scheduled to participate in the summer event this year.

It was the surprisingly negative responses from the four parents that prompted me to put together a survey that I sent home on Monday, October 11. I wanted to find out what parents really felt overall about the projects, not just the ones that came to speak directly to me. This first survey was given out one week prior to the cameras being due and was to be turned in the same day as the cameras. This first survey is the one I sent to teachers and support staff while the second survey is the one I sent to parents. Of the four hundred forty-two families that received the survey, one hundred forty-three
returned the survey. Twenty-seven of the support staff and teachers in our building returned the survey out of thirty-six. I have indicated the percentages to demonstrate how each group answered the questions on the survey below. The black type shows the original survey and the red type indicates the tabulations I added.

5.4.5 Teachers survey results.

**Wyandot Elementary Community Mural: Diversity and Character Education**

**Survey for Teachers and Support Staff Fall 2004**

1. I believe there is a need at Wyandot Elementary to inform students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and make obvious how our diversity builds strength in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

2. Creation of the family/staff diversity tiles is an innovative approach that will increase awareness and acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

3. The mural will help build pride in our school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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4. The mural will provide opportunity for all members of our Wyandot community to have representation in the mural will present potential to build a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

5. Students, families and staff are being encouraged to explore and expand their understanding or boundaries of how they think about good character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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</table>
6. As a teacher/staff member, I plan to utilize opportunities to integrate Language Arts curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs, or the overall mural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

7. As a teacher/staff member, I plan to utilize opportunities to integrate Social Studies curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs or overall mural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

8. In taking the photographs of good character in our Dublin community I will be extending my knowledge of my community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

9. As a teacher, I am getting to know other Wyandot community members better through diversity tiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</table>

10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return this survey to Sharon Buda by Monday, October 18, 2004. NOTE: Cameras are to be returned to school by this date also.

5.4.6 Teacher survey reflections.

Most of the teachers were supportive of the ideas and initiatives being proposed in the character education and integrated curriculum unit. Since this
was a previously agreed upon school goal many teachers were already busy planning activities that would go along with the murals at the time the surveys were distributed. There are a small percentage of teachers that were undecided or disagreed with the statements on the survey. Since I received no written responses with the survey from teachers, I can only speculate why.

In the past when I have initiated school wide curriculum units, I notice that there are a small percentage of teachers who do not seem to have the capability to comprehend or be able to visualize artistic processes. They often ask questions such as, “What will it look like before the process has even started?” When I explain that I will not know until we make it they seem to be bothered that I do not know the outcome in advance. I can assume these may be the teachers who were undecided on the surveys. As for the teachers who were in disagreement, I can only guess it may be two teachers that have been teaching in the same grade for a long time and are very resistive to change especially if it might mean extra work for them.

5.4.7 Parent survey and results.

Wyandot Elementary Community Mural: Diversity and Character Education Survey for Parents Fall 2004

1. I believe there is a need at Wyandot Elementary to inform students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and make obvious how our diversity builds strength in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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102
2. Creation of the family/staff diversity tiles is an innovative approach that will increase awareness and acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</table>

3. The mural will help build pride in our school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</table>

4. The mural will provide opportunity for all members of our Wyandot community to have representation in the mural will present potential to build a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

5. Students, families and staff are being encouraged to explore and expand their understanding or boundaries of how they think about good character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

6. As a parent, I will be able to teach my child/children about values that are important to our family as we take our character education photographs for the mural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<td>15%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
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7. As a parent, I have been able to teach my child about our own heritage or family traditions when we made our family diversity tile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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8. As a parent, we are getting to know other Wyandot community members better through the tiles of other families, teachers and staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
9. In taking the photographs of good character in the Dublin community our family will be extending our knowledge of our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
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<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<th>Disagree</th>
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<tr>
<td>49%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return this survey to school with your child by Monday, October 18, 2004. NOTE: Cameras are to be returned to school by this date also.

5.4.8 Parents’ comments and my reflections.

Some of the individual comments that I received from parents about this project at this point hand written on the survey surprised me. There were families who returned cameras with very few photographs taken and sent back comments that they did not have time. Since the families were given three weeks and one of those was also a three-day weekend, I found this comment to hold little merit. One parent commented, “The project with the cameras is above and beyond what families should be expected to do . . . taking pictures of 14 character traits is overwhelming.” While the same parent continued the comments, “I think the tile project was sufficient. The photographs were too time intensive. I think it would have been a great 5th grade year-long project.” I never indicated in the directions that they had to take every character trait so this is in part a misunderstanding as well and I did like the fact that she offered a suggestion that she felt it would be more manageable as a fifth grade project. Two others who responded with disagreement indicated the assignment was not at the level of comprehension of a first
grade child; it was an assignment for the parents. While it was obvious that this would require discussion and time would need to be spent with first graders to do the assignment; it was intended to be a family assignment. I felt the concept was comprehensible for first graders. This belief was later affirmed in my many conversations with them. I have no doubt that they were able to grasp the concepts with adult guidance to get them started.

A similar reaction was “This is done on a daily basis without parents getting additional homework!” Yet another family that had some disagreement indicated, “our children already accept differences. They are colorblind . . . As a parent, we have taught our family traditions, we didn’t need a tile” concluding with “this was a waste of time and money.” My thoughts were that this parent definitely did not comprehend the depth or complexities of this project, nor understand how this could strengthen what was being taught at home. The value in not just recognizing their family heritage but accepting the many various families in our community, and that diversity is not just about skin color. I knew I needed to do far more education with the parents of our school.

One of the dads who completed the survey with eight of the ten responses disagree or strongly disagree commented,” I support the concept and development of a mural. Art in the school such as that is well justified and desired. I disagree with an underlying political/cultural agenda. Leave my ethnicity, race, etc. out of our school. I do not need the school to tell me or survey me about how I do or do not support diversity and whether I teach my child about our ethnic background. You need to FOCUS ON ART not cultural politics!” It is most obvious we have differing philosophies about the role of education. If I am to prepare my students for their future, certainly understanding

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one's ethnicity and being accepting of others is important. I want our students to understand that our differences give us more strength as a whole community.

Another family's comment about the character education photographs included they "need help stretching the ideas since we can't take photo's of people." This too, is a matter of misunderstanding somewhere along the way. I never participated in any conversation with students or parents, nor did it indicate anywhere in the directions that we did not expect to have people in the photographs. The only thing I can think of on this one is that this may have been the family that was at St. Brigids last year and they decided not to include photographs of people in their mural.

My conclusions about this first set of surveys from parents was that there were many misconceptions that I felt could be turned around. I felt that if some parents specifically believed this projects was beyond the realm of comprehension for our first grade students then it would become evident when we had our classroom discussions to select and defend the one photograph that each child felt was the strongest representation of a specific character trait. I would know for sure if this were valid when we got to that point in this project. Most of the little misunderstandings about directions I was not truly concerned with at this point. I believed that the other statements of disagreement would be resolved through the unfolding of the unit and an extensive amount of education and communication with parents. This required me to be sure parents were receiving as much information as possible in regards to documenting their student's learning and education about the complexities of the unit.
5.4.9 *Parent newsletters sent home.*

I wanted to increase parent communication and participation in this project. I redesigned my Art Newsletter format so that I could include more information and better quality photographs. I sent home this new newsletter to parents explaining again about the character education photographs. This newsletter also informed parents of what students were currently doing in art with the creation of an art shirt project, which included a study of Jackson Pollock and Action Painting. The newsletter also introduces my student teacher from Ohio Dominican, Mrs. Barb Stoll. See Appendix A, Illustration 83 and 84 for text.

Illustration 27. October Art New. See appendix---- for full copy.

The second newsletter, which follows, helps educate parents about the mural processes. The newsletter reflects much of the information that the students learned about in their discussion and PowerPoint presentations in the classroom. Primary topics include introduction of William Wegman and *The Tilted Chair*, 2002. The information
introduces our visiting artist, Amy Yaich. It also explains about the similarities of our mural to the St. Brigid mural that some of them may have already seen. See Appendix A, Illustration 85 and 86 for text.


5.4.10 Presentation to all students about Wegman painting and Amy Yaich.

Two weeks prior to the arrival of our visiting artist Amy Yaich, students were shown a PowerPoint presentation and had interactive discussions about influences that have effected decisions in our mural process. What the students learned and understood from the presentation continued to impact our decisions. In the PowerPoint presentation students become familiar with William Wegman’s body of work, which was mostly photographs of his Wiemaraner dogs. Then they were introduced to the mural painting that is displayed in the Columbus Museum of Art, *The Tilted Chair*, 2002. This painting greatly impacted my thoughts about creating these murals with my students and led me to choose this specific process of using photographs to guide the mural painting. This is the
first real visual connection students are exposed to that helps them understand the connection of how their photographs will be used to guide their own murals. In the same Power Point presentation students are introduced to information about our visiting artist, Amy Yaich. They learn some personal information about her and see some of her prior murals. Approximately one fourth of the students have seen the mural that Amy Yaich and students at St. Brigid completed during May of 2004, which is in the cafeteria of this catholic school located just over one mile away from our school. Students who have not seen this mural were encouraged to visit it with their family. It was stressed that the topic of our mural is different than their topic but the process will have many similarities. Students watch a brief video clip that was made by Larrie Habel, art teacher at St. Brigid, which explains the process of the mural made with Amy Yaich in their school. See Appendix A, Illustrations 87-92 for Power Point presentation.

*The Tilted Chair*, 2002, heavily influenced the process to be used for our murals. I wanted students to understand how this painting inspired me to consider using this process with them. I value the exposure this provided for students to see how one artist can influence, and yet not copy their work. This was a powerful lesson for my students to understand and participate in first hand. In this situation my students were clearly able to take the inspiration from one William Wegman’s process, of using photographs to guide the mural painting, and apply it to our own community and needs. Students were able to see how artists pull bits and pieces of information together to communicate new ideas in new ways. Students demonstrated the ability to interpret and synthesize ideas and concepts to create new meaningful representations.

5.5 Selecting Photographs for Murals and Preparation for Teamwork

5.5.1 Collecting cameras and processing.

While most of the cameras were returned on time with close to complete rolls, 35 families or 4% had not completed the assignment. Fourteen cameras were returned after the deadline, but were still completed and I was able to take them to be processed with the other cameras. The cameras were dropped off at Rosemary’s Portrait Studio at noon on Tuesday, October 19, and I was told they would be ready on Thursday, October 21. I was not expecting them to be ready so quickly.

5.5.2 Initial photo selection process.

One week prior to artist, Amy Yaich, arriving to help us with our mural process the students received their photographs, which had been processed and printed from their processed disposable cameras. They spent one art class going through their photos with their photo log in hand. Students had made notes about what they photographed and what character trait they had intended for it to demonstrate. They were asked to be critical of their photographs and start by removing photographs that were too dark, too light or had other flaws in the quality of the photograph. Some students had a finger over part of the photograph. Students were asked to weed out photographs that the action or activity was too small to be able to see what was happening.

From the remaining photographs in their zip lock baggies, students were to choose one photograph that they felt best showed an example of “Good Character” in Dublin. They were to consider artistic quality of the photographs at this point as well. We reviewed interesting camera angles and varied shots that may not always need to be
straight on the subject or centered in the middle of the photograph. Discussion included that it was O.K. that the photo did not instantly give away the character trait. Just as with many pieces of art, there are sometimes hidden layers of meanings or we may need to study the image for clues to the meanings. We considered that this would add interest and would make people want to spend more time discovering these understandings in our murals.

Students spent the art class discussing and narrowing their selection to just one photograph for possible inclusion in the final murals. Every student was given the opportunity to place his or her selected photograph onto the large classroom poster board. Students who did not turn in a camera were asked to work with a student the class and were to turn in a photograph that was explained to them by another student so that everyone was represented. All the poster boards were arranged with the other three or four poster boards from their grade level and put on display in the commons for everyone to see and discuss the photographs. Students not only were eager to share their photographs with their friends in their class, but they gathered around the photographs at lunch, before school, after school and any other chance they found to come visit the commons to look at the photographs and share them with others.

Teacher and parents also congregated around the photograph displays. Several parents insisted on finding out which photograph their child had selected. It was up to the student to share this information with their parents. I purposely had students place name stickers on the backside of the photographs because I did not want the favoritism of friends and siblings to influence the final selection of the photographs to be included. Teacher and staff photographs were not displayed separately, but instead interspersed with the class photographs.

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5.5.3 Initial brainstorming process with the kids about possible related projects.

I had planted the seeds of my thought with my students, that this was their project. When the visiting artist, Amy Yaich, arrived she would help facilitate student learning. We would also have some limited assistance from our computer specialist and some parents may be available during this time to help with student learning activities. I told them to forget whatever they thought we were going to do or make and allow their minds to explore all possible ideas for now. We don’t have to do any of the ideas or we may choose to do any number of them. I expressed concern that if everyone wants to paint the mural and only be painters then that could be limiting our possibilities. I told them I knew of other schools where students also created their own movies about the mural processes. That was an option if they decided to make movies, but could they make any other form of art that would communicate ideas about our mural process or the big idea of “good character” in Dublin? I could barely keep up with the quick flow of the students’ ideas. They were so excited and responded immediately to this prompt. Movies came up as a definite in every class. Others included inviting parents to see the movies and the murals when they were done. Other ideas included:

- Timelines
- Scrapbooks
- Web Pages
- Books
- Sculptures of many differing mediums: clay, wood, paper mache, metal
- Individual paintings
• Signs around the school to let others know about the murals
• Posters in stores in Dublin
• We could have babysitting.
• We could sell food.
• Write an article to be in the newspaper.
• Decorate the building with streamers
• Sell popcorn at the movies
• Bake Sale to raise money

Many classes came up with similar ideas; it was apparent that students had ideas they were passionate about and they wanted to be involved. When every class had generated a list that represented their ideas, I analyzed them for commonalities. I determined that if I broke down the ideas into four groups I would be able to make every idea fit into one of the four categories. I presented the idea of making these four categories to become the four teams within each classroom. They would need to define the responsibilities of each team. They would need to determine who would do what job or jobs within the team. It was important to plan and discuss as a group, so that there was a plan, and everyone was not doing the same things.

I wrote the four team names: Video Team, Painting Team, Documents Team and Advertising Team on a large white tag board with their teacher’s name written across the top. We briefly discussed what kind of activities each team would do so that students clearly understood the role of the different groups. Students were then called up by table and asked to place their name on a list. I encouraged students to make decisions based on their skills and interest, not on their friend’s choice of team. I feared this approach might result in far too many painters, but I was willing to give it a try. Only two classes had
teams that were too large to manage. One class had a very large video team and another a large painting team. When I told students that it would be difficult to work with a group of nine or ten students on one team because it would be hard to share materials or resources with that many at one time; I had students voluntarily move to another group to balance the teams out. Three students asked after working with a slightly larger team if they could move to a smaller team and I allowed this to take place. I told the students that after we were finished with the photographs then the work they would be doing within their team would become important.

5.5.4 Preparation of mural panels.

I spent much more time than I anticipated getting the mural panels ready for painting. First of all, Lowe's Hardware had told me I could order 6'X 8' masonite panels and all I needed to do was place the order three days in advance so they could have them delivered directly to my building. When I called six days prior to Amy Yaich's first visit with us, I found this information was incorrect. They had only 4'X8' panels. This was not large enough for the space in our tile wall area. I called to several other hardware and lumber stores and found that only if I were placing a special order for large quantities of masonite panels could I get anything larger than 4'X8'. I ended up purchasing 4'X8' panels at Lowe's and placing one and almost half of another panel together to construct five 5'7"X8' panels. To do this I had to laminate two layers of panels together. I placed the panels on the floor of the art room and using liquid wood glue between the layers of Masonite to achieve this. They were weighted down by flipping my art room tables over top of the drying panels to hold them together firmly. I did this on a Friday after school so I could have them dry over the weekend. On Monday morning I came in and stood the
panels on end. Each panel ended up weighing approximately 40-45 pounds. I had students help prepare the panels. The panels needed to be primed and painted white so we had a fresh bright surface to begin with. Students who came to our school latchkey program get to school as early as 7:00 am. I asked for student volunteers to paint the panels one morning before school. What they did not finish, I had students come in during lunch recess to complete.

Illustration 31 Amy Yaich, Artist in residence.

5.5.5 Visiting artist Amy Yaich arrives.

On Monday, November 1, 2004, 9:25 am, our visiting artist, Amy Yaich, arrived fifteen minutes into my first class of the day. I was with my fifth grade class and we were gathering the fifth grade photo displays to bring back to the art room. We have five fifth grade classes with approximately 23 to 24 students per class. Mrs. Merkle’s class was in art. They were very excited to meet Amy. She walked into the room wearing a
bright blue printed top with a Middle Eastern print in the fabric, black pants and a bandana on her head. I quickly showed Amy the prepared Masonite panels as well as the fifth grade photos. I briefly explained where we were and that all the classes had selected one photo. I showed Amy how the classes displayed their selected photographs on the poster boards and that what she was looking at was all of the fifth grade photographs.

I introduced Amy to the class and she quickly jumped in to lead the discussion and the narrowing down process with the photographs. Amy knew that these photographs had been selected by students to demonstrate “Good Character” in Dublin. She started at the top and asked students to come up and tell their story about why they selected this photograph. She frequently asked questions to get the students to think deeper about the meaning or multiple layers of meanings in a photograph. Amy demonstrated an ability to first relate to the student with a question that demonstrated that she understood the intent of the student’s comment, but then most often bounced back with another question to further synthesize the information, make inferences about the information or to attempt to get the student to make more meaningful connections with the photograph and their community.
Amy learned some information about the Dublin community because she had just worked with students five months ago at St. Brigid. It was evident that this helped her relate to some of the students’ references more easily with other Dublin landmarks, or locations common to most of the Dublin students she was not as familiar with. We had many unexpected surprises as students shared their photographs.

Student presentations to the class about their selected photographs and the narrowing down of the photographs took four days. Since every class comes to art just once each four days, by the end of this time all students’ voices had been heard. It was now time to quickly narrow the number of photographs.
The students decided to do this based on many different elements. Some photographs were eliminated based on photographic quality, for example: too light, too dark, and too small to tell what it was about. While some students wanted to eliminate a photograph based on photographic quality, some of the photographs remained anyway because it was the only photograph or the strongest photograph, which showed that specific idea. Many times the story and strength of the student's argument or the impact of the concept behind the photograph took precedence over quality as students voted on decisions. At times, even what I originally thought was a photograph that was a good quality photograph and based on my personal interpretation showed strong evidence of good character, they were eliminated by popular vote because the student did not provide a meaningful defense of the photograph. We encouraged students to try to clearly tell us why their photograph would be important to our mural not just what the specific content was that they liked in the photograph. We encouraged students to provide in-depth meaning and support their feelings about the photographs. When students were vague, we tried to prompt them to go further. Some students were not able to clearly communicate their ideas because of limited English language ability.

Some photographs were eliminated because of the sheer number of photographs that represented the same idea. Most often these were sportsmanship photographs of a team. In one unique situation on the fifth grade mural, it was decided to cut several photographs of the firemen in the fire station and layer them together almost like a collage. This was also done in another case with a trash-recycling bin on the third grade mural.

A large discussion occurred when a student really wanted an Oklahoma State Flag photograph to be kept. There were a number of students who felt that since there were
not many Oklahoma State fans at our school, that it did not deserve to remain in the fifth
grade mural. Other students were more sympathetic to her loyalty to this team and felt
that even though she had moved away from Oklahoma, they admired her commitment to
continue to support this team. The photograph caused discussion in every fifth grade
class and may have been one of the most controversial photographs selected. Students
did end up including this flag photograph in the final mural because they rationalized that
our community is accepting of all differences. They felt that by including a flag that only
one student felt strongly about, actually demonstrated their strength of conviction in
accepting everyone into our community. Wow! It was evident these concepts of
character education were truly being internalized by the students the further we discussed
them.

Illustration 33. Oklahoma University Flag.

Another example of a photograph that generated truly remarkable thought
processes on the part of the students was centered on a photograph of two students
playing a game. The two girls were shaking hands over the board game. The student who took the photograph and submitted the photograph for selection contended it showed good sportsmanship. Many others questioned the authenticity of the handshake assuming that the photograph was merely staged and that they believed that no game was ever even played. When Amy and I inquired with classes as to the difference that it made in the photograph being selected, many agreed that it looked staged, and it therefore was staged, and thus it should not be included in their mural. All of the classes agreed that they needed to find out if it was staged. I found this to be a most interesting concept since most of what they see in the media and that influences their decisions most everyday is staged and not at all reality, though I never expressed this conflict with the students. After tracing down the original student who submitted the photograph and the students playing the game, we found out that they did in fact actually play the game and they did shake hands at the completion of the game. All classes agreed to keep the photograph for this reason. They now felt strong convictions as to the strength of this photograph’s ability to communicate good sportsmanship in their mural.

Illustration 34. Girls shaking hands after playing board game.
A first grade girl submitted a photograph of a small tree with a plaque on the ground. She said this demonstrated responsibility because this boy was now dead. He had died in an airplane accident almost two years ago, but when she sees this tree she is reminded of him. He was a neighbor who spent quite a bit of time with her and her family. She said she learned many things from him and he was a responsible boy when he babysat for her family. Since many of the other students also knew this young man personally or heard of this accident, they felt compelled to leave this photograph in their mural because they now knew the story behind the photograph. They also pointed out that this was not just a plain tree. Some people decided to plant the tree with flowers around it in his memory. This showed that the people who did this for him were being responsible for the tree, watering the flowers and making the nice plaque to go with them. This discussion with first grade students demonstrated the depth in understanding the concept and scope of our responsibility as citizens in our community.

Illustration 35. Tree planted to honor a high school boy who died in a plane crash.
Another first grade discussion that focused on responsibility was inspired by a photograph of a family at a picnic table. When we originally viewed this photograph, most of us thought it was a photograph of a family at a park having a picnic. A discussion about responsibility emerged as one student thought the photograph included setting the table for the picnic and thus the photograph showed responsibility. Another student thought that having a picnic outside showed responsibility to the animals and insects because they would be able to survive from the crumbs left behind from the family picnic so it was a good thing to eat outdoors instead of indoors. Just as another student shared with us that yes, eating outdoors was a good idea, but he was concerned that if the crumbs were too large then an insect would choke on the crumbs and this may not be a good thing. The student who submitted the photograph spoke up and told us we were all wrong that there was no food on the table at all. He was on a weekend camping trip with his family when the photograph was taken and he was being responsible because he took his homework to do even while on a family trip in the outdoors. After all the discussion about this photograph, the students insisted on keeping it in the mural. Even though some of the students did get off track with their discussion, I believe processing this information with first grades students did expand their understanding of the concept of responsibility. I truly never considered having a picnic outdoors as being responsible to the animals and insects until then.
Illustration 36. Student and his mother at picnic table.

At many of the grade levels there were several photographs of the American Flag. Most often students associated this with respect for their country. There was one first grade boy who really exemplified responsibility and honor in his story behind the photograph he brought of the American flag flying on the flagpole. His scout troop had been using a camp for their overnight excursion. They had noticed how tattered and worn the flag was that they posted on the pole in their morning ceremony. They decided as a troop to raise money to buy the camp a new flag. The boys used some of their earnings from their popcorn sale to do this. They brought the flag to the camp and put it up, then took the photograph. The scout continued to explain to the rest of his class as they listened attentively to his story how they had to burn the flag to get rid of it. Most of the children in the class did not know that a flag should not be just be thrown into a trash can; thus an authentic learning experience was taking place as the students asked questions to our quite knowledgeable cub scout about this process. The telling of his
story and the answering questions went on for over ten minutes. The students were genuinely interested and learned new things about showing respect for their country and the flag.

Illustration 37. American Flag at Boy Scout Camp.

Listening to the stories connected with the photographs clearly shows that the families taking the photographs, as well as those listening to the stories, are extending their connections and meanings of the character traits selected. Coming up with a way to document good character in their community was just the beginning of this internalizing process. As students had to narrow their selections more and more, you could see their connection to the beliefs about the strength of the message become more important to them. Defending their photograph to others with the hope of leaving an impression that would convince others to want to include their photograph in the final murals certainly
helped to deeply embed these concepts. The fact that students of all grades were able to verbalize to their class why they took and selected this photograph for consideration above other photographs required students to prioritize and clearly express their ideas. They had to make decisions about which ideas were strong. They quickly realized their idea had to be valid, that they must be able to answer questions presented by their peers and by Amy and myself.

The democratic process used by students to eliminate photographs gave students ownership for what was included and what was excluded. The process was lengthy and continued for several days. This was an important process for the students to go through because it provided a common understanding and commitment to their inclusion in their grade level mural. At times, conversations that were about a photograph’s significance had to be retold by Amy or myself. Students of an entire grade level were selecting photographs for their grade level mural although they only had direct discussions with the other students in their class in the art room. They never met as an entire grade level at once to make the decisions. Amy and I had to interpret and retell the students’ original stories to be able to share them with other classes. We did the best we could to deliver the students’ intended meanings. At times this became difficult with as many as 120 students in the fifth grade alone.

5.5.6 Parent Volunteers.

In a newsletter, I had asked parents to sign up if they were able to assist with our projects. Parents signed up for one or more days to come in and volunteered to assist with classes for a morning or afternoon block of time. The day Amy came to our school, I had a non-English speaking parent who showed up with my first fifth grade class in the
morning. I was not really sure why she was there so I introduced my self to her and she gave me her name as well. “Me, Hitomi” and she smiled and then added, “Hiromi my daughter!” She was the parent of one of the Japanese girls in this fifth grade class. Her daughter was shy and spoke very limited English. She used her daughter's palm pilot to look up a few words then she said, “Um, in Japan... um, I studied art.” She paused and smiled then added, “I help.” That was good enough for me. I welcomed her to the art room and she showed up almost everyday there after. She did many things to help prepare materials and the classroom environment. This was appreciated because of the busy pace that was common throughout the process. She was a tremendous help to Amy and me. The majority of the other parents just came in and out a day here and a day there, which was somewhat beneficial, however, it just took so long to get them on the same page with what we were doing or what I could tell them to expect, that I had to question if parents being here just for a single visit was worth the loss of my direct teaching time with the students.

Illustration 38. Parent who helped throughout the process.
5.5.7 *Scanning and printing selected grade level photographs.*

Once the photographs for each grade level were narrowed down, parents were asked to assist with scanning the photographs, and making a color copy so that we would not paint on the original photographs during the process of the mural painting. Two parents at a time worked for two days to scan, print, and cut the photographs to be used. We put the original photographs away for later use. Students had already placed a sticker with their name and classroom teacher on the back when they originally selected their photograph. It was decided to have parents take responsibility for the scanning since we have only one scanner in our school and the classes were not able to move forward until they had the scanned photographs.

5.5.7 *Placing the photographs on the mural panels.*

Day one of working directly on the mural panels involved the placement of the photographs onto the blank white panels that the students had prepared. This placement process turned into a lesson about composition. We started by handing each of the students in one class one or two of the photographs with a thin layer of adhesive from a glue stick applied on the back. The students were asked to look at the panel and decide where they felt the photograph should be placed. The students randomly placed the photographs they were given and returned to their seats to see how they all worked together. On every mural except for the second grades', the photographs were very evenly placed. There was a similar amount of space between each photograph. Amy and I questioned the students if they thought that was a visually pleasing arrangement. We examined some to the close up photographs of *The Tilted Chair*. Students noticed that in
his painting some of the postcards were close, some farther apart, some touched each
other, and some areas had larger open spaces. All of the classes decided to make changes
in the arrangement of the photographs to make it more visually interesting. This could be
accomplished in a variety of ways. The classes analyzed prints of artist’s paintings and
they used the class word wall of principles and elements of art to facilitate conversation
about how other artists arrange visual elements in paintings and then used that to guide
the decisions about placing their photographs.

On the second day, we explained to the classes the process that the first classes
had gone through. They too used the principles and elements to discuss and facilitate
their judgment and decision-making about the photograph placement. We told the
second class to use their “fresh look” at the photograph arrangements; and then the class
voted on photographs to be move as students made suggestions. A few decisions from
each class actually brought about changes.

The second grade was the exception to this process. For a reason unrecognizable
to either Amy Yaich or myself, the second grade students had placed the photographs in a
very visually pleasing arrangement the first time. We still gave students the choice to
move them, but they all agreed that they liked the way the photographs created
movement on the big white panel. They decided this was good and to leave them alone.
They had both clusters and broad open spaces. There was balance, but it was not
symmetrical. They were placed in a way that created visually pleasing movement across
the panel. Both Amy and I felt this was the strongest panel in terms of composition
created by the placement of the photographs even after the other grade levels rearranged
their placement of photographs.
5.5.9 Last minute details, getting ready for our small group work.

On Tuesday, November 16, we were ready to begin our actual work in our student-selected groups. I had the fifth grade mural leaning up against the wall on one side of the room. Behind the panels I had taped large sheets of tag board to the wall so students would not have to worry about getting paint on the walls of the art room as they worked. I had placed large plastic tarps on the floor and taped them down to the area under the mural panel so the floor was protected. All of the paints were arranged on a large metal cart that was used throughout the process to keep the paints and brushes together and off the floor once the lids were placed back on for the night. The paints we used were interior house paints of all colors. Some of these paints had come to me as a donation for this project and had been dropped off at our school earlier in the year. Amy also provided a great deal of the paint and a number of very large paint brushes for students to use during the painting process.

The plan was that we would try to keep the murals private in the sense that only 5th grade teachers and students would have access to viewing the 5th grade panel during its creation. The same process was followed with each grade level only having visual contact with their specific grade mural. The rationale for this was that students may be influenced by what other classes were doing and there would be the potential of them all having a similar look in the end. We felt that if we let each grade level evolve without viewing the other panels, they would emerge quite differently. I borrowed small 12" X 12" scooters from the Physical Education teacher. They each had four wheels. By placing them under the bottom corners of the mural panels, I was able to move the panels more easily. This was best accomplished with one other adult; although I often moved them alone just because of time restraints.
Other preparations for the day included having a cart set up for the video groups to use. On the cart were two video cameras with all of the necessary cords for charging batteries and down loading clips. Large supplies of digital tapes were available for each camera. Baskets were provided to store the grade level tapes. There was a tripod available throughout the duration of the project. I started out with only five apple iBook student lap top computers. By day two I realized there was much stronger interest in digital media among many of the groups so I checked out one of our mobile computer labs containing 16 student lap top computers. This lab ended up being used by all third, fourth and fifth grade classes daily and stayed in the art room until March of 2005.

These student computers came loaded with a variety of programs that were utilized by my students throughout the process. The video teams used iMove to edit and construct their movies. The documents teams used Microsoft word processing for books. Some of the documents teams used a time line program and web page programs from Dreamweaver MX. Advertising groups primarily used Microsoft Word documents and inserted clip art from the Internet or uploaded their own digital images from the camera. One of the advertising teams used Microsoft Draw to create bumper stickers.

On this day Mrs. Unger’s 5th grade class started the process at 9:15 am. Amy would not arrive until 9:30. We had fifteen minutes to get ready. I had moved the tables into four distinct blocks for the smaller group work. When the fifth grade students came in, I designated which groups would be seated at which block of tables. I gave each table a sheet of tag board to construct a table tent type sign that would be used throughout the process to identify their station for working. They were given paint markers to do this. They were also given newsprint and pencils to brainstorm ideas that their group identified
as goals. It was suggested that they write down everything; then if there were too many that they vote on which ones to utilize.

I let the groups know that they had to have some agreed upon plan that was approved by me before they started working. I gave the groups fifteen minutes to accomplish this. I floated around to groups to monitor what was going on. I never saw my students so excited. The ideas were flowing like fountains from their minds into the air in the form of fast expressive blurring. Students kept asking me if they could do this or do that or they wanted to tell me their idea. I would respond with a question. Is that what your team has agreed upon? They quickly got the message that I was not going to approve or tell them what they could or could not do until they shared their ideas with their team and they agreed on a plan of action for the team.

Students were talking over each other all at the same time so that no one was really being heard by one another. In most cases this continued only for the first five minutes or so before the students realized for themselves they would get nowhere if they continued in this fashion. Some groups set rules to follow. For example, the painting group decided that everyone would have a turn and they would go around the table in clockwise order. In their group they wanted each person to contribute one idea about the mural painting. In the advertising group they wanted to have one person write and they were going to raise their hand to be called on by the person writing before they shared their idea. The documents group was smaller, only five students, and they were having a hard time writing down ideas as fast as their minds were thinking. Students were making their own list and then they were going to compare lists.

The video group needed some prompting to organize. They all wanted to be the cameraperson at the same time and then they all wanted to edit. The entire group would
sway their ideas based on one student's voice of ideas. This was obviously a group of followers with one apparent leader. I stressed the importance of using strategies that would allow them to work together better as a team and that in a team each person needs to do specific jobs. All of which are important, because the video will only be accomplished if they all contribute and do their portion well. This helped somewhat but they continued to have relapses throughout the class period.

When Amy arrived, I signaled the class using an echo clap. I asked the class to be attentive and listen to the next set of directions. The painters would now present their ideas to Amy. I would show the video team how to use one of the digital video cameras for a few minutes. Then I would be going to the advertising and documents teams to hear their ideas and assist them, so they would all be successful.

5.6 Students Begin Working In Four Teams

5.6.1 Painting teams begin.

When Amy arrived that morning, students were most eager to begin. Amy worked with the painting group. She discussed the goal of beginning by getting a base covering of colors on the mural panel. She instructed the students about carefully loading the paintbrush to achieve interesting color mixes. She demonstrated dipping brushes so that only the tip of the brush went into the cans of paint. She required the students to dip into at least three or more colors before placing the brush onto the panel. She distributed a small folded paper towel for each student to hold under their brush when they were not actually painting, so that they could catch their own drips instead of having them fall onto the tarp where it would then get tracked around by their feet.
Within just a few minutes the students were busy loading and brushing the colors across the panel. They were so excited about the colors that were coming off the brush that there was little thought or regard to what else was going on around them. The room was filled with words of sheer astonishment. “Wow. Look at this one!” One student spoke out. “This is awesome, look at the way the colors come out!” yelled another. “Look what happens with I mix all five of these colors together!” These types of comments continued for about twenty minutes as students in the group each found an area to work on the panel.

This was one of the most freeing experiences for my students to approach painting in this manner. The fifth grade has just completed a project where they painted with acrylic paints that required them to mix tints and shades and specific color combinations in a very controlled methodical way. This exciting experimentation used for beginning the mural sharply contrasted their last painting assignment. There was no question from the student voices, watching their facial expressions, and the body language that the students were having fun as they were learning how to work cooperatively with each other in this setting.

After about twenty minutes, Amy stopped the students and asked them to move back from the panel to see what had gone on. Students did not want to stop but after Amy asked several times and then physically removed the paintbrush from one of my autistic student’s hands, they were able to step back and take a look. They discussed the color choices analyzing the various color mixtures. At times Amy would talk to the students who did a specific section and inquire about the colors that had been chosen to create it. When she saw evidence of quality brush strokes and color she would ask a
student to demonstrate to the class how they had achieved this success. Students were teaching other students the skills that they had mastered in just a short time.

Conversation continued to emerge from what was observed in the painting. Students identified evidence of lines and shapes that appeared. Students looked at the balance of color in terms of warm colors and cool colors, light values and dark values, thick application of the paint and color to the thin opaque application of the paint and color. It was evident that students were able to identify these differences as they selected areas of the panel and identified these through their discussion. One student, Jenny, commented as she demonstrated her painting techniques, “Over here you can see the white paint show through the colors almost like a stained glass window. That’s because I put the paint on like this and spread it out really thin. Over here I just put the same three colors on thicker. I rolled the paintbrush and let the colors streak across, but I didn’t scrub them out. I just left them like that.”

Illustration 39. Fifth grade mural almost covered with first layer of paint.
5.6.2 Video teams begin.

The first group that I worked with directly was the video team. Before beginning, I asked if any of them had ever used a digital video camera before. Two students said yes, their parents had one; one student shared that his father makes movies with theirs at home. Two students had the VCR mini tapes that are placed into a converter to view on a VCR. The other three said they had not ever used one, but they have seen others use them.

I gave this group of students a pep talk about responsible use of the equipment. I let them know my primary concern was that proper care be taken of the cameras. We had seventeen classes plus myself-using these cameras; and if we are all responsible in our use, then everyone should be able to accomplish their goals. If one was broken, I was not sure we would be able to repair it or replace it right away and it could interfere with our ability to produce the movies. I instilled the importance of keeping the cameras plugged in to charge the batteries any time the cameras were not in use and especially at the end of their class time. In fairness to the following classes I did not want them to be stuck with a camera that had no battery charge, just as they would not be appreciative if the last class before them left it uncharged to start their day. It was important that they looked at the end of the cord before they just plugged it in. Trying to plug the camera in the wrong way would damage the plug and could make it unusable. My rule of thumb for all parts of using the cameras is that if it does not fit easily, you most likely have it the wrong direction or you have the wrong piece of equipment for that job.

Next, I showed the students about the tapes. There were two different cameras and two different kinds of tapes. I gave them a tape to unwrap that would fit the Sony camera. I ask them to use the labels and place their teacher’s name on the tape and the
tape cover. They would need to get their tape at the beginning of each class period when they came in and it would be important to easily identify their tape. I demonstrated placing the tape properly into the camera using the characteristics on the backside and relating them to a “smiling face” so the students would easily remember which side to put which direction. The smiling face always looks at the yellow instruction label on the way into the camera. Again, if it doesn’t fit easily, it is most likely the wrong direction or wrong piece of equipment.

I briefly demonstrated the basic camera function of filming. They would need to know how to start recording, pause and stop the camera. I wanted them to learn to zoom in and out on objects or people smoothly, and I asked them to find out what it looks like when it’s fast and jerky as well as slow and smooth. My total discussion and demonstration only lasted 6-8 minutes. Then I asked that every student have a turn to record by the end of the class. They were on their own.

At first there was much discussion and what I would consider argument about who would go first, second, and so on. This continued while Joey picked up the camera and started filming. They had somehow worked out a list on paper and continued each student for about three minutes until everyone had a turn.
Illustration 40. Third grade video team learning to use digital video camera.

5.6.3 The advertising teams begin.

They quickly got together a very long list of things they wanted to accomplish: Posters around the school, going on the PA system in the morning for announcements, planning the big open house to invite people to see the finished murals, making a newsletter to send home in each class to their parents to let them know what was going on, go to the mall and pass out flyers, pass out flyers in their neighborhood, make posters to put in stores, write press releases, have cake at the opening, have a bake sale at the opening, have some kind of contest or something to do at the open house so that there was more to do than just seeing the murals. They were still working on the list when I arrived. They started out pretty loud, but became better at organizing and taking turns to share their ideas. I asked them to pick the one or two things they thought they should do first. They decided to have half the group work on a jingle for the morning
announcements and the other half to make posters using the extra photographs and paint markers on some of the very large sheets of paper I had available. I directed them to the necessary supplies and they worked very hard for the entire class period.

Illustration 41. Fifth grade advertising team brainstorming and planning.

5.6.4 The documents teams begin.

The 5th grade documents team, which was a group of just five girls in this specific class, had decided they wanted to create a web page and a book. I encouraged them to choose just one of their ideas to begin with, and if there was enough time, they would be able to do a second project. They decided on the web page. They had already put down a few ideas like a page to learn about our visiting artist, Amy Yaich; a page about where Mrs. Buda got the idea from; a page about each of the teams in our class. I told them they were off to a very good start and asked them what they would need to do next. They
wanted to write some questions so they could interview Amy and me first. Then they planned to interview people on the other teams. I directed them to some more paper and let them continue.

Illustration 42. Fifth grade documents team starts web pages.

5.6.5 My reflections of the teams’ work.

Under no circumstance do I mean to give the impression this was well organized and orderly. The students were so anxious and excited about their abundance of ideas that I had to ask the class several times to stop for a moment and turn down the volume. I only did this because I was sure that everyone in the commons and the music class next door could hear us even with the door closed. Before this historic day, I am pretty sure the art room has never been this loud from the students generating ideas. The majority of the time students were not sitting on stools as they were up asking others for their opinions. “What do you think of my idea?” “How does this sound?” and “Do you think
we can do this?” I was also asked the same questions repeatedly to the point I felt like a trampoline, bouncing questions and ideas back at students almost as quickly as they were fired to me.

I was empowering the students to make decisions for themselves as a group. I was limiting the boundaries of what they were able to accomplish only if it affected their immediate safety. It was enlightening to see their minds at work. The students were like kites that took off flying. At first, there were gusts of wind that would carry the kites off and then at times they would drop to the ground as though the breeze just quit when their ideas didn’t work out. Many of the kites soared higher than the amount of string they were given and they had to think through their ideas realistically. They never gave up though. If they thought their ideas were valid, they would bring them back to their team for discussion, strengthening their positions on their idea. What wonderful negotiation skills this taught my students. These were real life lessons that I had not anticipated.

5.6.6 Ending the class period.

With only about eight minutes left in the fifty-minute class period, I gave an echo clap to quickly get my students attention. I had them place all of their work into a folder that I had given each group to store their work. I let them know that I expected them to put everything away in two minutes and that each group would need to give a brief report to the class as to what their group had accomplished during the class period. The documents group asked if they could tape the sharing portion then put their tape away. I agreed that it would be a good idea to document what each class accomplished.

The students smiled as though they were glowing as their appointed representative shared their ideas. I don’t believe any group made it through without
another student chiming in something they felt was important, but was left out. They
couldn’t wait to tell their classroom teacher about their art class and the things they were
going to do.

Illustration 43. Third grade painting team begins the painting process.

5.6.7 The rest of the morning.

I had two more fifty-minute classes, Ms. Biegel’s third grade and then Mrs.
Sarver’s fourth grade, which went very similarly to this first class. For the sake of
sparing my readers from the repetition, I will simply highlight a few of the differences
from the first fifth grade class that I already described.

Ms. Biegel’s third grade documents team consisted of just two girls and one boy.
They created a very long list of ideas and had a hard time narrowing their choices of what
to start with. They were very strongly leaning towards making a book, but were not sure
of the kind of book they wanted to construct. They wrote and sketched ideas, but were
not completely decided by the end of the period. This class also had more difficulty with their video team cooperating than did the fifth grade. This group consisted of six boys and just one very soft-spoken girl. Only one of these students had operated a video camera previously. There were arguments in the beginning trying to solve the issue of who was going to go first to use the camera. They ended up with two students feeling very upset about the situation and feeling that their opinion did not count. I spent some time, about fifteen minutes into their work time, discussing the possibility of coming up with some common rules to work in small groups in a fair way. They made progress when I asked them to sit and discuss the situation with me. They agreed that every student should put in one idea each time. When they would vote on the best idea, they would go around the table in the order that they were sitting. Even though I did need to ask them if they were all following the rules of the group before the end of the class period, it was much better after they talked it out.

Illustration 42. Third grade student sharing what his team accomplished today.
5.6.8 *Lunch on this day.*

Amy and I headed to the cafeteria for my lunchroom duty right after the third morning class as we did every day. After duty we would stop by the lunch service area to get ice and then we returned to the art room to reflect on what had transpired that morning. The energy that was generated from the students in the morning was phenomenal. We were both talking about how this energy was contagious and that the kids were responding so enthusiastically that we both knew this project would go well. At 12:15 pm we were just getting to the point that we were going to sit down and nibble on our lunches, when several third grade students came into the art room to ask if they could work on their projects during their lunch recess. It was not unusual that I had a few kids from the third and fourth grades come and work most every day. I allowed them to get their things out and continue. By 12:30 pm there were a number of fourth grades students who also wanted to come in and work and by 12:45 pm the fifth grade students had joined in too. These were just the classes that had art this morning that had already started with their groups. The art room was fuller during my planning time, than it was during a regular class period.

5.6.9 *The afternoon classes.*

On this afternoon, I had a first grade class and a second grade class that were also beginning the painting process today. These classes did not break into teams. At the beginning of class I called on a group of students who were already seated together to come up to have a turn to paint with Amy. I let the class know that I would be calling students up to have a turn and everyone would have a turn to paint on the murals. I called up six students from the first grade to work with Amy painting. They started in a
similar way to that of the older groups, with a discussion and demonstration of the way to load the paint brushes with at least three colors and how to hold the paper towels underneath to keep paint from dripping onto the floor during the process. Of course, all of my painters were wearing art shirts to protect their clothing.

I took the rest of the class and asked them to select two photographs that documented good character in Dublin from which to create a new piece of artwork. Each class had their family’s photographs in a white five-gallon bucket with the teacher’s name marked on the outside. We had to locate the classroom bucket where the photos were stored. Each family kept their bag of photographs in the bucket of the oldest sibling in our school. The students who did not have photographs were asked to borrow photographs from another student. I gathered the students around an easel and demonstrated that we were going to practice a skill that would help them with painting on the big mural although this would be their very own artwork. They were going to glue the two photographs to their paper in an interesting position and then connect the photographs and continue the images onto their big white paper. They would be using oil pastels to make their artwork. They would be expected to mix their oil pastels and not just use them like they have used crayons, to simply color in a shape. They each received an 18” X 23” piece of paper. They watched while I showed them ways to mix colors and discussed the kind of mixing they needed to do to make intermediate colors that they might want to use.

The students went back to their seats, put their names on the back of the white paper and then got busy gluing down the photographs. They were as fascinated with mixing the oil pastels as the painters were with their paints. Most of the class period for both the painters and those using pastels focused on color exploration. There was one
boy in this class who never really moved beyond mixing pastels on a small area approximately 6” by 8” in size. He just wanted to keep adding more and more layers of pastels to the same area observing how the color changed every time he added another layer. Even though I prompted him to move on from this mixing he was far too interested to get him to shift his attention. He continued to work on this one area and gathering students from the class to see his mixtures. By the end, his focus also included amazement with the slick feeling of this area he had worked with so many layers. He even noticed the heat from the friction so that became a topic of discussion as well.

Illustration 45. First grade students beginning personal artwork using photographs.

The second class for the afternoon was Mrs. Stapleton’s second grade class. With this class I also selected six students to work for the day on the painting process with Amy while I discussed and demonstrated the art making activity using the photographs with the rest of the class. The students were eager to work and found the color mixing as interesting as the painting.
5.6.10  *The next three days.*

During the next three days every class had been to art one time. Since there was now paint already on the mural surface, every class from here on started with a discussion of the mural. Some classes and days the discussion was very brief and other days the discussions lasted almost thirty minutes. During these next three days, for the most part students were still just getting started in their processes. They reflected about their thoughts on the mural so far, the way the paint was put on, the colors they saw and the goals of finishing and getting the surface of the mural covered. By the fourth day, some of the painters were applying a second layer over another persons paint but the rule was they had to let part of it show through. Each painting group received their initial instructions from Amy about using the paint and brushes. Each video group received their pep talk from me about the use and care of the video camera. The advertising and documents groups started to narrow down their ideas. Most of the advertising groups
stated with creating posters to be put in the hallways, but it was not until their second day of working in groups that the first poster was completed and hung in the hallways.

They each started their group work enthusiastically. The parents who came to assist with our projects were equally as energized by the students’ excitement to begin their work and the problem solving that was evident in the students thought processes as they debated ideas for their groups. They were discovering how to work as a team in small groups. Students were just beginning to see how powerful the democratic process could be in helping to make fair decisions. Students were collaborating to set their own rules for their groups. They negotiated, listened to other students’ points of view, and debated pros and cons of specific situations on their own. They were solving real issues that arose as they were given the freedom to explore with the least possible boundaries I felt I could impose. This project was off to a better launch than I had predicted. My students astonished me from one minute to the next with their complex thoughts and they were finding strategies to solve their own problems as they came up.

The most diverse groups were the documents teams. Each documents team spent quite a bit of time exploring options before locking into a concrete decision about what to do. There was a wide range of interest. These included making sculptures from clay and paper mache, to books of all sorts, using digital and drawn graphics, making timelines, web pages, and posters. I was impressed with the depth of thinking from these groups. See Appendix B, Illustration 94 for a flow chart that shows products produced by specific groups within the school.
5.6.10 The next morning.

At 7:17 a.m. Mary, a third grade girl, ran into the art room with her backpack still on her back and wearing a lightweight jacket. She exclaimed that she had written a press release to go to the newspaper to invite people to the opening of our murals. She told me that was her job on the advertising team in her class. Since we had only one day of actual work on the mural, I really had not set a specific date for the opening yet. I though it would be best to wait until we were further along to pinpoint an actual date. I read over her very well written information and suggested that we place it into her group’s work folder until we were ready to insert a date. I was a little worried about her being here so
early since school does not begin until 9:00 a.m. and it was only 7:23 a.m. She said she was going to go to latch key until school started.

Mary returned at lunch just to see if I knew any more about the date for the opening and then asked if she could do some more work for her group. She stayed and made a poster. She proudly hung the poster in the commons in a prime location where everyone was sure to see it.

5.7 Progression of the Group Work

5.7.1 Day two of group work.

Amy and I continued to begin every class by having the students reflect on the current status of their grade level mural. By now things started to evolve in the works. The fifth grade panel especially had many lines and visual elements that were extensions from the photographs into the painting. Students pulled ideas from the colors and images that presented themselves in the early layers of paint. They discussed ideas that they had concerning subject matter and connecting the content from the photographs into the mural. This was most evident in the second and fifth grade paintings. From the beginning those murals presented more realistic representations. The first, third and fourth grade murals at this point remained more abstract in nature.

The video groups had all learned to use the first digital video camera and were ready to learn more. I introduced them to the second digital video camera that we had in our school. I discussed similarities and differences with the groups. I also encouraged them to try the tripod to keep the camera more stable. Many students did not like the limited mobility of putting the camera on the tripod while a few found it most beneficial.
Students started writing the interviews and volunteering for various assignments. They wanted to get organized so they could download film and begin the editing process.

Illustration 48. Fourth grade video team beginning interviews.

By the end of this second-class period, some of the groups had been able to download about five to ten minutes of footage to the computer. Many of the students had not used the laptops prior to this experience and needed to be shown how to open, navigate to the iMovie program, import the tape into computer clips, save and then properly shut down and put away the laptops again. The other groups that did not download yet were the groups that worked more extensively on specific interview questions and planning out their approach in more detail.
The documents groups all made commitments to specific projects by the end of the second day of group work. Some of the final decisions about what to make as a group did require give and take negotiation with their fellow teammates. One of the larger third grade groups wanted to break into two smaller groups. The girls chose to create a web page and the boys wanted to create a sculpture. I approved of splitting the group since there were eight in the group and both groups presented very valid ideas about the directions they wanted to go with their work. They had all accomplished voting on ideas within their groups and some preliminary planning for their art making.

The advertising teams were very busy groups. They jumped in right away creating signs to go up in our school telling others about the murals. Many of the groups used the photographs that documented good character in Dublin to help spread the message of the mural on their posters. Others started working on scripts for morning announcements that would air on the PA system for the school in the mornings.

There were many times I had to question the advertising teams and ask them to consider who their market population really was. Who do you think will have the most interest or benefit from seeing these projects when they are completed? They would come up with students in our school, parents, families, teachers, people in other Dublin Schools, people who live in Dublin because the murals are about Dublin. This usually helped them focus on the types of advertising that would reach those people. Of course every now and then they wanted to put their advertisements on national T.V. or a radio station; after thinking it through considering the cost involved, they all decided those media routes might not be the best way to go. This was a good lesson for them to learn and the fact that they had the ability to think critically about the cost and the market they
needed to reach, demonstrated they were able to apply a higher level of reasoning to these concepts.

At the end of each class period, the student groups reported their progress to the rest of the class. The students were attentive and genuinely interested in what the other groups were doing. The asked questions of each other and at times offered another group a suggestion that was not solicited. I had already suggested to the groups that if they were having a difficult time making a decision about something or they wanted more feedback that our end of class oral reporting time would be a good time to accomplish this. The students embraced this idea and frequently utilized this opportunity to bring others into the decision making process. It was apparent that they were becoming more confident and comfortable in allowing the majority to rule. By this time in the projects, the students were accepting that not all decisions would go their way. They were accepting the give and take of negotiating and accepting of others’ points of view. These were the valuable life lessons that I had not anticipated, but became a major component in the students’ learning.

5.7.2 *Lunch recesses.*

It was evident on day two that there were far too many kids who wanted to give up their lunch recess to continue their team’s work than I had space, materials or computers to handle. This was an excellent indicator of the type of interest and enthusiasm the students had as active co-creators of their curriculum and their learning. Students found this authentic student driven process to be more fun than they had anticipated. Suddenly students who would sit quietly were asking for assistance or wanting to share their ideas with Amy, fellow students, me or anyone who would listen.
At one point, a very quiet fourth grade boy walked up to a parent during this lunch recess time and explained his idea for one of the videos at great length. He was bouncing around using hand and body gestures to show her what he wanted to do. She responded enthusiastically, but then she just looked at her and said, “Who are you anyway?” I am pretty sure he must have thought he was talking to me but was so excited and wrapped up in the moment that it really didn’t sink in until he looked up to hear the reaction.

To help solve the problem of the lunch recess overcrowding, I had to adapt a plan to keep some semblance of control and order. It was becoming apparent that the students did need technical assistance with the video, and so did the advertising and documents teams which were using laptops and digital images in their work. It was becoming increasingly frustrating for the students since there was only one of me and so many of them. The first thing I did was to explain to classes that they would need to come up with a plan for continuing work during recess. I suggested that they only send two students from their group to the art room to work at a time. They could take turns with the students who wanted to work. This would eliminate the problem of such large numbers of students in the art room. It did reduce the number of students total but I still only had 16 laptops. There were days I let students use my computer and other days I had to limit groups to just 15 minutes at a time because the next groups were coming in and waiting.
Illustration 49. Third grade students working on construction of their books at lunch recess.

5.7.3 Computer tech assistance.

The other thing I did after the first day of group work was to talk to my computer tech representative and discuss in more detail what my classes were doing and what had transpired when we started working. She agreed to spend any available mornings since that was when I had grades 3-5, and any recess times 12:15 pm to 1:00 pm that she could work into her schedule, in the art room with me to assist students. She already had some commitments to other classes so she was in and out at times and she was only in our building two days a week in most cases. Every little bit of help was greatly appreciated. I had her assist first with kids doing web pages and timelines since my skills in those areas were not as strong as the taking and inserting of digital images. I quickly learned many new things as we worked with iMovie though. I was usually only a small step ahead with my learning than they were. I explained to her what had transpired in such a
few short days. She was very receptive to assisting with the project. We had discussed this earlier and I wasn’t sure of her commitment to the projects, but after beginning she really enjoyed working with the students. She was particularly attentive to those students who easily reached the point of frustration and kept them on track.

5.7.4  Progress of the painting teams.

The students came into the art room day after day with continued excitement. They were very eager to sit down and see the progress that had been made on the mural painting since the last class. They liked having the opportunity to provide suggestions and direct input to the painting teams. The painting teams had the responsibility to listen and try to incorporate the ideas from the class as much as possible. If class ideas were contradictory from one persons perspective to the next we took a classroom vote to settle differences. On two or three occasions throughout the process there had been ties in the numbers and at that point Amy or I jumped in and made a final decision to move the progress forward.

This process required additional time to facilitate meaningful discussions. I weighed the concern about the time these discussions required to the benefits that I was seeing and decided to continue each class with the discussions. I found that all students were taking ownership for the content of the mural because they knew their voice was being heard and it did make a difference in the painting process each day. The students did not feel the murals belonged to just the painters; they all felt they were represented in the mural and it was equally their ideas even if they were not a member of the painting team.
Another consideration that was required when students reviewed the progress of mural was to honor and respect those who preceded them. They understood that it would not be fair to come in and paint over, completely wiping out the work of the students from the previous day. They were able to relate this to their own personal feelings of how they would feel, if another class, were to paint over their ideas. The students really demonstrated a strong sense of respect for the work of others in this way. It was expected they would add to, build on, extend, improve or in many ways change things that were started, but it was not acceptable to completely repaint over the work of others. These guidelines applied to all painters and it became like a code of ethics for working together collaboratively with mutual respect.

Illustration 51. Fifth grade mural work in progress.
5.7.5 *Progress of the advertising team.*

One of the fourth grade advertising groups had divided into smaller sub groups with assignments distributed to each group based on student interest. The two students who worked on a morning announcement script were insisted they had to have a catchy slogan or jingle. They wrote and rewrote. They had almost everyone in the class at one point or another listen to what they had done so far and give them feedback. They really liked the lyrics they had rewritten for a well-known jingle and they also made up one with their own tune and different lyrics. They were most obviously proud of both as they repeatedly practice, and sang them. They ended up doing both in two different commercials they created. The boy in the group insisted that only he had speaking parts and one girl really wanted to sing so this worked out.

Most of the advertising teams progressed from posters and morning announcements to newsletters, flyers, and signs that could be taken to businesses informing parents and the community about our mural making, the movies and the other items being produced by the documents teams. These were often in the form of word documents created on the laptops. Students visually enhanced these documents with clip art and digital photographs they downloaded from the camera and then imported them into their documents. There was no question that the students were learning many new skills as they worked. As students learned and mastered the skill independently, then they became teachers and taught others these skills too.

One of the fifth grade advertising teams created a very informative flier to be distributed to the community. They had even downloaded a map of our immediate neighborhood and inserted it so others could locate our school if they were not familiar with the location of our building. They had asked if they could pass these out. I thought
it was still too soon since we were about 45 days from our opening at this point. I told them it would be best to wait and we would need to get parental permission. The following week one of the parents of a fifth grade girl approached me and asked if I had heard about what happened yesterday. I replied that no, I was not sure what she was refereeing to but my mind was spinning at the thought of what she might tell me. She indicated that one of the boys in this specific advertising group had taken it upon himself to invite the entire group (9 kids) to his house and was going to have his mother take them to the mall to pass out flyers. Most of the parents assumed I had set this up with the students. Six students were dropped off at the boy’s house. The parent who came to me thought this was a little unusual that I would not have sent something home in writing; so instead of dropping off her daughter, she accompanied her daughter to the boy’s home. When the two mothers started questioning the kids, they determined that I did not approve or know of this expedition to the mall. They talked to the kids about their target market and ended up taking the kids around the neighborhood to pass out the flyers door to door with a personal invitation to the opening.

Wow! I knew the kids were enthusiastic about getting word out but this was a little more than I was expecting. I couldn’t be upset with the kids for their eagerness but I wanted to ensure that they were safe. I happened to have art with that class first thing after I spoke to the mother. I sat down with the group and let them know that I was in no way upset with their enthusiasm and I even applauded them for the extra effort to make our event successful. I did let them know that all activities in the future, especially off school grounds, were going to need to be approved. I told them that this was not meant to limit their work in any way, but their safety had to be the number one concern. One parent would not have been able to supervise nine children randomly walking around the
mall. If we considered doing this again, I would need to have parents' approval in advance to accompany them. They understood and apologized to me later for not thinking it through all the way. They did not intentionally go against what they thought was allowed. They admitted they got a little too excited in the process.

Illustration 51. Setting parameters with a fifth grade advertising team.

5.7.6 Progress of the documents team.

This specific sculpture team consisted of four boys. Three of them spoke English as a second language and two of those three had just come the United States at the beginning of this school year from Korea, and another was from Japan but had been here for a year already. The fourth boy in this group was one of the most patient boys I have met for his age. He wanted very much to work with the other three even though communication was not always quick or easy between them. They decided to create
paper mache masks of some of the different character traits from the murals. They had
seen the plastic mask molds on the shelves and they wanted to use them. I had them start
shredding newspaper right away so at the next class they could use the wallpaper paste
and paper mache over the soaped mask forms. Even though these boys were hesitant at
first about putting their hands into the paste, they eventually got over the fear and were
able to each get a good start on the layers by the beginning of the next class.

They continued to work the following class until they had three layers of
newspaper and then they created the final layer of paper mache from torn up color copies
of the photographs. They printed the color copies in the computer lab and then sorted
them into distinct piles by the character trait they felt best fit the photo. They kept each
character trait in a different zip lock one-gallon baggie so they would not get mixed up.
The four boys each used one of the baggies to make the final layer for the mask. They
sprayed a clear protective covering over the surface when it was completed. They wrote
about what each mask meant. It was a very short interpretation of the character trait that
was represented. Next they painted a box and glued the mask and the writing on each of
the four sides of the upside down box.

In creating the sculpture, the boys not only learned several art processes that were
reinforced through their writing, but they had to rely on many other strategies to achieve
their goal. The language barrier was just one of the obstacles. Several of these students
were absent on different days and they had to work as a team to keep the absent one up to
pace with the others. The in English writing was difficult. They had to learn to use the
laptops to do the writing, which was a new experience for the non English-speaking
students. They were all very proud of the sculpture. I think this gave the two Korean
students a comfortable way to participate that was not too limiting because of the language differences.

One new third grade boy who had been very quiet in art since he moved to this school came out of his private world on this day and became an active participant in the making of his group’s book. As soon as I had approved the group’s plan for the book and inquired about the type of pictures they were going to use, he was a changed person. I simply asked if they were going to draw or in another free hand way make the images for the book or did they want to take photographs for the book with a digital camera? His eyes lit up as if there had been an explosion inside his head, and in his loudest voice said, “We are using the camera and I wanna be the photographer!” He looked at me for just a minute, as if he expected me to say no, he couldn’t. He had an awkward grin; maybe it was just the first real smile I had seen on his little face since he started school here three months ago. I proceeded to ask him if he had ever used a digital camera before and he replied, “No, but I could learn” again he hesitated. I told him that was great; we would go get the camera and I would teach him how to use it. I worked with him just enough to learn some basic care of the camera, how to turn it on and off, where the flash was, the two viewing options and how to zoom in and out. Then I turned him loose and told him before the end of the class he needed to come see me to learn to download them onto the computer. He looked at me with such amazement that his face, which was always very pale, and most colorless, was red and glowing.

I turned him loose and I’m guessing fifteen minutes later he said it was full. I quickly showed him how to download onto one of the computers his group was already using and erase the memory card. He was very responsible with the camera and took great pride in his photographs as well as the care of the camera. Every art class as soon
as the class completed the discussion of the mural for the day, he would go straight for
the desk, and put that digital camera around his neck. Then he would proceed to get out
the laptop and collaborate with his group about their book. It was difficult to get him to
let others in the class use the camera but he did cooperate, as long as they promised to
bring it back to him when they were done. He became the photography expert for the
class and taught many others to use the camera and download properly. He had mastered
this skill well and others were looking up to him and asking him for expertise for the first
time at his new school. He seemed to carry this confidence with him well after the unit
was over and has asked when we will be doing another big project like the murals again.

Mrs. Dowden’s third grade documents team consisted of two boys and four girls.
They created what I may consider to be one of the most dynamic sculptures I have seen
from any elementary students. The boys really wanted to make a clay sculpture and the
girls were a little unsure. I told them they needed to work together to come up with an
idea that provided them all with a chance to share suggestions. They drew a sketch of a
sculpture with two figures, one girl and one boy painting a mural. I questioned if they
could include more murals? One of the girls yelled out, “The sides of the box could be
the murals and the boy and the girl could go on top!” “Yea!” Another girl added, “They
could put their paint brushes up in the air to make a W with their arms for Wyandot too!”
I told them it was a great idea and to get started with wedging the clay. I cut a square
pattern for them to use to make the sides of the clay box. They knew this would be a lot
of work and two of them came in almost every day through February to work on it.

They ended up remaking the clay slabs three times due to problems, the first two
being too thin. The third set I was able to have them come in by themselves during a
planning period so I could better advise them about the amount of clay needed and assist

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with flipping the slabs. The size and weight of the clay slabs were very challenging for them to handle. When the students painted the figures, they worked with the flesh color for some time mixing varying amounts of yellow, red, white and a touch of blue until they had the color they wanted. They mixed other colors on their own as well for the sides of the boxes. I felt they had done an outstanding job of painting the boxes with bright colorful painterly strokes. I was not able to provide much feedback or assistance with the painting because I was working with several of the video teams. I showed them where the acrylic paint jars were that they could use and some mixing trays. They cleaned up and put everything away at the end of recess for several days and in a row and returned again to paint some more.

The two sculptures of the people also presented some challenges. One of the figures bottom half had broken into several pieces when it was fired. We decided they would save the head and remake the rest. On another figure the leg broke off during firing, but was easily glued back on.

When they completed all of the painting they had to decide what material to use to connect the clay slabs. We all searched the art room and came up with many options, but they felt the colored wire went best with their brightly painted box. The girls could not resist asking if they could put beads on the wires too. Then the figures were glued to the top with a hot glue gun. They found a polished rock to put under the foot of one figure because she was lifting her foot and they did not want her to fall off and get damaged.
Illustration 52. Documents teams’ books.

Illustration 53. Fifth grade Documents team working on web site.
Illustration 54. Documents team making paper mache character masks.

5.7.7 Process of the video teams.

The video teams progressed from filming to editing with varying amounts of quality. The fifth grade classes quickly grasped the concept and were able to proceed with having some students who continued to write interviews and film selected topics of footage for the final movie. Others in those groups continued to work on the editing as fast as they were able to download for the cameramen and women. The fifth grade started out pretty dry. Later they began to integrate more of a sense of humor into their work as their skills increased and their confidence developed.

Mrs. Kimball’s third grade class went into the video process with a real spirit of making a creative film but they had to overcome some technical challenges. They came in and taped over film from the last class that hadn’t yet been downloaded. They had
forgotten to either download first or fast forward past the part of the tape that already had
been recorded on. This caused them a little frustration and delay but they quickly caught
up with the other groups. They actually did the most with sound tracks using Star Wars
music in the background inserted into their third sound track. They added sound effects
that demonstrated the playful nature of their spirit yet they included serious reflective
cuts from their peers about the process.

Mrs. Wilch’s fifth grade video team demonstrated great leadership in progressing
the other fifth grade classes through the process. Adam had told me that his father made
movies on his computer at home and so he had done a little with this before. Adam’s
group was the first to insert titles at the beginning of their movie and credits at the end.
Alex showed me how to record their voice into a section of the movie and turn off the
original sound track for that period of time. This was helpful because it was very
challenging to listen to the students speaking on the movie clips. The amount of
background noise that was picked up from around the room was overbearing at times
making it difficult to pick up the intent of the speakers’ words. Some students were
content just leaving it that way; others allowed music to fill the background and forgo
any speaking in parts. A few students tried to rerecord important ideas over the footage
of visual clips. Each group worked in a different manner.

There were students from almost every video team working during recess
throughout the entire process. Many of the videos were not completed until February and
that was with a ten-minute maximum time limit on the video. In mid-January Mrs.
Owens fourth grade class lost their entire video. They could not find their movie
anywhere. We still don’t know exactly what happened to it, or why, but they had most
all of their original work on tape and were able to download and edit it in time to have it ready for our opening ceremony.

Illustration 55. Grade four video team downloading from camera to computer.

5.7.8 First and second grade collaborative books.

The first and second grade students were finishing their large individual pieces and started to construct collaborative class books as the others were still having their turn painting on the mural. Students again selected a photograph from their collection that represented good character in Dublin. This time they choose a 9” X 12” sheet of construction paper to glue it on and framed it with patterns and a word that best interpreted the meaning of the photograph to them. They worked with construction paper and crayons to build complex patterns around the photograph.
Illustration 56. First grade collaborative books.

In the next first grade unit, they would be investigating animal habitats and environments. They were to recognize what the animals needed for survival through the activities leading to the creation of a collage. I wanted them to gain some practice and expertise with cutting shapes with scissors. I decided that the cover for our collaborative book could also move students towards this goal. They learned to cut many geometric shapes from a single sheet of construction paper. After spending two days exploring textures and color mixing of tempera paint by experimenting with multiple color combinations and varied painting/printing tools, the students had a very large selection of unique papers to choose from. They choose their favorite to cut shapes. They made a bookmark and a row of shapes for the cover of the collaborative book. This reinforced the collaborative nature of this work and all students had their own row on the cover and their own page in the book but their name was not identified in either area.
The second graders made the same type of pages for the inside of their collaborative classroom books, but their covers were different. They broke into table groups and came up with ideas for a cover that 1.) demonstrated creativity, and, 2.) represented every student in the class. They presented their ideas to the class and they voted. The covers varied from class to class. In Mrs. Stapleton’s class they each cut out a photograph that demonstrated good character in other communities to demonstrate how good character was not just limited to Dublin but was a universal concept. I very much liked the thought behind this idea and it won the popular vote in the class. They cut the images from magazines and decoupaged over the top of the photographs. Mrs. Walker’s class wrote character words on the cover with paint markers. Mrs. Lehman’s class wrote brief examples of good character on the cover and Mrs. Fischer’s class made words and symbols on the cover.

Illustration 57. Second grade collaborative books.
5.8 Progression of the Murals

5.8.1 Grade one mural progress.

The first grade classes started out with paint right out of the paint cans like the older grades, but about half way through the process we made a change in our approach. The first graders could not reach the top of the mural panel with it leaning against the wall so we laid it down flat on the ground at times to enable them to reach the top portion. One day we even placed the mural upside down. Amy and I were not sure if they would notice, but some of them did notice immediately and proceeded to announce our error to the class. About two weeks into the painting with the first grade class, Amy and I were discussing the lack of direction we noticed in the first grade panel. Nothing was really coming out of the paint as far as inspiring images. There were some good color mixing and splotches of interesting paint but it just was not coming together yet. When Amy asked me how many more kids still did not have a turn to paint, I responded that we were not quite half way through yet. It was as if a light went off in both of our minds at the same time. We looked at each other and I asked, “Are you thinking what I am thinking?” Amy responded, “I don’t know, what is your idea?” I grabbed the paint markers and said, “What do you think about having the first grade finish with these?” She responded that we were indeed reading each other’s mind. That was exactly what she envisioned at the same time I did. We tried it out. About three minutes later the first grade students marched into the art room in their art shirts ready to paint some more. The paint markers worked out well and the mural took on a very Australian aboriginal art resemblance. Within a day or two we showed the first grade classes both impressionists and aboriginal paintings and they too saw the similarities from both in their works.
With first grade, the mural painting became like a giant seek and find picture. Students would try to find things hidden in the many lines they had created to fill in spaces on the mural.

5.8.2 Grade two mural progress.

The second grade panel was the most realistic from the beginning. It started out with areas of the mural that looked like daytime and other areas where it looked like night. This was interesting to the kids and they wanted to be sure to keep it that way. There was much movement with large sweeping dominant lines across the mural. This had all begun with the arrangements of their photographs before the painting even started.

The second grade extended scenes from the content of their photographs. One image of a handmade stained glass window with light shining through it became somewhat of focal point for the mural. The twisting light was extending far above the photograph and was a dominant part of the mural.

5.8.3 Grade three mural progress.

The third grade mural most impressed me with its colors. It was very cubist in style. The students painted with layers and layers of paint that created the richest and most vibrant colors. The students had started focusing on the shapes early on in the painting process. As their work continued, they notice that a student had taken their finger and made a spiral in the wet paint of one of the shapes. When this happened the top layer of paint was removed by the student’s finger and allowed the layer of color underneath to shine through. Many of the students were attracted to this specific spot in the painting because the power a spiral has to pull your eye into the center. They

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decided to add other spirals and other textures within shapes of the painting. This painting is very different than the others in that there are really no “images” to recognize in this work. The color blocks stand on their own quite well.

Illustration 58. Third grade mural in progress.

5.8.4 Grade four mural progress.

Fourth grade had the most discussion over the direction of their mural. About the second week of painting some of the students as well as Amy started to visualize this as blue area as sky and the green as the treetops. They would explain that it looked like they were lying on the ground and they were looking up through the treetops into the sky. There were leaves and photographs floating to the ground. While others insisted that the blue was water not sky at all and the green areas were land not tree tops. It was being viewed like an aerial view. The very abstract nature of the images was interesting. The
students accepted that they did not really all need to interpret the painting the same way, but in order to direct the painters to proceed with the emerging ideas, they needed to come to some consensus. The conversations about the sky or water continued for days and the images kept flipping back and forth. It was interesting to allow the debates to continue because the students really defended their interpretations and then others would start to see it the way they did. This also gave the students a stronger sense of commitment to the final outcome of the images. Finally the aerial view of water triumphed and they voted to add a boat to the water, which pretty much drew the distinctions that it was water not sky. Even now when I look at their finished mural panel, I bounce back and fourth until I lock in on the boat.

Illustration 59. Fourth grade mural detail of boat.
7.8.5 Grade five mural progress.

As the fifth grade mural progressed, some very interesting things started to happen. Early on students extended lines from the photographs onto the white panel. Many of these lines served to continue the subject matter from the photograph. In some instances they became other things too. For example the lines of the intersection, also became the roof of the barn; whereas, the flag that hangs from the barn almost looks like it is just part of the painting and not a photograph at all. There is a school bus in the upper left section of the painting, which became controversial. A group of students decided it was going to become a hippy bus. They painted it with flowers and peace signs. They even extended the flowers off the bus and into the air around the bus. Some of the other students had disagreement with the hippy bus being on the mural but since we had this code of conduct about not painting over anyone else’s work, the bus and all of its flowers and peace signs stayed.

There was another interesting thing that happened one day with the bottle of water in the lower right area of the painting. The plastic water bottle from the recycling dumpster was on its side and the water was painted to flow out of the bottle. The flowing water became a river or stream, after a few students played around with that concept one day. Most all of the students agree that they liked what was started there and they wanted to continue to improve it as students worked.
Illustration 60. Detail of four photographs combined on fifth grade mural.

Illustration 61. Detail of section of fifth grade mural.
5.8.6 Completing the painting process.

As we drew near the completion of the painting process on the murals, I realized we were all going to miss seeing Amy. The whole process of watching the images emerge from these large white panels has been a very thought filled process. I feel as though there is truly something from everyone in our school community represented in these murals.

The students had to decide when to stop painting. When was the mural finally finished? The first grade mural was completed first. Then the third, the fourth and then, finally, the second and fifth grade murals came to closure. We had to bring some of the second and fifth graders in during extra planning periods to complete the final touches.

Amy’s last day was Tuesday, December 14, 2004; we had just three more days until winter break. The kids made thank you cards for Amy expressing their fond appreciation for her coming to Wyandot. Amy was good at challenging the students to think and form their own thoughts and opinions. She showed my students that she respected their ideas and feelings. She encouraged them to have a voice in decisions and placed value in being active participants in their school and community.

One of my second grade students who is already sure that she wants to be an artist or art teacher when she grows up, spent much of her lunchtime with Amy in the art room. They had built a rapport that was very positive for this second grade student. Sam came to the art room not just to work on her art work or help in the art room like most of the other students when they came in. She generally just liked to talk about art and I think she enjoyed and benefited from the opportunity to be involved in conversations about the murals with two adult artists and educators.
Even though the painting of the murals was completed, there was still much work to be done. Many of the painting groups still needed to remove the photocopies of the photographs and replace them with the original photographs that we laminated. The rest of the groups that were finished started to look for creative ways to thank those who helped with the process. They made cards and thank you tiles of clay for many of the organizations that provided grant funds. One fourth grade painting team made a thank-you iMovie for the Dublin Arts Council. Another group even created a clay sculpture with leaves that were glued to a board and a thank you message was painted within it. Their mural had several leaves in it so the clay leaves that they used to make this thank you sculpture contained similar subject matter. These special projects that the painting groups started, continued for two weeks after winter break while the other groups completed their work.

Illustration 62. Amy Yaich with nearly completed murals.
Illustration 63. Completed panels that need original photographs glued into place.

5.9 **Progress During the Last Two Weeks To Work During Art Classes**

5.9.1 **Student progress and evaluations.**

After returning from winter break, I started by having students in grade 3-5 complete a Progress and Evaluations sheet. Students completed questions 1-5 on their own and then assembled with their group to work on the answers to questions 6-8. Answering the questions and provided a way to refocus the students and identify the specific needs to complete their work after being away for two weeks. Even though the painting groups were finished with the actual painting process, they had all identified ways to contribute that would help us prepare for the opening event. The student responses are referenced in red. I tried to provide evidence of student thinking without being overly repetitious with my decisions about what content to include or exclude from this presentation of information.
Mural Project Progress and Evaluation

Name ___________________________ Teacher ___________________________

1. Circle the group you were a member of.
   
   Painting Team      Video Team      Advertising      Documents

2. Is there one person in your group that has become the leader? If so who?
   
   — To my surprise 99% of the groups indicated there was not one person who
   became the leader of their group.

3. Has everyone in my group actively participated in decisions about our
   projects?

   98% Everyone has given ideas
   
   92% Ideas were voted on or selected with ideas from the entire group
   
   2% Some students did not get a chance to give their ideas

4. Has everyone in my group actively participated in making these projects?

   87% Everyone participated equally
   
   13% Some participated more than others

   Less than 1% The work has only been done by a small part of the total
   students in our group
5. What can I do to be sure as we finish, that everyone has equal voice in decisions and completing necessary work?

3rd Grade Responses:
Help everyone do their best, help them and work together, taking turns to do things, by letting each person do each thing for like five minutes, I should not try to boss, keep working hard because our group all takes turns good, everybody takes turns giving out ideas and then vote on which ideas they like best, everyone helps each other.

4th Grade Responses:
Make sure everyone has had a chance with everything, work hard and don’t waste time, take votes. In my groups I know when someone has a good ideas or does not agree with someone they speak up and we listen, to take turns and use a little bit of everyone’s idea, we take turns and share, make sure everybody’s ideas get accepted, make sure nobody gets left out. No one be bossy, mean or rude. I can tell others to use perseverance, working together and following through on our plans, get along with everyone in my group, the people in my group who have not had as much chance should get to now, letting others do more that you for a change, try to talk more to the people who have not shared a lot and see what their ideas are.

5th Grade Responses:
Ask if everyone else thought their ideas were used. Ask everybody’s opinion, could encourage my team mates that don’t talk as much, giving everyone a listening ear, try everyone’s ideas at least once, ask others what they want instead of what I want, can make sure everyone is ok about things. If someone
didn’t really sure then we can talk together again, we always go in a circle and everyone gives an idea then we decide.

6. List the accomplishments of your group.

Painting Teams:

5\textsuperscript{th} Grade  Learning how to paint a mural, how to use a lot of imagination, painting techniques, use small brushes and big brushes, mixing colors, how to draw very small details, making the mural, using pictures in a painting, getting the ideas, using buckets of paints like this, working together, making sure everyone participates, how to put the pictures together, blending colors, how to paint more 3-D, put thoughts into it, lots of creative ideas, make it so colorful, how to make it look real, make so many thoughts in one painting, how to paint so good.

4\textsuperscript{th} Grade  Painting the mural, auditioning people for the thank you video, learning to add things to the pictures, finish lines, learned there is no such thing as a solid color, how to blend and let colors flow, how to make things 3-D, be respectful to others ideas, learned about depth, taking pictures, making tiles, learned how to use a camera, learned to make poster with the laptop, paint good brush strokes, painting skillfully.

3\textsuperscript{rd} Grade  Pick out the pictures for the mural, painting the mural, making cards to say thank you, painting good, mixing colors, helping others, working together.
Advertising Teams:

5th Grade Many posters all around our school, flyers to give out in community and our parents, made clay frames for photographs of finished mural, planned many things, made a book “The P.A. book” with all of our morning announcements, planned the ideas for the opening, everybody shared ideas, we made lots of lists, organizing things for a bake sale to earn money to help pay for Amy or another artist for next year, bake sale flyers, mural flyers, put an add in the school newspaper, lots of morning announcements, made flyers to hand out at the mall and our neighborhood, newsletters for parents, taking pictures.

4th Grade We used pictures for our posters, some posters we made by hand, some we used the computer, invitations to the opening, got Mrs. Clark to let us play the drums for a drum roll before we take the paper down on each mural, download pictures on the computer from the camera, newsletters, planned opening, contact the high school, we made a jingle, morning announcements.

3rd Grade Learned how to use the paint markers, learned to use the digital camera, learned how to use the laptops, made a skit with posters and speaking parts to share what we are doing with the kindergarteners, morning announcements, newsletters for parents, if we cooperate we get more done, we put our minds together to get better ideas, working together is good.
Documents Teams:

5th Grade  We learned to make a cool website and put all the colors in and upload my links so they work. I learned it takes lots of planning for something this big. I made a plaque out of clay for our mural, take pictures, typing on the laptops, how to interview people, made a book, you have got to work step by step, how to use the computers and download pictures. we started a slide show, made newsletters.

4th Grade  Learned to used salt on our watercolor painting for the cover of our book, writing about our work and our pictures, we kept thinking together until we got a really good idea, we had to help each other out to get done, we got ideas that were unique, we used teamwork, we choose good colors to use, printing out pictures on a color printer, planning what to say on each page of our book making sure we had a good front and back cover for our book so it is like a real book, we had to work together, we learned to make a timeline.

3rd Grade  We learned how to make clay tiles, we learned to make the heads and bodies for our clay sculptures, take pictures of the family tiles with the digital cameras and print them on the color printers, downloading pictures and making the book, picking out good colors is important, learned how to use laptops, learned how to make our own website.

Video Teams:

5th Grade  I learned how to use the digital video cameras, how to download the video to the computer, how to edit the movie on the computer, how to work together as a team, we learned how to interview, we learned how to work hard.
we learned you have to solve a lot of problems that come up, learn what we should record and what is worthless.

4th Grade (see above skills) We learned how to work together, how to start, stop and rewind the camera, how to use the laptops, you can't put too many movies on one computer or there is not enough memory to work.

3rd Grade (see above skills) Working together with the whole group, everyone's ideas and positions, teamwork.

7. What still needs to be done by your group before the opening event for our murals?

These answers helped focus students on what they still needed to accomplish.

8. What does my group need help with to accomplish this goal?

These answers helped me better assist my students so their goals were met.

5.9.2 Setting the date for the artists' reception.

Our revised goal was to have students complete all work by the end of January even if it required working at recess. I approached the principal about possible dates for the opening. We were very limited in our times. I wanted to have it the soonest possible date during February so the students did not lose momentum. My principal, who has been extremely supportive, explained that there was already a parent meeting for Social Studies Curriculum one week, a New Math Curriculum Meeting another, a PTO meeting another and a meeting for parents of fifth graders on the fourth week. I took the first available date offered to me, which was Tuesday, March 1, 2004. Although to be honest,
I did have reservations about scheduling this event following so many other parent events. I announced this date to the PTO, parents, students, and teachers immediately.

5.9.3 Grades 3-5 last two weeks to work during art class.

The first two weeks after winter break was the end of all group work on the projects during regular art time. I felt there was a necessity to bring closure to this unit and to move students on to other curricular topics. I had a student teacher who started just after break and I knew he was going to need to begin teaching his own lessons.

Students in the advertising groups could insert the opening date into all of their print material that they were holding to release. They sent invitations to the superintendent; e-mails to the teachers in the district, and invitations to parents from each specific class. Flyers were distributed to be taken home and others were posted at our local community businesses. Students started back with more frequent morning announcements again as we neared the opening date. The video and documents teams were still working strong to complete the work they started. The video teams were refining their editing, timing special effects and sounds, and downloading music into their movies.

Illustration 64. Third grade video team making final edits to iMovie.
5.9.4 *Artists’ reception preparations.*

When I notified the teachers about the mural projects artists’ reception date, I also asked if they would do a reflective writing assignment in their classrooms prior to the opening. I ask them to choose, whole class, small group or individual writing assignments for their class based on what best met their curriculum needs and available time. At an earlier staff meeting it was discussed that their classes would be involved in this so it was not really a surprise. I gave them deadlines so I would have a chance to have the writing mounted on colored construction paper and be posted in the hallways.

The PTO Art Resource Committee helps with the art show every year. They assist with mounting and hanging artwork throughout the year and for the art show. I advised them of the date and let them decide if there was going to be a separate show with two to three pieces of artwork from each student at a later date, or did they just want to combine the art show with the mural opening. If they choose to combine, I thought every student would have at least one individual piece of artwork not related to the mural projects, and all products from the mural units would be displayed including the reflective writing. The PTO felt it would be best to combine the two so they set to work to arrange parent volunteers to mount all of the flyers, photographs, letters, etcetera that were 2-D products for the mural projects. We needed to mount other student artwork as well as arrange for parents to help the night of the opening. The parents of the PTO have been extremely supportive and I would not have been able to make this project a success without their assistance.
5.9.5 Artists’ reception announcement optional competition.

I sent home the following information with all students in order to give them an equal opportunity to those students who have a strong interest in art, a chance to extend beyond the criteria of the mural projects. I received only fifteen entries by the February 3rd deadline. I did not get as much participation from the students as I was hoping for, although the student that was selected clearly put into visual form a powerful message. The fact that he included an artist statement along with the artwork made it even more meaningful. His statement reads: “I made a bunch of similar boxes that are completely different. This is to show how people are similar yet complexly different. This is how I am showing diversity in art.”
If you are interested in submitting a design for the opening event postcard that will be printed and distributed to our school community, teachers, administrators, local businesses and organizations that have supported our mural projects then I invite you to submit your ideas. This opportunity is open to all 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students at Wyandot. You are welcome to draw, paint, use marker, photography, technology or other 2 dimensional mediums. Keep in mind the postcard will be reproduced using only black ink on one color of card stock. We will not be able to print colors only values. Two post cards must fit on one paper the size of this handout. This paper is 8 1/2” X 11”. The space provided below is 1/2 of this paper although you may choose to divide the paper in another way as long as two will fit on this size paper. You may do your design on this paper, or turn put it in an envelope and attach it to this form with your name and teacher completed. The information that appears on this form above your name and teacher should be included somewhere in your design. The deadline for entries is Thursday, February 3, 2005. If you have any questions please see Mrs. Buda as soon as possible.

Good Luck!

Illustration 66. Artists’ reception postcard designed by fourth grade student.
ARTISTS' Reception and Mural Project
Diversity and CHARACTER Education
March 1, 2005 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Wyandot Elementary, Dublin City Schools
5620 Dublinshire Dr. Dublin, OH 43017 phone: 761-5840
7:00 5th Grade Mural Unveiling & Dublin Fund Recognition
7:05 4th Grade Mural Unveiling & Dublin Arts Council Recognition
7:10 3rd Grade Mural Unveiling & Dublin Education Foundation Recognition
7:15 2nd Grade Mural Unveiling & Wal-Mart Recognition
7:20 1st Grade Mural Unveiling, Rosemary's Portrait Studio & PTO Recognition
7:25 Meet Guest Artist Amy Yaich
7:30 5th Grade I-Movies
7:40 4th Grade I-Movies
7:50 3rd Grade I-Movies

Student work related to the mural projects will be on display throughout the evening.
These works include: books, sculptures, web pages, timelines, posters, flyers, and
reflective writing.

Thank you to Joey Michals, 4th grade student from Mrs. Owen's class for the design of this announcement.
Artist Statement: "I made a bunch of similar boxes that are all completely different. This is
to show how people are similar yet completely different. This is how I am showing diversity
in art."

Illustration 67. Backside of artists' reception postcard announcing date and time of
events.

The student who was selected to have his artwork on the announcement of the
mural opening did not usually do any extra work other than that which was required of
him. Matter of fact, it was most often difficult to get his active participation without
additional prompting. The difference that it made in this student's attitude and
enthusiasm following the announcement of his work being selected was remarkable. The
rest of the year he entered the art room with a contagious enthusiasm, confidence and a
smile. He did not seem to need the nurturing that had been typical for him to be
successful.

190
5.10 Culmination of Unit

5.10.1 February lunch recesses.

The students in the painting and advertising groups were almost finished with few exceptions. The documents teams and video teams needed to finish but they were at the place in their work when it was best to have only one or two at a time working instead of having the entire group at one time. I choose to have the students come in during recesses to complete the work or if their teacher would release them during the school day, they had permission to come in and work quietly during my other classes. Lunchtime in the art room continued to be a busy and demanding time of day with students needing guidance to complete steps of their work. The students' enthusiasm never dwindled and their energy continued to be felt as they worked diligently towards completion.

5.10.2 Presentation of the iMovies.

It was right around this time that I was making plans for how I was going to get the completed iMovies to the screen in our school the night of the opening to be shown to the parents. I asked our building computer tech about options that would work. I came to the realization that our opening was scheduled to be one hour long and our total movie time combined was approximately 60 minutes. I did not want to have movies showing during the time of the unveilings and student presentations. According to Linda, our technology representative, I could load the movies by grade level back onto a digital tape and play them from the cameras for the opening night. We decided to use the gym to show the fifth and third grades and the music room to show the fourth grade movies. Later in the month she and I rounded up speakers, and carts to rehearse this. Days before
the opening one of the cameras stopped working correctly. She was able to physically take the camera to be fixed, and my principal approved the funds to have it repaired immediately.

To solve the issue of being able to have students own a copy of the movies we discussed burning the grade level jMovies onto a DVD. I did not know at that time that we did not own a DVD burner in our school. She spoke to my principal and her supervisor that oversees technology in the district and they placed an order for two new computers that would burn DVDs. Linda returned to my room after being gone less than one hour and she told me not to worry, I would be able to burn DVDs for my students. The new computers would be here by spring break and we would be able to use iDVD to burn separate third, fourth and fifth grade DVDs. After the opening, we did burn DVDs for every student in grades 3-5 who brought in a blank DVD-R for us to burn. Parent volunteers and Linda made this possible.

5.10.3 Student reflective writing.

Teachers turned in their class’s reflective writing to me by Wednesday, February 23, 2004. The first and second grades had done collaborative writing as a class activity using chart paper. Students were able to share with each other and reflect on the process with their classroom teachers. They applied grade level appropriate spelling, grammar and punctuation through mini-lessons directed by their teachers at the same time. The majority of the third, fourth and fifth grades worked independently on the writing after some class brainstorming. It was evident to me that many of the classes must have reviewed the mechanics of a paper such as paragraph form, supporting ideas
with details, having an opening and closing paragraph; and many of the classes typed their papers on the computer and used spell check.

I hoped that if I was removed from the writing process and the students completed the reflective writing with their classroom teachers that there would be more validity to what they wrote than if I gave the assignment. I didn’t want to influence the students for fear they would write what they thought I wanted to hear. As soon as I received the student reflections from the teachers I got busy reading them. I was learning what specifically my students thought they learned during the process of making the mural. It was important to me to know what my students learned or did not learn to better inform my construction of effective curriculum design.

It was decided we had time for just one oral presentation per grade level to be recited at the artists’ reception. I had to move quickly to accomplish this. I had to be sure the selected students were indeed going to be able to be present on the opening night. I sent home permission slips notifying parents right away and asked that the permission slips were signed and returned immediately so if they were not able to attend I still had time to select another student. All students did return their permission slips, the next day. All of the writings were displayed in the main hallway out of the commons for parents to view the night of the opening.

I have included the one writing sample from each grade level. These are the reflections that were presented orally at the artists’ reception.
Grade One mural and mural reflection:

Illustration 68. Completed first grade mural.

Mrs. Milburn's First Grade Mural Project

- Learned how to paint
- If you paint smaller, it looks further away
- Painting is more fun than I expected it to be.
- If you paint bigger, it looks closer.
- Break it up
- Learned how to be more creative
- Mix colors
• Do a sloppy copy if you need to
• Learned more about respect
• Work together in groups
• Learned how special things can really be

Grade two mural and mural reflection:

Illustration 69. Second grade completed mural.
Mrs. Stapleton's 2nd Grade

The mural project was awesome to watch as everything we did started to come together. Last year our families designed tiles that told about our family history. We came to school in the evening to paint our tiles, even our dad's were helping paint the tiles. Then they were glazed and fired in a kiln. It was exiting when we saw the finished tiles about our families mounted on the wall. This really showed our diversity as some kids had parents from Russia, Sweden, Korea, Japan and places all over the world.

Last fall we took cameras home so that we could find pictures of people in our community who are good citizens. It made us take a good look at what goes on around us and we saw things that we normally ignored. This is a great place to live and good things are happening all of the time.

Mrs. Buda had all the photos developed and we designed a mural that made everything come together. It was so great having a special artist in our school who designed the mural with us and helped us paint. We learned how to work together and cooperate and to listen to each other's ideas. Some kids had really cool ideas and we learned to respect what everybody was thinking.
This was really a community project and we liked working together with so many people. Our families will be proud when they see the finished mural surrounded by the tiles. It will be in the commons forever, so when we are in high school we can come back to Wyandot and part of us will be right here on the wall!! And we will go back out in the world and be GOOD CITIZENS!!

Grade three mural and mural reflection:

Illustration 70. Third grade completed mural.
Wyandot Mural
Deborah Grade 3

The mural was made by mixing colors and put the paint on the mural. The technology was by using cameras which took pictures and videotaping. The computers were used to make the flyers. Something I learned about citizenship is that you can always work with other people even if you don't like that person. Something I learned from democratic process used to make decisions is you won't always be able to get your way. You should use other people's ideas. This project was a representation of all students, families and the community by putting on pictures of something or someone that's doing a character trait. This project is a representation of teamwork, and cooperation that can gather up little pieces and make something wonderful and beautiful. This project is a representation of our diversity of students in our school that even though each student had different personalities and character traits if we cooperate you can make one good thing. My opinion of this project is that I liked the mural and so will others because we all made it and it is going to look really great in our school. I learned that citizenship is really important in our school and our community.
More than a Mural

Scott
Grade 4
Mrs. S.'s Class

I learned many things when I helped make the mural with my class. I learned about citizenship, decision-making, the community, teamwork and diversity. Not only was the mural fun, but it taught me some respectful lessons. The mural was good for the school, kids, and neighborhood.
Citizenship is one important lesson that I have learned while making the mural. Citizenship means to help those in need, or to follow rules. My group showed citizenship by taking care of the equipment. Another way we showed this was by helping each other on the computer. Citizenship is an important lesson that I have learned.

Decision-making and teamwork are two other important lessons that I have learned. My group showed decision-making by telling each other the truth about their ideas. We also learned that we don’t have to agree with each other. Our team had rules like to try to not fight, not criticizing each other’s, and always listen to other people’s ideas. Teamwork and decision-making are two skills I have learned from making the mural.

I learned about diversity and community involvement from the mural. My group showed diversity by excepting ideas from others. We also showed community involvement by inviting the neighborhood to see the mural when it’s finished. I learned that the school is part of the community and that we all learn to respect each other’s ideas and ways of living.

The Wyandot murals are more than just art. They are something that taught me about citizenship, decision-making, the community, teamwork, and diversity. Now I appreciate others peoples viewpoints. The Wyandot mural is a connection between the kids, teachers, school and the community.

Grade Five Mural and Mural Reflection:
Illustration 72. Completed fifth grade mural.

The Mural Experience

By Kyle and Roshan

In school we’ve been making a mural. We will cover four aspects of making our mural that were important to us. The first aspect is citizenship. The next aspect covers the democratic process for decision making. After that is representation of all families
and the community. And the final aspect covers the diversity of our school. All four are important. We used all four of these to help make our mural.

As a citizen you should show citizenship by helping our community. This makes it a better place to live. We decided to make a mural so that we could make our school a better place. It makes the school more beautiful and interesting. That's a great example of citizenship. To make our community a better place we try to help by recycling, picking up trash, sharing toys and helping to set up activities in our community. We show those things in our mural.

Our mural shows the democratic process of decision-making in action. Voting is shown. It's one of the ways people make decisions. We gave everyone a chance to give their ideas without being interrupted. We gave everybody a fair chance to make decisions by voting on our ideas. People also split into separate groups to decide on some things. When we made our mural we had four groups each group learned different kinds of skills. The people in the documents team, painting team, advertising team and the video team made some of their own decisions because they were informed about those areas. Being informed makes for better decisions.

Our mural does a good job of representation of our families and our community. We picked some important events, people and places to commemorate. We decided that they were important if they showed kindness, cooperation or community growth. We showed fire trucks on the job, a statue dedication and some everyday events like doing the dishes at home. Everyone has to do their part and little things we do helps our family and our community.
Diversity in our school is an important part. It's what makes our school a better place to learn. The mural showed boys and girls of different races, and religions. The mural shows different celebrations. Our whole mural shows diversity.

Our mural shows all of these aspects in a colorful and beautiful manner. It used teamwork to make it happen. It took a lot of people to make it. A lot of decisions had to be made. We learned a lot about our community, teamwork, responsibility and good character. We worked hard and had fun making our mural. It is awesome and it's going to make our school more beautiful.

5.10.4 My conclusions about the student mural reflections.

I felt it was necessary to have parents hear from students the significance of the mural projects. I was sure, as demonstrated in the responses to the survey, that some parents did not understand the most significant authentic learning of life lessons that was taking place within the students as they engaged in the mural making process. I wanted them to see the value beyond the products of the artwork.

The first grades seemed to focus first on learning to paint with new techniques, colors, and their enjoyment of the process. Then they shifted to included that they had to work together in groups and that they learned more about respect. These were not as detailed or rich as the conversations that were present during their art making, but I think that since these were to be comments that came entirely from the students not teacher prompted, I felt it was reflective of how the students saw things from their first grade perspectives. They understood they had to cooperate, respect others’ ideas and decisions and learn to work with all of the others in their grade level to be successful.
The writing of the third, fourth and fifth grades was much more insightful; they presented details and examples for their ideas presented. While there was mention of some of the art processes they learned, it was evident the value they understood that the character traits that were identified in our school goals, and that they took photographs documenting evidence in our community of Dublin, that were the very same characteristics that they wrote about and that they had to use to be successful in their own work. It became self evident to my students the power this gave them. It is clearly and precisely documented in their writing by all students that they applied the concepts of diversity and character education, as they became active participants in their school community through the democratic process they used.

5.10.5 Art resource committee.

February 22 through 25, groups of parents assembled to mount final student work to colored construction paper and put student work in the hallways. I had already placed all five of the grade level murals into the commons with paper covering them until the unveiling. Parents put up posters, flyers, photographs, letters, printed out web pages, printed time lines, and more all around the commons between the murals and down the two hallways that connect to the commons. Parents covered the main hallway that leads from the commons to the academic wing with student reflective writing. Throughout the academic wing every student had at least one other piece of artwork on display that was not related to the mural projects in any way. The fifth grade students all had a clay mask that I hung from the ceiling tiles against the walls of the commons. Parents had already signed up to volunteer the night of the art show to set up student three dimensional work
in the commons prior to the art show or to pass out announcements and help direct parents after the presentations to the proper video viewing area for their children’s grade level.

5.10.6 Rehearsal for the artists’ reception presentations.

During lunch recess on Monday, February 28th, students who had returned their permission slips to present their mural reflections or to make a presentation to a specific group or organization came to the art room for a rehearsal. As students were released for recess they came to the art room to recite their information. One student decided that he just could not get up in front of all the parents and students and do this. Since his skin was becoming splotchy and red just in anticipation of practicing, I allowed him to select another student to read his reflection for him. I called the parent to obtain permission. Everyone knew when he or she was going to present and I had a photocopy of their information if they did not bring their own for the Artists’ Reception.

Illustration 73. Artists’ reception completed unveiling murals.
5.10.7  *The artists’ reception.*

The night of the artists’ reception came and went so quickly. The commons were bursting with people. It was a very tightly packed room with parents, siblings, grandparents and a few various friends and relatives. I was unsure about how the snowstorm would affect attendance. Our art show started at 7:00 pm and I knew there had to be parents still on the freeways trying to get home. They were calling for eight or more inches of snow by morning. There was no way for me to attempt to get an accurate head count, but it was a very good crowd.

Illustration 74. Third grade student reading reflection on stage at the artists’ reception.

One grade at a time beginning with first grade students came up to presented their reflective writing to the crowd over the P.A. system, followed by a presentation to one of the groups or organizations that provided support and then a mural unveiling. The Dublin Fund, The Dublin Education Foundation, the Dublin Arts Council, Wal-Mart,
Rosemary's Portrait Studio, the PTO's Artist's-In-School's committee chairperson, the PTO's Art Resources Chairperson, principal Mr. P. and our visiting artist, Amy Yaich were recognized for the contributions that made this possible. The fifth grade students presented me with a dozen red roses. I announced the time and location of the videos and encouraged parents to be sure to see all of the advertising and documents teams' work as well.

Illustration 75. Third Grade clay sculpture. Illustration 76. Fourth grade paper mache box sculpture.

I quickly moved to the gym to be sure I would be able to get the movies started on time. I showed the fifth grade movie on the wall of the gym at 7:30 pm. Linda started the fourth grade movies ten minutes later in the music room while I was still showing the third grade movie. At 7:50 pm I started the fifth grade movie also in the gym. Following the movies, both students and parents helped remove the three dimensional artwork and computers from the commons. See Appendix A, Illustration 94 for the complete agenda of the artists' reception.
Many parents communicated to me that they were in sheer astonishment of the success of the work the students had done. Many of the parents had not seen any of the student work until the opening night. All of the comments I received were positive and communicated messages that the work was far more complex than they would have ever expected possible from elementary students. I always responded to the parents that their children have been working so hard and they should be very proud of the accomplishments of their child. I was extremely proud of my students and they were pleased to be able to show their parents what all the hard work they had been doing was really about. It was about working together regardless of our differences to achieve a level of success that we would not been possible without teamwork. I was sure my students all learned this.

In this chapter I have presented a narrative of the curriculum unit that I did with my students as a case study for researching my overarching thesis question. How can I use an arts based integrated curriculum to improve citizenship within my school community?

I felt it was important to include information about how this curriculum unit was developed from its conception to demonstrate first, how my school and professional learning communities contributed to this process and second, the amount of planning it took prior to actually beginning the unit.
CHAPTER 6

Summary and Conclusions of Study

In this chapter I set out to demonstrate the success of the integrated curriculum unit. I discuss additional parent, teacher and support staff attitudes and compare where they were during the fall of 2004 to those during the spring of 2005 after the unit was completed. I discuss the some of the multiple assessments I used throughout the unit that informed my practice by providing success indicators for student learning. I demonstrate that student achievement was high. This is important to the study because the indicators of student learning were used to guide my decisions about the effectiveness of my selected pedagogy throughout the entire unit.

6.1 Attitudes of Parents, Teachers and Support Staff

In May, I sent out surveys that were similar to the ones I sent out in October. I wanted to see if there was a change in parental and/or teacher attitudes now that the projects were complete. I have placed both sets of survey information together to compare the differences. Parents returned 143 surveys in the fall and 74 surveys in the spring out of a total of 440 families. Teachers and Support Staff returned 27 surveys in
the fall and 24 in the spring. The responses are indicated in red type and the black type is the original survey.

6.1.1 Teacher and support staff survey comparisons.

Wyandot Elementary Community Mural: Diversity and Character Education

Survey for Teachers and Support Staff

1. I believe there is a need at Wyandot Elementary to inform students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and make obvious how our diversity builds strength in our community.

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1. I believe the Wyandot Elementary Murals were successful in informing students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and to make obvious how our diversity builds strength.

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2. Creation of the family/staff diversity tiles is an innovative approach that will of increase awareness and acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

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2. Creation of the family/staff tiles has been an innovative approach that created not only increased awareness but also acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

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3. The mural will help build pride in our school.

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4. The mural will provide opportunity for all members of our Wyandot community to have representation in the mural will present potential to build a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community members.

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4. The mural process established a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community.

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5. Students, families and staff are being encouraged to explore and expand their understanding or boundaries of how they think about good character.

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6. As a teacher/staff member, I plan to utilize opportunities to integrate Language Arts curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs, or the overall mural.

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6. As a teacher/staff member, I was able to utilize opportunities to integrate Language Arts curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs, or the overall murals.

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7. As a teacher/staff member, I plan to utilize opportunities to integrate Social Studies curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs or overall mural.

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7. As a teacher/staff member, was able to utilize opportunities to integrate Social Studies curriculum and standards with the family diversity tiles, character education photographs or overall mural.

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8. In taking the photographs of good character in our Dublin community I will be extending my knowledge of my community.

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8. I extended my knowledge of this community by taking the photographs of good character in Dublin.

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9. As a teacher, I am getting to know other Wyandot community members better through diversity tiles.

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9. As a teacher, I gained new knowledge of other Wyandot community members through the diversity tiles.

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<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>

10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</table>
10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community and would be interested in future endeavors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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### 6.1.2 My conclusions about teacher and support staff attitudes and understandings.

Looking at the total percentage of teachers that agreed or strongly agreed with the statements compared to the number who disagreed or strongly disagreed, there was little fluctuation in their overall attitude between fall of 2005 and spring of 2005. In analyzing the data that is presented, I have to ask why the questions that specifically refer to the teacher's integration with their class, about social studies, and language arts, or improving their specific knowledge of the family diversity or community, consistently dropped in percentages from strongly agree in the first survey to agree at the time of the second survey in May. I can only question if it was due to the many changes in curriculum across grade levels and the need to focus on achievement test that they were not able to include or complete as much as they had originally planned? During the last quarter of our school year, there was very much of a sense of frustration because both parents and teachers may not have been provided with all of the necessary information to be most successful in transitioning to several new curriculum approaches imposed by the district all at once. Coupled with the fact that at least six or more teachers in my building were unexpectedly reassigned to new classroom locations and new grade levels for next year. I have to think that those stresses may have effected the last question concerning placing value and support for future integrated curriculum units. At no time did I ever receive any comments from teachers during the unit that they were anything other than supportive, and that the results had surpassed their expectations as far as the students enthusiasm for learning and desire to be actively involved in
the process. Further information would be needed to draw any valid conclusions so all I am able to do is speculate from my bias role as both participant and researcher.

6.1.3 Parent survey comparisons.

Wyandot Elementary Community Mural: Diversity and Character Education Survey for Parents

1. I believe there is a need at Wyandot Elementary to inform students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and make obvious how our diversity builds strength in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

1. I believe the Wyandot Elementary Murals were successful in informing students, families and staff members about the diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our school community and to make obvious how our diversity builds strength.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. Creation of the family/staff diversity tiles is an innovative approach that will increase awareness and acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

2. Creation of the family/staff tiles has been an innovative approach that created not only increased awareness but also acceptance of the diversity that exists in our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. The mural will help build pride in our school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. The mural has helped build pride in our school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The mural will provide opportunity for all members of our Wyandot community to have representation in the mural and will present potential to build a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community members.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. The mural process established a stronger sense of membership and connection to our school and our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Students, families and staff are being encouraged to explore and expand their understanding or boundaries of how they think about good character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
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</table>

5. Students, families and staff were encouraged to explore and expand their understanding or boundaries of how they think about good character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. As a parent, I will be able to teach my child/children about values that are important to our family as we take our character education photographs for the mural.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

6. As a parent, I was able to reinforce and teach my child/children about values that are important to our family as we discussed and took our character education photographs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7. As a parent, I have been able to teach my child about our own heritage or family traditions when we made our family diversity tile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. As a parent, I was able to teach and reinforce with my child/children about our own heritage or family traditions when we made our family diversity tile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8. As a parent, we are getting to know other Wyandot community members better through the tiles of other families, teachers and staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</table>

8. Our family extended our knowledge of this community while taking the photographs of good character in Dublin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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</table>

9. In taking the photographs of good character in the Dublin community our family will be extending our knowledge of our community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>13%</td>
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</table>

9. As a parent, I have gained new knowledge of other Wyandot community members through the diversity tiles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</table>

10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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</table>
10. I value and support this type of integrated learning in our Wyandot community and would be interested in future endeavors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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6.1.4 *My conclusions about parent attitudes and understandings.*

As I attempt to analyze the results of these surveys to make sense of the data, I find myself asking more questions than being able to draw definitive conclusions. When I first sought feedback from the surveys in October, it was in reaction to a few negative responses from parents. I felt a need to quantify the number of parents who may have had similar issues to those of these parents, regarding my teaching of this unit. To my surprise 14% of the parents did not support or see value in this type of integrated learning while 67% agreed or strongly agreed and 19% were uncertain.

I reacted with the assumption that there must be a lack of education and understanding about the benefits of this type of arts based integrated curriculum approach. I felt strongly that if parents were provided with more information and they had a chance to see and hear for themselves first hand from their children, they would comprehend how the arts can be an expressive and creative alternative form of learning that brings meaning to many curricular areas and focuses on important life centered issues. I thought that I would clearly demonstrate to them the impact of the unit of study and they would support and value this type of learning in the future. I felt that I had provided every opportunity for parents to see, hear, and learn more about what was going on in our unit through their children. Parents were provided with many opportunities to be well-informed and active participants.
It is obvious that I was successful at changing the viewpoint of some parents. One parent wrote, “When the project was assigned, I was confused and skeptical about it. After seeing the end result, I am glad and thankful you took on this project. It is wonderful!” Another commented to me, “You should be proud of the impact you have had on the students at Wyandot, you know you are getting through when my fourth grade son and his friends come home excited and talking to me about what they are learning and doing in art! It is hard to get boys at this age excited about anything not related to video games or sports.” These are just a few of the many positive comments I received directly from parents. It is the parents that I was unable to reach that I have the most concerns and questions about.

Why is it that the number of parents that agreed or strongly agreed to support and value this type of curriculum only increased from 67% to 76%? The number of uncertain responses went from 19% down to 11%. And the number of parents who disagreed or strongly disagreed went from 14% to just 13%. What I did not ask was, why these 13% disagreed and why they still felt this way. Were they parents who are so busy with their career paths that they don’t have time to listen to their children or come to school to participate in the opportunities for their involvement at school? I would be referring to the parents who leave their children off at school at 7:00 am every Monday through Friday; winter, spring, summer and fall, and pick them up at 6:30 pm then rush home to participate in all of the extracurricular activities that students of economically wealthy families most often participate in. Maybe it is the families who felt three weeks was not enough time to do the assignment, so therefore, don’t ask me to do something like this again next time? Maybe the parents, who thought this was going to be above the comprehension of their children, never heard the words from their children’s mouths that
I have heard. Do these parents feel the arts should not have such a large role in their child’s day and/or life because it is not a core academic content area, which is directly measured with test scores? Possibly these parents feel there should be more curriculum time spent with traditional methods of education within traditional core academic subjects and less time with the arts.

I may never know for sure but if nothing else, I hope I was able to effect a change in the attitude of two specific parents whose comments have haunted me since early in the unit. A parent who suggested during the first survey that I must have felt the parents were not doing their job well enough at home, since I felt a need to address diversity and character education with their children in my curriculum at school; nor was it my place to be teaching them this. During the early stages of this unit, another parent anonymously wrote, “The family tiles are no different than the handprints fifth graders leave on the wall with green paint as a record of attending this school! Why are you bringing politics into this?” I keep these types of comments in perspective by considering the student deaths that resulted in the incident at Columbine and the numerous other tragic accounts that occur in real schools, with real kids, even in economically privileged communities. When accepting diversity is not translated to all aspects of our everyday lives, and we have students in our schools who are unable to find commonalities between them to be accepted into their school communities; will we continue see the results escalate to such horrific events? As an educator of young students who are at the stage in their development that they are questioning and actively forming their beliefs and values, and as a globally responsible citizen, I know that I can teach my students that they too can contribute to make our school, our community, and our world a better place to live, one day at a time.
6.1.5 Summary of parent, teacher and support staff attitudes.

Teachers and support staff were extremely supportive and enthusiastic about the project with their students. Participation of staff in designing the tiles, taking photographs and integration into classroom curriculum was 100%. I can only guess that some of the variance that caused teachers to fluctuate from very strong to strong agreement from fall 2005 to spring 2005 had to do mostly with not having the time to integrate as thoroughly as they may have initially planned to in the fall. Teacher stress and pressures at the end of the year for accountability is assumed to have been a factor in the change primarily as a result of lack of time. Further research would need to be conducted to provide definitive conclusions.

Parent attitudes were not as congruent as those of students and teachers. There was an overall sense of great accomplishment and pride in the work of the school community. However, there was not consensus on the importance or value of this integrated curriculum and the amount of involvement parents should have in a project. The overall value of the activities and curriculum unit as reported in the parent surveys did improve approximately 10% from fall of 2004 to spring of 2005. I would need to conduct further research to reveal the underlying attitudes from the parents with whom I was not able to effect change in their perception.

6.2 Assessments of Student Learning

It is through observation and interaction with my students as well as the analysis of the field notes, voice recordings, videotapes, narratives, oral and written reflections, progress notes, interviews and student artworks that I have been able to assess my
students for learning using the data I collected during the curriculum implementation to continuously shape the teaching and learning process. The process of shaping this curriculum has required constant self-reflection and evaluation for evidence of student learning and revisions. Since the goals of my curriculum included development of deeper understanding that would lead to action and behavioral change, I need to rely on complex assessment methods to determine if my goals have been met or to what degree of success have I have been able to positively impact citizenship in my school community. All of the sub-questions I have identified overlap and contribute to understanding the overarching thesis question. My summative assessments of student learning helped to identify the impact on student learning relating to issues of citizenship, character education, and diversity within our community. Assessment of student learning was important throughout the process as it serves as an indicator of student success and informed my thoughts, actions, and pedagogy in development of the curriculum unit.

6.2.1 Informal checks for understanding.

I have adapted my own continuum of assessment from that of Wiggins & McTighe, (1988). This is to demonstrate how evidence of understanding was collected using a range of assessment methods as checks of student understanding.
Informal checks for understanding

- Observation of participation
- Dialogue
- Identify areas support is needed
- Oral reflection on progress
- Written progress self/group (January)
- Transformation of idea to visual form
- Role in final project of group
- Written reflection of significance of unit
- Personal actions of students

As student understanding is of primary importance to assessment of the desired outcome of this curriculum, I examined the six Facets of Understanding (McTighe & Wiggins, 1999). I looked for students to demonstrate continued progress through these facets of understanding. Students gradually move from literal, novice, uncritical and egocentric responses to more sophisticated evidence of understandings that are masterful, skilled, revealing, in-depth and insightful. Students’ responses ranged throughout grade levels that reflected their experience, maturity and depth of understanding. These Six Facets of Understanding identified by McTighe & Wiggins (1999) are:

- Explanation
- Interpretation
- Application
- Perspective
- Empathy
- Self-Knowledge

222
6.2.2  **Student learning and behavior regarding diversity.**

I will begin with my conclusions about my students’ participation in this arts based integrated curriculum unit, and their art making to examine evidence that demonstrates a positive impact on student learning and behavior regarding diversity. One of the most evident activities that clearly demonstrated students’ learning about the diversity of the students in our school was through the creation of the family tiles. As presented earlier in this study, every family in our school community designed a tile that demonstrated their culture, heritage or activities their family enjoys. In the analysis of the tile designs it was concluded that 35% of the tiles included cultural images, 31% included flags from countries of their heritage, 43% included activities their family enjoyed together and 13% represented other types of images. After the art show in May of 2004, when students painted the tiles with their family, students took turns sharing their tiles with their class in the form of oral narratives that went along with their actual painted tile. This was an example that clearly demonstrated authentic learning that took place as one student at a time, shared his or her heritage, culture and family activities and information through the oral narrative that explained their tile. There were 587 students who shared their significant narratives with their classmates. It was evident in the breath and depth of the questions that students asked each other during these discussions that learning about the diversity of our families was taking place.
Illustration 77. Family diversity tile.

Illustration 78. Family diversity tile.
Next I needed to examine if this learning about diversity impacted the behavior of my students. I believe there is evidence of positive impact in the way students worked together throughout the mural projects. Students’ understanding of diversity has expanded from the beginning concept of acceptance of those from different countries and cultural practices to include their attitudes about age, gender, race, religion, and personal viewpoints. There is repeated evidence that my students not only learned about diversity, they applied it to their personal actions and transferred what they learned into multiple situations. This includes their ability to put what they learned not only into practice but also into written form, which further solidified the learning process that took place. It is documented in the written reflections my students did in their classrooms. Throughout the written student reflections there were statements beginning with first grade, which referred to how, the students all worked together to accomplish the making of their mural.

I will continue to reference the previously identified examples of students’ writing from each grade level to demonstrate where I found evidence of understanding each of the aspects of my study. These statements serve to validate the learning process. For the purpose of my study, the statements are representative of student learning for their entire grade level. Documenting of evidence of learning could just as easily be accomplished through critical analysis of the students’ videos, works made by the documents teams or works created by the advertising teams with similar results. Although in this study I chose to use their reflective writing, which served as one assessment of learning near the end of the study. Students from all four groups and in all grades did reflective writings.
I begin with documenting evidence of learning that shows how this arts based integrated curriculum and art making positively impacts student learning and behavior regarding diversity.

**Grade 1**  
“Work together in groups”

**Grade 2**  
“We learned how to work together and cooperate and to listen to each other’s ideas. Some kids had really cool ideas and we learned to respect what everybody was thinking.”

**Grade 3**  
“This project is a representation of our diversity of students in our school that even though each student had different personalities and character traits if we cooperate you can make one good thing.”

**Grade 4**  
“My group showed diversity by excepting ideas from others. Now I appreciate others peoples viewpoints.”

**Grade 5**  
“Diversity in our school is an important part. It’s what makes our school a better place to learn. The mural showed boys and girls of different races, and religions. The mural shows different celebrations. Our whole mural shows diversity.”

The students demonstrated that they were able to process this learning and apply it to their actions throughout the curriculum unit. The examples presented provide evidence within the written reflections, similar to what was apparent throughout the decision-making of students during the creative processes. The students who created the videos made comparable oral references throughout their videos. The third grade students, who created the clay slab box with the painters on top, purposely included both
a boy and a girl to demonstrate how they worked together hand in hand. The student who created the drawing for the opening reception postcard clearly demonstrated that he understood diversity in this artwork and the written statement that he provided to go with it.

6.2.3 Student learning and behavior through character and diversity education.

The second question in my inquiry dealt with how this arts based integrated curriculum positively impacted student learning and behavior through character and diversity education. The teaching and learning about character education and diversity was approached as a school wide goal. Teachers of all grades, subjects, taught this concurrently across all disciplines and through varied approaches. This exploration with effective curriculum of character and diversity education has promoted learning in multiple layers to develop breath and depth in student learning.

The September town meeting with all of our students, teachers and staff was the kick off for this school wide focus. At this time I passed out the disposable cameras and gave the family assignment to take photographs that documented good character in their community of Dublin. The teachers also were required to embrace good character and presented skits to the school to introduce the concepts of each selected Character Trait. The traits that were the focus for our school were citizenship, responsibility, respect, caring and giving, perseverance, cooperation, sportsmanship, honesty, trustworthiness, and self-discipline. Each time students rethought the theme of character education with a new group, be it classmates, siblings, parents, other students from our school, or
teachers they learned from shared perspectives, through the narratives and viewpoints of the others which lead to the comprehensive learning about good character.

In their classrooms, they used their multiple intelligences to create skits, songs, and presentations for our school-wide town meetings that exposed their understanding of a specific character trait as they applied it to the concept and it would be understood within the context of our school community. When the film from the cameras was developed, all students had to defend the photograph they selected as the best representation of good character in their local community of Dublin. The process of selection required students to analyze, interpret, and prioritize by importance or significance and to make a decision about the one photograph they felt was strongest from all of their choices. The next step involved in defending their photograph provided the class with another layer of depth to their understanding of these good character traits. Students provided sound reasoning and compelling arguments as to why their photograph was important. We had to narrow the photographs more and more to a manageable total number of photographs and these reasons became more and more important to the students. It was evident that students understood these traits in new ways as they were able to eliminate some photographs that may have represented the traits in similar ways, but then kept a different one because it was very unique and there were no others that addressed the same trait or maybe included a new way of looking at a character trait.

In the reflective writing from the grade levels increased thoughtfulness and depth of their understanding is documented. I feel these statements are representative of student learning for their entire grade level.
Grade 1  “Learned more about respect”

Grade 2  “Last fall we took cameras home so that we could find pictures of people in our community who are good citizens. It made us take a good look at what goes on around us and we saw things that we normally ignored. This is a great place to live and good things are happening all of the time.”

Grade 3  “This project is a representation of teamwork, and cooperation that can gather up little pieces and make something wonderful and beautiful.”

Grade 4  “Decision-making and teamwork are two other important lessons that I have learned. My group showed decision-making by telling each other the truth about their ideas. We also learned that we don’t have to agree with each other. Our team had rules like to try to not fight, not criticizing each other, and always listen to other people’s ideas. Teamwork and decision-making are two skills I have learned from making the mural.”

Grade 5  “We learned a lot about our community, teamwork, responsibility and good character.”

In the making of the mural projects within each of the groups, painting teams, video teams, documents teams and advertising teams, I frequently recorded conversations of students referring back to these character traits. The character education emphasis became part of how they made decisions and how they approached their work. Students selected to use additional photographs of their character traits as part of the letters they
sent to others telling about the mural projects. The photographs were also used in signs, posters, and in much of the thank you information that was sent to parents and supporters. Teachers have noted that reference of the traits and good character is coming through in other writing and in student conversations. Our school community has demonstrated a stronger sense of commitment to the importance of student conduct being representational of being good characters in our community.

6.2.4 Bringing our school community together.

The next of my inquiries addressed how this curriculum design brought our school community together to demonstrate the strength found when citizens unite in a democratic society? This was the focus of the family diversity tiles. When all the tiles were brought together to form the frame for our murals, it would represent our united strength. If the tiles were presented individually they would not demonstrate the strength that we provide as a united community. Together, and only together, our tiles form the frame for our murals. The frame area was intentionally placed so we could keep adding to the wall. New families are welcomed into our community as our strength grows.

Throughout the curriculum unit, decisions were primarily made through the democratic process of listening to the viewpoints of others in order to consider multiple perspectives. Then we make informed decisions through a popular vote. Students quickly realized this may not always result in getting their own way but part of the responsibility of being a citizen in our community is living by the rules or votes and standing united behind the majorities decision. When we stand united, we have strength to be successful at larger things we may not be able to accomplish alone, like the murals and all the projects that went with the curriculum unit. My students learned the
importance of presenting their personal viewpoint clearly, to negotiate, and to compromise. Students began to see the democratic process modeled in the original narrowing down of the photographs, which was carefully monitored by Amy and me were responsible to see that every student presented their photograph and ideas to the class before any decisions were made. As the unit progressed, students used this method of decision-making with less and less guidance, while having discussions about the direction their grade level mural was moving. Democratic decision-making was being used independently among groups of students in their four teams without any assistance from adults. Students agreed and accepted the outcomes as fair decision-making that would bring everyone together and allow them to make continued progress.

References I included from the students’ writing are as follows. I feel these statements are reflective of student learning for their entire grade level.

**Grade 1**
“Work together in groups”

**Grade 2**
“We learned how to work together and cooperate and to listen to each other’s ideas. Some kids had really cool ideas and we learned to respect what everybody was thinking. This was really a community project and we liked working together with so many people.”

**Grade 3**
“Something I learned from democratic process used to make decisions is you won’t always be able to get your way. You should use other peoples ideas.”

**Grade 4**
“Decision-making and teamwork are two other important lessons that I have learned. My group showed decision-making by telling each other the truth about their ideas. We also learned that we
don’t have to agree with each other. Our team had rules like to try
to not fight, not criticizing each other, and always listen to other
people’s ideas.”

**Grade 5**

“Our mural shows the democratic process of decision-making in
action. Voting is shown. It’s one of the ways people make
decisions. We gave everyone a chance to give their ideas without
being interrupted. We gave everybody a fair chance to make
decisions by voting on our ideas. People also split into separate
groups to decide on some things. When we made our mural we
had four groups each group learned different kinds of skills. The
people in the documents team, painting team, advertising team and
the video team made some of their own decisions because they
were informed about those areas. Being informed makes for better
decisions.”

### 6.2.5 Pride in our school through voice and involvement.

Did this curriculum provide opportunity for my students to develop pride through
having voice and being actively involved in visually improving our school? Students
from all four of the groups were enthusiastic about having their work displayed at the
artists’ reception. Their energy level was high. They were nervous about the
presentations on stage, but excited to be chosen to make the presentations. The students
look at the mural in the center of the tiles each day to see which mural was in the
commons today. There were always students in the crowd who remark with great pride,
“That’s our mural!” In videos the students made they included statements of being proud
to have been part of this project. The smiles on the students’ faces show this beyond a
doubt. It was evident in the selected reflective writings in most of the grade levels that
they felt great pride in making their school a better place.

**Grade 1** *(No evidence was found in the writing sample for this grade level)*

**Grade 2**
“Our families will be proud when they see the finished mural
surrounded by the tiles. It will be in the commons forever, so
when we are in high school we can come back to Wyandot and
part of us will be right here on the wall!!!”

**Grade 3**
“My opinion of this project is that I liked the mural and so will
others because we all made it and it is going to look really great in
our school.”

**Grade 4**
“The mural was good for the school, kids, and neighborhood.”

**Grade 5**
“We decided to make a mural so that we could make our school a
better place. It makes the school more beautiful and interesting.
We worked hard and had fun making our mural. It is awesome and
it’s going to make our school more beautiful.”

These inquiries contribute to answering the overarching question of my thesis
research which was to explore how the construction and use of arts based integrated
curriculum could improve citizenship within my school community. Students in several
grade levels made direct reference to their understanding of citizenship in their reflective
writing. In my broader definition of citizenship within our school community all of
these issues contributed to their active participation as responsible citizens in our school
community.
Grade 1  (No evidence was found in the writing sample for this grade level)

Grade 2  And we will go back out in the world and be GOOD CITIZENS!!

Grade 3  I learned that citizenship is really important in our school and our community.

Grade 4  Citizenship is one important lesson that I have learned while making the mural. Citizenship means to help those in need, or to follow rules. My group showed citizenship by taking care of the equipment. Another way we showed this was by helping each other on the computer. Citizenship is an important lesson that I have learned.

Grade 5  As a citizen you should show citizenship by helping our community. This makes it a better place to live. We decided to make a mural so that we could make our school a better place. It makes the school more beautiful and interesting. That’s a great example of citizenship. To make our community a better place we try to help by recycling, picking up trash, sharing toys and helping to set up activities in our community. We show those things in our mural.

6.2.6 Summary of study.

In this thesis, I have presented a theoretical framework my positionality as an art educator teaching in a specific elementary school and a thorough overview of a curriculum unit that spanned a twelve-month period of time from start to completion. The purpose of this investigation was to consider how to design an integrated arts based
curriculum unit to improve citizenship of my school. My reflections have been made public, as this curriculum unit has been described through my narratives. I revealed the complexities and challenges that were presented and the teaching pedagogies employed.

I have included the voices of my students, parents, teachers, and our visiting artist through the reality that I have constructed through my relationships with them. I have attempted to communicate this reality through clearly stated bits and pieces of the process and the accounts that I felt would have significance on the readers’ construction of reality as others read my thesis. When I go back through journals, videotapes, voice recordings, photographs, student work and notes from parents and teachers, I have had to make choices about what should be included and likewise excluded. More information has been excluded than included for the sake of presenting this reality in a manageable more concise form without compromising trustworthiness. It has been my intention to develop trustworthiness with my readers by providing credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability in my data. I have communicated how the use of reflexivity has contributed to my attitudes and decisions throughout the process.

It has been my intent to evoke the essence of the phenomena I observed during my research by supporting it with the construction of shared understandings through evidence provided in writings, video clips and photographs of the processes as it unfolded. The quantitative data from the parent and teacher surveys add validity to my qualitative multiple voiced representations provided. Skepticism may still be present in the readers’ constructions because of lost meaning in the translations.

The multiple voices of representation in my research provide a more encompassing view of the reality of the phenomena. My voice as teacher, co-creator of curriculum, learner, facilitator and researcher provide a significant dominance to this
representation. I have tried to honor the rich cultural contributions, learning styles, class, age, gender, race, religion and voices of all the participants in this study. It is the blending of these multiple voices, reflections, implied significance and factual accounts that intermingle in the creation of representation that will never be able to truly reveal all of the nuances of an actual lived event. As the identity of the characters within my research has been presented, I have tried to present a subjective portrayal of their moral, professional and ethical dimensions.

Reflexivity has been paramount to this action research. Students, parents, teachers and myself engaged in reflective small and large group discussions and writings that promoted both support and challenges to beliefs and opinions as they evolved in my research. Time to grapple with ideas and concepts was provided. Changes in attitudes and depth in understandings of the students about the value of diversity, cooperation, teamwork, respect, and responsibility of all participants' personal contributions were realized at various points along the way characterized by active citizenship in our school community. Reflexivity provided a critical influence to decisions about pedagogy in my practice and design of this curriculum. Reflexivity was used in construction of meanings whether input was from written data, oral discussions or visual observations which was in turn used guide my thoughts and actions relating to students, parents, teachers, support staff, the PTO representatives, funders of projects, and our visiting artist.

This study provides opportunity to draw conclusions relevant to both general education and art education with the potential to impact how others might consider use and design of integrated curriculum. This study has led me to ask more questions about my own practice and pedagogy. I believe the curriculum unit will have lasting impact on my students.
6.2.7 *Strengths of the study.*

- Participation included all students, teachers, and families.
- The study continued over a 12-month duration.
- Collaboration with a professional artist for 6 weeks greatly benefited students.
- Students were co-creators of the curriculum.
- Students accepted responsibility for their own learning.
- Advanced learners taught less experienced learners.
- Students experienced a variety of authentic learning situations and solved real problems.
- Multiple assessments were used throughout the study.
- Multiple surveys were done to obtain parent and teacher attitudes.
- Flexible design of the study allowed for reflection and revisions throughout process.

6.2.8 *Weaknesses of the study.*

- More information is needed to draw accurate conclusions about parent and teachers' attitudes.
- More time for collaborative planning between teachers would have been beneficial.
- Better understanding of using assessments.
- Would it have been beneficial for students to design rubrics for assessing their own learning prior to beginning their work with their team?
- There were situations when students became frustrated because I was not available to assist or direct them when they needed help; this led to unproductive use of time.

6.2.9 Conclusions.

I have demonstrated how the development and teaching of arts based integrated curriculum might increase understanding and improve citizenship within my school community. Student achievement exceeded my expectations not only in the quality of their artwork but in the attitudes and self-accountability students took for their learning. It was evident that when I gave my students this opportunity to be co-creators of their curriculum that they took ownership for their own learning. They determined what they needed to learn to accomplish their grade level and small group goals. They willingly forfeited many recesses to continue their work. They worked at home, on their own and with their groups, to provide thoroughness in their project without any implied expectation from me. They read operations manuals, conducted research in books and used the Internet. They utilized resources available through interactions with our visiting artist, the technology teacher and myself to assist them with their learning. They problem solved issues that developed throughout the unit. Students enthusiastically sustained cycles of active learning and reflection of citizenship for a twelve-month duration that resulted in complex understandings of important life issues. This provided authentic learning of what is required to work together as responsible citizens in a community; they
accomplished this by actually working together and being responsible decisions makers in their own specific school community. Metacognition of this concept was evident in many of the fourth and fifth grade students.

The real importance of this curriculum unit for my students was not accomplishing the completion of the murals or any of the specific projects related to this unit. The significance lies in the meanings and life lessons that our school community learned during the process, and understanding how it was that they accomplished these important issues that will have impact beyond the classroom. The complexity of being an active citizen in one’s local and global community is abstract in nature. This concept has required and will continue to require sustained inquiry and reflective practice. The true measure of the success will be in the actions of my students several years from now after they have left this school community and they participate in important local and global issues in their communities.

In this chapter, I provided summaries and conclusions about my research. I established evidence of the quality of the integrated curriculum I developed and this was supported by the assessments of learning I used. I showed the attitudes of teachers, support staff and parents. In the next chapter I will address implications of my study for the field of art education and areas for further study.
CHAPTER 7

Implications and Future Research

I have presented my research that demonstrates how I designed an integrated arts based curriculum unit focused on a big idea of citizenship in my school community. My students and I co-created this curriculum to investigate essential questions about diversity and character education to better understand citizenship. In this chapter I will address implications for the field of art education and areas for further study.

Teaching citizenship and character education has been a focus in general education from as early as Horace Mann (1848) and John Dewey (1897) to present. Dewey wrote widely on topics of democracy, education, philosophy, science and art. As an educator, he supported teaching methods that produced active learning centered on students’ interests and he opposed traditional methods of learning within strict disciplines and memorization of facts. Dewey emphasized knowledge as a means of controlling one’s environment to improve the quality of human life and declared that education must include a student’s physical and moral well-being in addition to intellectual development (Smith, 2005). Democracy and Education (1916), Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920), and Experience and Nature (1925) are writings of Dewey that inform my practice and beliefs about education and construction of knowledge. More recently (Beane, 1993,
McTighe & Wiggins, 1999, Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005) continue to build on these same beliefs of constructivist theory and curriculum design that engage students in real-life problem solving of issues in their community that are both important and relate to student interests. Walker (2001) and Parsons (2004) support constructivist learning that focuses curriculum on "big ideas" that create enduring understandings of important issues that are complex and have social relevance for effective teaching in art education.

My research and the design of the arts based integrated curriculum unit that I created is informed by these beliefs and linked to arts based inquiry, community and service learning. It is through arts based inquiries that my students demonstrated sustained interest in citizenship for a twelve-month period of time. Students experienced ongoing cycles of exploration and reflection as they explored these inquiries and presented their knowledge in photographs, murals, sculptures, web pages, books, videos, posters, commercials and more that demonstrated the depth of their learning. They were able to successfully transform their knowledge that included multiple perspectives form our school community for the viewer into visual art forms. Rasanen (2002) defends that arts based inquiry provides a means to re-see or re-connect knowledge so others can understand it in visual form. The curriculum was collaborative and included our whole school community in the learning and creating of art. The idea to create to a mural was in part a result of problem solving: what to do with a wall in our building that had become problematic. We as a school community had identified this as a problem. The entire school became actively involved in art making activities that solved this problem and improved the appearance of our own school. Direct participation, critical thinking and reflection (Taylor and Ballengee- Morris (2002) are characteristics of the process our community engaged in that align this curriculum with this service learning theory.
The implications of my research and the creation of this curriculum unit provide further support of the importance of arts based integrated curriculum as pedagogy that can improve the function of art education in our schools. This study provides evidence that art curriculum can successfully include more substantial concepts, development of important life issues and problem solving than purely a Discipline Based Arts Education program when our primary goal is to prepare students for their future.

This study provides a foundation for further research that could include a variety of topics. These opportunities for further study could include additional service learning experiences, investigating the impact of arts based inquiry on learning, assessment to support curriculum development, and the use of big ideas and essential questions to construct meanings are a few of the possibilities that could be built upon from this study. I have a specific interest in continuing my research with arts based integrated curriculum design and building citizenship within my school community. I would like to research how brain based theory might provide support of sustaining civic responsibility and the ability for my students to apply these civic concepts beyond their school community to their local community and to our larger global community.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Nash, Robert J. (1997). *Answering the Virtuecrats: A moral conversation on character*


APPENDIX A

TEACHING AND FAMILY DOCUMENTS
Wyandot Elementary
Diversity and Character Education Murals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding from Grants</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1000.00 from Wal-Mart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1200.00 The Dublin Fund</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$280.00 The Dublin Education Foundation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$400.00 Dublin Arts Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3280.00 Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2000.00 - Balance Paid by Wyandot PTO Artist In Schools Committee
$280.00 Funding for Murals

Primary Expenses
- $1380.00 Cameras
- $3000.00 Amy Yaich
- $900.00 Processing and printing photos

5280.03 - Primary Expense total

Dublin City Schools Mural Funding
Art Budget

ADDITIONAL EXPENSES:
- Columbus Clay 5/8/04 Clear glaze & underglazes 328.27
- Columbus Clay 2 Gallons Glaze 81.50
- Video Tapes 11/3/04 CVS 27.74
- Lowes 13 4x8 panels 10/30/04 118.84
- Lowes 3 4x8 masonite panel 2/4/05 23.67
- Lowes Velcro & polycrylic 2/8/05 119.95
- Meijers cassette tapes 11/17/04 12.67
- Meijers Adhesive for photos 9.48
- Lowes 1/0/05 Tile Adhesive and glue 22.69
- Roush Hardware Epoxy (for broken tiles) 4.15
- Video Tapes 11/16/04 64.01
- Meijers videotapes 11/16/04 34.84
- Roush Hardware 1/10/05 14.67
- Lowes Velcro 4/13/05 21.19
- Lowes Velcro 4/20/05 16.26

Total Additional Expenses 899.83

Additional Expenses paid by:
- PTO Teacher Fund 199.15
- Principal's Fund 609.18
- Art Budget 81.50

Total Expenses 6169.86
Family Tile Mural

Our tiles have been handmade by Wyandot students grades 1-5, though all of our tiles are approximately 6" x 6" they each contain unique marks made by the artists hands. These subtle differences are qualities to appreciate.

Family tile designs that were turned in are located on the classroom table of the oldest Wyandot student in each family. All materials you will need are located on the classroom tables. Each family should paint their tile design onto a tile tonight during the art show. The tiles will later be clear glazed and fired. Over the summer they will be secured to the wall in the commons to represent the strength found in our diverse school community.

**Directions:**

1. Transfer your tile design onto a bisque fired handmade tile by folding the paper over the tile so that the top of the design is at the top of the tile. Slide a piece of carbon paper under the design so that the blue carbon will transfer onto the tile. Draw over the design, outlining it with a pencil to transfer the design to the clay tile. Put your name on the back of the tile with pencil.

2. Paint two coats of underglaze to each area of the tile. The carbon used to transfer the design will burn off so all of the design should be painted with colors. The underglazes will appear dull until they are coated with clear glaze and fired again. Glazed clay samples are on display if you want to see how the fired colors will look. Rinse and dry the paintbrushes well between colors. Additional water should not be added to underglazes.

3. When the tile is finished, gently stack the tile and your tile design on the shelf in the art room, of the oldest child in the family.

4. Thank you for participating in our community mural project, the tiles will be unveiled at the 2004-2005 Walk Through.

Illustration 80. Photograph of directions given to families for painting tiles.
Welcome New Wyandot Elementary Families,

I am very excited about our first school wide collaborative mural. The mural started with making clay tiles were painted, fired and are being assembled to construct a frame or border around the space that is becoming our mural. The mural is truly a collaborative endeavor that involves all students and families in our school, teachers and support staff.

I would like your family to design one of the tiles to be used in our mural border! When all the tiles are assembled to construct the border for our mural, it will represent the strength found in our diverse school community.

*What should we include in our family tile design?*

Your family tile should represent your family in a special way. This may include ethnic background, cultural depictions, family heritage, or family activities. Please draw your design in the space provided on the back of this page. This is the size that your actual clay tile will be.

*Who will make the tiles?*

Wyandot students made the actual clay tiles during art time with Mrs. Buda.

*When will our family paint the tile?*

On Friday, August 27, 2004 from 3:00-5:30 during the walk thru and ice cream social the art room will be open for families to paint their design onto the tiles. If you are unable to paint your family tile during this time, please make arrangements to do so within the next two weeks.

*Then what will happen to the tiles?*

The students will apply clear glaze to the tiles and they will be glaze fired. Over the summer Mrs. Buda and some parent volunteers secured the tiles to make the border around the mural wall. The new tiles that are finished in August and early September will be added to the existing tiles. In mid to late September your students will bring home more information about the rest of the mural process. All families will be involved in what goes into our Character Education Mural. The goal is to have the mural completed before Winter Break this year.

*Volunteer Opportunities?*

Many parent volunteers are needed throughout the year to make this project and others meaningful to our Wyandot students. Please complete your name and phone number below if you would be interested in volunteering.

---

- Art Resource Committee- Parents assist with mounting artwork to be hung in the hallways and for the art show in May.
- Artist in Schools- parents come in during the school day to assist with visiting artists.
- As needed for special projects.

Name __________________________ Phone __________________________

Illustration 81. Photograph of information sent to new families during the summer.
Parents,

Thank you for becoming involved with our Diversity and Character Education Mural and volunteering your time to make this meaningful for Wyandot students and families. I value parent input and hope you will continue to be involved with the visual arts program. As the focus in contemporary art education theory is shifting toward using visual arts to explore “Big Ideas” and life centered issues for our children, you will find that I will be frequently seeking parent volunteers throughout this school year to accomplish meaningful curricular endeavors.

In September we will proceed with the next steps of this mural. I will be sending home a disposable camera and an assignment for each family. All Wyandot families will be asked to photograph and reflect on what exemplifies “Good Character” in our Dublin community. We will use selected photographs to incorporate into our mural and artist Amy Yich will lead students through further developing ideas and painting the mural. All students will participate in writing, reflecting, discussing and decision making about the mural. Every family has already been asked to design and paint their family tile. New families and any family who has not yet completed a tile will be given an opportunity to do so at the Student Walk Through and Ice Cream Social on Friday, August 27th. The new tiles will be added to our mural border so that all families are represented. Every student will participate in several art making projects as they explore character education. Students will participate in one or more activities of painting the final mural, video taping the process, editing film, documentation about the process, making invitations or other activities in preparation for an opening reception to dedicate the mural.

This mural project should be completed by winter break at which time our P.O.N.D. committee should be receiving notification about a sizable grant from the E.P.A., which Wyandot has applied for funding. Through community and P.T.O. support our P.O.N.D. project is an exemplary innovative integrated curriculum unit through which our entire school will connect curriculum of all areas with over a 30-month period of time from December 2004 through April 2007. Our committee is currently seeking parents that may be interested in becoming involved in this project at many different levels. One teacher from each grade level is on a committee to develop curriculum specifically connected to this project. We are interested in having parents involved in helping plan science, art, social studies, language arts, music, P.E. and Health and Safety curriculum on our committee. We are also interested in the possible formation of a separate P.T.O. committee that could coordinate volunteers and assist with a variety of activities (taking classes to the pond, working with various artists constructing murals, sculptures, and redesigning the park area around the pond behind our school, coordinating scout troop community service, etc.).

Thank you again for your support and I hope you will consider serving on the P.O.N.D. committee or the Art Resource committee this year if your schedule allows. I am committed to bringing collaborative and meaningful learning experiences to our Wyandot families through our visual arts program and welcome any suggestions or feedback you may have.

Mrs. Buda

Wyandot Art Specialist

Illustration 82. Photograph of information given to parent volunteers putting tiles on the wall.
Fire Prevention Poster Contest

I would like to thank all students who turned in a Fire Prevention Poster. This contest was sponsored by the Washington Township Fire Department and included several Elementary Schools in the area.

Congratulations to: Ali Fisher, 2nd grade Mrs. Fischer’s class; Jojein Han 5th grade, Mrs. Witch’s class; Kevin Hwang, 3rd Grade, Mrs. Kimball’s class; and Katie Harrington, 4th grade, Mrs. Hardgrove’s class. These students all received awards for their participation in this contest.

Diversity and Character Education Mural

Phase One Family Diversity Tiles: This required Wyandot families to work together to design an image that represented something specific about their heritage, culture, ethnic background or family activity. Everyone was invited to our Wyandot Elementary Art Show in May to paint their family design onto a clay tile that students made. These tiles have been fired and secured to the wall in the commons to create a border where our mural painting will eventually be hung.

If your family has not completed a tile for any reason, the art room is open every Friday during October at lunch recess and before school (7:30am-9:00am) for students or families to paint their tile. We want to be sure every family is represented on the wall so please try to complete any unfinished tiles during the month of October.

The family, teacher and staff tiles are all hung together to represent the strength found in our diverse school community.

Phase Two Character Education Photographs: The disposable cameras are due on Monday, October 18. Bring your camera to school and we will have the film developed and the photographs printed. Hopefully over the last three weeks your family had an opportunity to creatively explore the multiple meanings and interpretations of these character traits. The process should lead to better understanding of what good character in our Dublin Community can look like. Special Thanks to Wal-Mart for the donation of $1,000 that helped pay for the cameras and the Dublin Fund for their grant contribution to this projects.
Art News

What will happen with the photographs?

There will be many opportunities for students to use their Character Education photographs. First of all, students will be getting them back and asked to select one that may be used for their grade level mural. Students will be working with mural artist Amy Yalcin to create grade level murals in grades one through five. Students will be documenting the art making process by using digital video, digital still photos, writing, interviewing those involved and creating promotional materials such as posters or invitations for our community opening of the finished murals. Students will have an opportunity to sign up for specific responsibilities related to this project.

The additional photographs will be utilized in a variety of ways throughout the year. Many teachers are planning social studies and language arts units using the student photographs. Poetry Alive may be spring boarding off the student ideas, and several individual art works will be created using traditional and non-traditional methods.

Jackson Pollock

Ask your children grades one through five about Action Jackson and the action painting of Jackson Pollock. Students had a great time using sticks and spray bottles to splatter acrylic paints onto their art t-shirts. Students were able to analyze Jackson Pollock's paintings and identify formal elements within his works. After having first-hand experience experimenting with these colorful splattering techniques, students were able to see just how this process actually does record the movements of the artist.

The artwork on the shirts was created using a community approach. All students in the class splattered and dripped paint onto all the shirts in their class, which required cooperation, respect, tolerance and fairness. In moving towards the making of the murals it is important that students were able to practice working collaboratively in art. Students will continue to work on both individual and community works throughout the year.

Special Thanks to Mrs. Stoll, Student Teacher in Art!

Mrs. Stoll has been observing and teaching in the art room since the first day of school. She is from Ohio Dominican University and is completing her requirements to become a licensed art teacher. She has two children who attend Dublin schools and her husband is a physical education teacher in Dublin as well. Mrs. Stoll is going to Coffman High School to continue her student teaching experience with an older population. Mrs. Stoll has learned many things from working with your children. Her last day at Wyandot will be October 22, 2004.

Illustration 84. Page 2 of October Art News.
Art News

Wynandot Elementary

Character Trait Photographs

Once again Wynandot Families have done an incredible job. The art room is being flooded with remarkable photographs that are filled with fascinating stories that bring meaning to them. Discussion has focused on how well the photographs clearly demonstrate specific character traits that are of interest and importance. Students are sharing their photographs with each other in art. Each student is selecting a photograph that will be preserved to our visiting artist Amy Yach. Each photograph will then be used to develop our mural ideas. We will continue to use more of the photographs for press releases, creative writing, documentation and additional art processes.

Character Education Mural

Photograph taken by Luke Pucker, 1st grade Mrs. Costello's class.

Interpreted by Suriya Lacy, 4th Grade Mrs. Sawyer

"This photograph of Le Cheyenne represents courage. He was a brave Native American Chief."

Tilted Chair, 2002

Artist: William Wegman

Permanent Collection of the Columbus Museum of Art

During this art rotation students are learning about artist, William Wegman. His painting, Tilted Chair, inspired the process we are using that incorporates the use of photographs on the canvas and painting them together into landscapes or scenes to connect them. This is the process that students will use to create their grade level murals. Each grade level is using their character trait photographs to develop the ideas for their mural. During classroom brainstorming sessions students have been making plans to document these processes with digital videos, creation of books, and timelines of progress. They have advertising committees within their classes that will do announcements, make invitations, posters and other communications about an opening celebration for our finished mural.
William Wegman’s Photographs and Interpreting our photographs

The students at Wyandot have been learning about the artwork of William Wegman. His works are represented through photography, painting, video, and drawing. He is best known for his photography and videos and has works that have been included in Sesame Street and Saturday Night Live. The students have enjoyed seeing how Wegman has photographed his dogs. We have made comparisons with his photographs and we also had to think about: What makes a good photograph?

How camera angle can change the way a photograph looks? Will others understand the photograph to mean the same thing I do?

Students understand that photographs are also artwork and they too can have multiple interpretations and meanings. When we bring understanding to how we see our photographs and we connect our experiences to make meaning of it, then we are interpreting the photographs.

Artist Amy Yaich

Mural Artist, Amy Yaich will be arriving on Wednesday, November 3rd for her first visit with us. She will work with all classes grade 1-5 to help them develop their ideas from their photographs into the finished mural. She will be here most of the month of November working with students. Amy is from the Columbus area and has two elementary aged children of her own. She has worked with preschools, private and public schools to do a large variety of mural projects. We are very fortunate to have Amy come work with us at Wyandot.

Interested in Volunteering?

Students grades 3-5 will be involved in painting the mural, video taping, editing film, advertising, for a grand opening of the completed mural, creating books and timelines about the artistic processes and the character traits. Students in 1st and 2nd grade will be painting the mural and creating individual art pieces from their photos during art. Any parents who may be interested in volunteering to assist may sign up on the wall outside the art room door or email me at beda_sharon@mail.dublin.k12.oh.us.

These projects are likely to continue through most of the month of November with the exception of November 11 & 12.

Illustration 86. Page 2 of November Newsletter.
Illustration 87. Photograph of Power Point presented to students page 1.
Illustration 88. Photograph of Power Point presented to students page 2.
Illustration 89. Photograph of Power Point presented to students page 3.
William Wegman
Mural Painting
Tilted Chair
2002
Columbus Museum of Art

How was the mural made?

Tilted Chair Mural
• Found Post Cards
• Oil Painting
• 4 separate wooden panels put together
• Approximately 8' X 16'

Illustration 90. Photograph of Power Point presented to students page 4.
What is an important problem at Wyandot Elementary?
- Could we use art as a vehicle to learn about character education?
- Could we learn several new art processes making our mural?
- Could we work together collaboratively involving our entire school wide community?
- What local artist could I invite to help us with the mural?
- Where would the money to do this come from?
- How much would it cost?

Art Processes in our mural
- Making clay tiles
  - Clay slabs
  - Painting with underglazes
  - Clear glazing
- Designing a tile that represents our family
  - What kinds of images and symbols will represent my family?
  - What is important to show about my family?
  - Are the colors important?

Could we do this with our own photographs at Wyandot?
- What would be an important issue to work on in our school?

Art Processes in our mural
- Photography
  - How do I photograph Good Character?
  - What makes a good picture?
  - Does it matter what camera angle I use to take the picture?
  - Will others understand the why I took the photograph?
- Art Processes in our mural
  - Painting
  - How will we come up with ideas for our painting from the photographs?
  - How will we connect the photographs in the painting together?
  - How many students can paint at a time?
  - Who will help us paint?
Artist Amy Yaich

- Amy has painted several murals with children in other preschools, private and public schools.
- Amy lives in the Columbus area.
- Amy has two children of her own.
- She likes working with children.

What do we need to do get started on the next phase of our mural?

What jobs need to be done?
What can we learn from the St. Brigid of Kiltearn mural?
Wyandot Elementary, Art Show Agenda
Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Parents: Please help your child watch for their time to line up on stage.

Artists’ Statement

1. 7:00 5th Grade Mural Unveiling Reflections: Kyle Deshone & Roshan Jayaprakas Men-A

2. "If there is a representative from the Dublin Fund here tonight, please come forward. Wyandot Elementary would like to recognize the Dublin Fund for their contributions to our mural projects." - Tammy Denoma

Mr. P selects volunteer to help tear down the 5th grade paper and next set of students comes up to stage.

3. 7:05 4th Grade Mural Unveiling Reflections: Surya Lacy 5-A

4. "If there is a representative from the Dublin Arts Council here tonight, please come forward. Wyandot Elementary would like to recognize the Dublin Arts Council for their contributions to our mural projects." - Annie Punam D-3

Mr. P selects volunteer to help tear down the 4th grade paper and next set of students comes up to stage.

5. 7:10 3rd Grade Mural Unveiling Reflections: Deborah Hong K-3

6. "If there is a representative from the Dublin Education Foundation here tonight, please come forward. Wyandot Elementary would like to recognize the Dublin Education Foundation for their contributions to our mural projects." - Sarah Cooper

Mr. P selects volunteer to help tear down the 3rd grade paper and next set of students comes up to stage.

7. 7:15 2nd Grade Mural Unveiling Reflections: Kaylee Munnin, Marissa Laquette, Jon Coyle, Martina Zepeda S2

8. "If there is a representative from Wal-Mart here tonight, please come forward. Wyandot Elementary would like to recognize Wal-Mart for their contributions to our mural projects." - Kacey Barrett, Alley Binkman, Austin Piffer, Ian Smith, Cora Greaves

Mr. P selects volunteer to help tear down the 2nd grade paper and next set of students comes up to stage.

9. 7:20 1st Grade Mural Unveiling Reflections: Ben Drumm & Mitch Isler M-1

10. "If there is a representative from Rosemary's Portrait Studio here tonight, please come forward. Wyandot Elementary would like to recognize Rosemary's Portrait Studio." - Samantha Nwarath W-2 (Samantha stays on stage to help give parent volunteers their awards and the Amy Yalch)

Mr. P selects volunteer to help tear down the 1st grade paper and next set of students comes up to stage.

PTO Recognition:
- Annette Thomas - Art Resource Committee Chairperson and all the other parent volunteers
- Judy LaPointe - Artists in Schools Committee Chairperson for their support with our visiting artist

12. 7:25 Meet Guest Artist Amy Yalch

13. Mr. Pfeifer:
- "Our group made this special mural book so you." - Aki Toker

4. Laura Tucker - Technology Representative

14. 7:30 5th Grade I-Movies - Buda

15. 7:40 4th Grade I-Movies - Tucker

16. 7:50 3rd Grade I-Movies - Buda

Illustration 93. Photograph of artists’ reception agenda.
APPENDIX B

STUDENT WORK
FLOW CHART OF STUDENT WORK

DIVERSITY TILES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Tiles</th>
<th>Teacher Tiles</th>
<th>Staff Tiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

CHARACTER EDUCATION PHOTOGRAPHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

GROUP WORK GRADES 3, 4 & 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mural Painting Teams</th>
<th>Video Teams</th>
<th>Advertising Teams</th>
<th>Documents Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Mural per Grade</td>
<td>Grade 5 = 4 classes each created one video</td>
<td>Grade 3-5: *Morning Announcements *Posters *Fliers</td>
<td>Grade 5 = 2 groups made books 2 groups made Web Pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5 = 4 classes worked on the 5th grade mural</td>
<td>Grade 4 = 5 classes each created one video</td>
<td>Grade 5: Created Bumper Stickers: I am the proud Parent of a Wyandot Mural Maker!</td>
<td>Grade 4 = 1 group made a paper mache mask sculpture 1 group made a web page 2 groups made books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 = 5 classes worked on the 4th grade mural</td>
<td>Grade 3 = 4 classes each created one video</td>
<td>Grade 4: Letter to Superintendent</td>
<td>Grade 3 = 1 group made a clay sculpture 1 group made a web page 1 group made books 1 group took photos of diversity tiles and presented them for artists’ reception participants to record their personal interpretations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3 = 4 classes worked on the 3rd grade mural</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 3: Skit for 6 kindergarten classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GRADES 1 & 2 ALL STUDENTS ROTATED THROUGH EACH GROUP

Mural Painters Individual artwork with character photos Page & cover for class book Illustration 94. Flow chart of student work.

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Illustration 95. Photograph of third grade timeline.

Illustration 96. Photograph of third grade web pages.
Illustration 97. Photograph of fifth grade Web pages.
Illustration 98  Photograph of advertising team poster.

Illustration 99. Advertising team poster.
Illustration 100. Advertising team poster.

Illustration 101. Advertising team poster.
Illustration 102. Advertising team poster.
Come See Our Wyandot Mural

when: mural opening event on March 1, 2005 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Where: Wyandot Elementary (Dublin City Schools)
5620 Dublinshire Drive

Who: Wyandot staff and students invite you to the grand opening of our Wyandot murals and other related projects.

Illustration 103. Advertising team flyer.
Dear Wyandot Parents,

Letley in art class we have been working on a mural to put in the Wyandot canongs. There are four main groups: Advertising, Documents, Painting, and Video. All groups are doing great things. Advertising is working hard to get people noticed at the mall, school, and local community. Painters are working on improving the mural, and Documents are working on a website (www.artrocks.com). Video is taking pictures and taping the hard work of the mural. You will get more information in weeks to come.

We interviewed 3 people in different groups:

Jami' Sulliven: “We are doing a website. It is really cool.”

Fisher Bertke: “We have been interviewing and taking photos.”

Reid Caruti: “I’ve been painting and filling up white spots on the mural.”

Illustration 104. Advertising team flyer
You are Invited to the mural opening

Come one come all to the mural opening.
March 1, 2005
Tuesday 7-8 pm

All mural projects will be on display.

Illustration 105. Advertising team flyer.
The Murals News Letter

We have been working very hard on the murals. They are finally finished. The murals have lots of designs and shapes. Amy Yaich worked very hard with us. Some murals are showing outdoors and some are showing shapes. The grand opening will be March 1st 2005 from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. Not just murals will be shown. All of the projects the school has made related to the murals will be on display. Also, you can see we have put many posters up on the walls around the school telling you about the murals. See you there.

by Annie Putnam Kaitlyn curry Hailey Philbin Narumi Sonobe.
January 24,

Dear Dr. Fenner,

We are so delighted with your support of the Wyandot murals! The Wyandot students would love for you to be at the opening. If you are available, it would be much appreciated. We would like for you to have the honor of cutting the ribbon at the opening. The date of the opening is March 1, 2005 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. If you agree to coming you will get to see the creative minds of the students. We know you are a very busy person and we thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Illustration 107. Advertising team letter to superintendent.
Wyandot mural

Hi wyandot we are doing a mural opening. A mural is a where people put pictures together. It makes one big picture! we hope you come and see it!!! we worked hard!!! we will be sending out fliers!

Illustration 108. Advertising team flyer.
Amy was here for 6 weeks. She will be here for more!! She has been here for longer than she thought!! Right now she is helping the Painting group. The mural looks great. The painters are Ani, Ben, Hiroki, Morgan, and Christina. There are more painters these people are just Mrs. Thompson's 3rd grade class. How do you think the mural is going? Good, bad, or ok? Amy has worked in every class for a long long time!! But the work paid off!! So when you see Amy please say thanks for all your help! She has done a lot of hard work for our whole school. THANK YOU AMY YAICH! Come see the mural in 2005.

Chlebus's Mural Projects

The documents group is trying to create a book about the Wyandot Mural and timeline on the computer.

The video group is interviewing people from each group and trying to download it on the computer.

Illustration 110. Advertising team flyer.
Wyandot Mural!

Wyandot has been working on murals. We have been working REALLY hard! They are about CITIZENSHIP. Citizenship is helping others, doing work without being asked, and doing the RIGHT THING!

So be a good CITIZEN!!

By, Grace Bolander & Megan Lemon

Illustration 111. Advertising team flyer.
Illustration 112. Video team prop.