

Re-Imagining Teaching and Learning: A Snapshot of Hip-Hop Education

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A Snapshot of Hip-Hop Education

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About this publication

This report explains the findings of a 2010-2011 national online census of Hip-Hop education courses and programs as they relate to the current developmental state of the Hip-Hop education field. The research was conducted by the Hip-Hop Education Center in collaboration with the Metropolitan Center at the Steinhardt School for Education, Culture, and Human Development, with a seed grant from the Nathan Cummings Foundation. The census was designed to increase the understanding of the courses and programs that exist to support the professional and economic development of the field of Hip-Hop Education. A key objective is to identify those schools and organizations, or programs within organizations, that intentionally serve youth, especially in low-income, marginalized, and chronically violent communities. With this information, we can advise administrators, policymakers and funders about how to better target resources, improve outcomes, and scale and/or replicate best models and practices. This white paper also provides policy and programmatic recommendations for interventions that can be identified for immediate implementation.

Our approach in delivering the first national scan on the use of Hip-Hop-based education courses and programs is to publish empirical evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, that builds awareness of the validity of Hip-Hop educational practices and combats the bias that Hip-Hop culture is a negative medium through which to engage youth in learning. The analysis and viewpoints conveyed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of supporters.

Introduction

A decade after the No Child Left Behind Act was passed by the United States House of Representatives on June 14, 2001, we are still trailing behind South Korea, Finland, Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai in China, and Canada in regards to academic performance. Out of 34 countries, the U.S. ranked 14th in reading, 17th in science and 25th in math. Today, 70 percent of our eighth graders are not proficient in reading.

Approximately, 1.1 million American high school students drop out every year (Broad Foundation 2010). Past research shows that educational failings are linked to the persistence of rote learning, ineffective teachers, poor school leadership, and lack of resources in schools and surrounding communities. This education crisis has direct negative consequences for poverty, crime, and economic conditions in the U.S. The poverty rate for families headed by dropouts is more than twice that of families headed by high school graduates. **Every year, dropouts cost the U.S. \$192 billion in lost income and taxes.** A dropout is eight times more likely to end up in prison than a high school graduate and nearly 20 times more likely than a college graduate. Several studies have suggested that a student-centered curriculum with the integration of media, the arts, community-based projects, and real-world vocational experience will engage and prepare students for the 21st century. If high schools and colleges were able to raise the graduation rates of Hispanic, African American, and Native American students to the levels of white students by 2020, the potential increase in personal income across the nation would add, conservatively, more than \$310 billion to the U.S. economy (Rouse 2005).

The education system alone is not responsible for failing our youth in the United States. Our society is also suffering from broken down social-economic, environmental, and health care systems. The enormous wealth and employment disparity fuels social inequity and perpetuates racial discrimination and a hegemonic elite class system. There is an urgent need to invest in youth employment and their ideas through social enterprising and college bound programs. **The College Board released a report earlier this summer that found nearly half of young men of color age 15 to 24 who graduate from high school in the U.S. will end up unemployed, incarcerated or dead.** “At a time when our nation is committed to reclaiming its place as the world leader in higher education, we can no longer afford to ignore the plight of our young men of color,” said Gaston Caperton, College Board President, shortly after the report was released in June. **“As long as educational opportunities are limited for some, we all suffer”** (College Board 2011).

Despite the various curricular innovations, and teaching and learning theories -- such as thematic, experiential, inquiry-based, constructivist, project-based, participatory, and interdisciplinary learning, many schools still operate with antiquated models, separating school from community and knowledge from experience. Several studies have suggested that education must be re-conceptualized to be a hands-on, critical, exploratory (inquiry-based), culturally relevant, and liberatory experience for students and teachers (Dewey 1916, 2009; Noguera 2003; Akom 2009). It must include existing and new strands of knowledge based on students’ reality and community that can be implemented across the curriculum. Education must also address the increasing number of mentally and emotionally ill and autistic children, and their particular needs as they enter information-based learning. Evidence from numerous studies suggests we find new ways to prepare our youth to deal with the pressing challenges of the 21st century.

As a form of intervention to effectively assist urban communities with chronic dropouts, health problems and unemployment, many educators and teaching artists are turning to Hip-Hop art and culture and students’ experienced-based knowledge (Runell and Diaz 2007; Morrell 2007; Parmar 2009). Much of this desire to utilize cultural texts that are relevant to this generation stems from research on academic engagement, which postulates that students’ performance in school is directly related to their interest in school and the inability of many of their teachers to connect with what matters to them (Duncan-Andrade and Morrell 2008; Hill 2009; Seidel 2011).

In recent years, much of the curriculum in public schools has focused on meeting testing standards created by the No Child Left Behind Act. Instead of allowing students to demonstrate their different skill sets through a variety ways (portfolio-based, performance-based, participatory research action project-based...) in order to merge learning with practice to inform teachers, administrators, and peers in their environs.

Several scholars have agreed that as stakeholders in their own education, students should participate in education reform (Noguera, Ginwright and Camarota 2006; Morrell

and Noguera 2011). When youth learn to problem-solve and organize around issues that are close to their experience, they more likely engage “in civil society in ways that hold schools, institutions, and politicians accountable to their interest” (Ginwright and Camarota, 2011). In *Leveraging Reform: Youth Power in a Smart Education System*, a national study of education organizing by Annenberg Institute researchers shows “youth are a growing presence in community organizing for school reform, and youth-led organizations are winning changes that lead to an improved learning environment and more equitable policies and practices” (Mediratta, Cohen, and Shah, 2007).

There is also an emergence of a new wave of educators and cultural workers influenced by Hip-Hop culture, technology, and globalization. The first wave began in the early 90s with a little over a dozen artists, scholars, and entrepreneurs who grew up with Hip-Hop. Today, we have hundreds of teachers, artists, scholars, social workers, social entrepreneurs, and administrators in K-12 and institutions of higher learning, who are able to serve as an inter-generational cultural bridge. Whether Hip-Hop culture is used inside the classroom to teach a subject, serve as a hook to teach a lesson, or as an academic subject itself, vocation or art form, teachers from all backgrounds are integrating it into their curriculum as a liberatory, critical, and culturally relevant and responsive pedagogical tool. Like other educational fields, Hip-Hop education practitioners aim to meet youth where they are and employ all resources at their disposal to improve the students’ plight.

Motivated by the same concerns, a broad range of non-profit, for-profit and government agencies that are designed to advance education, employment, reduce juvenile recidivism, improve environmental and health outcomes among underserved and marginalized communities, now populate the national landscape. These initiatives employ a range of strategies to accomplish their goals, including the use of standardized Hip-Hop-based curriculum and testing modules, student exchange-programs, professional development workshops and seminars, media projects, social enterprise ventures, and the creation of new educational platforms on-and-offline.

To most effectively incorporate Hip-Hop culture into the current education and economic reform movements, we must study programs, strengthen and replicate the best practices and models, develop standards, and professionalize the field of Hip-Hop education. Furthermore, there is a significant need to gain an understanding of school-community collaborations and develop a typology of the major approaches linking community organizations and businesses to school improvement through Hip-Hop texts and culture. For example, the PENCIL Program has a proven track record of successfully linking business leaders and principals to inspire innovation and transform public schools. There are numerous Hip-Hop artists and organizations that have partnered with PENCIL to participate in their Principal For A Day and Business Leader For A Day Programs. According to information found on their website, in 2010, 370 PENCIL Partnerships affected over 80,000 students, providing guidance and support, technical assistance, workshops, training, and materials—\$5 million in volunteer hours, services and resources. In these schools, attendance and graduation rates improved,

staff attrition decreased, parents became more engaged in their children's education, and test scores rose (PENCIL 2011). How can we tap into Hip-Hop's social and human capital to develop a similar program that will transform public schools?

We know of award-winning Hip-Hop after school programs, summer camps, and supplemental correctional education programs that help youth cope with peer pressure, trauma, and identity formation. Through Hip-Hop, youth are being taught essential life skills such as critical thinking, debate, media literacy, and peer-to-peer mediation that support their emotional, physical, cognitive and civic development. There are now entire high schools that are utilizing Hip-Hop-based education and pedagogy in an effort to transform students' lives and their communities. While the use of Hip-Hop as an educational tool is growing, limited research and evaluation, and a lack of readily available standardized curricula, hampers the expansion.

To fill this void and support the development of the field with practices that been demonstrated to be affective, The Hip-Hop Education Project [H2ED Project] was launched through a partnership between New York University's Metropolitan Center for Urban Education [Metro Center] and the Hip-Hop Association [H²A]. The H2ED Project leverages the credibility of Hip-Hop artists, archives, and network of the H²A and the research capacity of the Metro Center. This partnership forges new territories of knowledge within Academia and serves as a bridge to understanding, linking community and youth culture with education.

This brief is the first of three phases of investigation that will explore, evaluate, and measure the impact of the Hip-Hop education field.

Goal and Outcomes

The primary goal for the H2ED Project is to contribute to the education and economic/labor reform movements by providing empirical evidence on the use of Hip-Hop education, and by presenting sound policy and programmatic recommendations.

Our short-term goal is to release a brief that will summarize key data collected over the 2010-2011 school year that can be used to determine areas for additional longitudinal study in Hip-Hop education practices and models. In the long run, we will extrapolate the best practices and models to provide tool kits, training, and a facilitator/co-teacher certificate program. We wish to accelerate progress within the Hip-Hop education field by providing synthesized scientific data. We seek to facilitate dialogue and inspire the existing and next wave of educators, teaching artists, researchers, administrators, policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and funders to work together to build up this promising field and bring about efficient social and policy reform. It is imperative that we address the complexities of urban education as part of a national reform that will include modifications in curriculum, classroom/school environments, staffing, and testing policies. In addition to providing a safe space for youth to learn, schools need to offer wrap-around social services (medical, human resources, housing) to students in low socioeconomic communities.

We expect the outcomes of the H2ED project to provide much-needed information and assistance to those interested in finding out more about the field of Hip-Hop education. We hope to empower existing practitioners involved in the education field to reach their full potential.

Methods

We began the H2ED research project by conducting an extensive search for literature, curriculum models, courses, supplemental, and after-school programs to gain an understanding of what already exists within public schools and communities across the United States. Promising programs have been identified through a number of methods that include research review of state and federally funded grants and programs, Internet searches of supplemental program databases and networks, and phone and email interviews with schools and organizations. Each program has been indexed into a demographic database that consists of age ranges served, number of students served, location, years in existence, partners, funders, and staffing.

Survey Results

There were nearly three hundred participants, courses and programs indexed. Over two hundred of the programs were national and international participants that took the online survey. The rest of the programs were identified through Internet searches, press articles, theses and dissertations. This range of initiatives demonstrates that there is an overwhelming need to centralize Hip-Hop education data to create a national registry that will connect the different organizations.

Location of Program Implementation

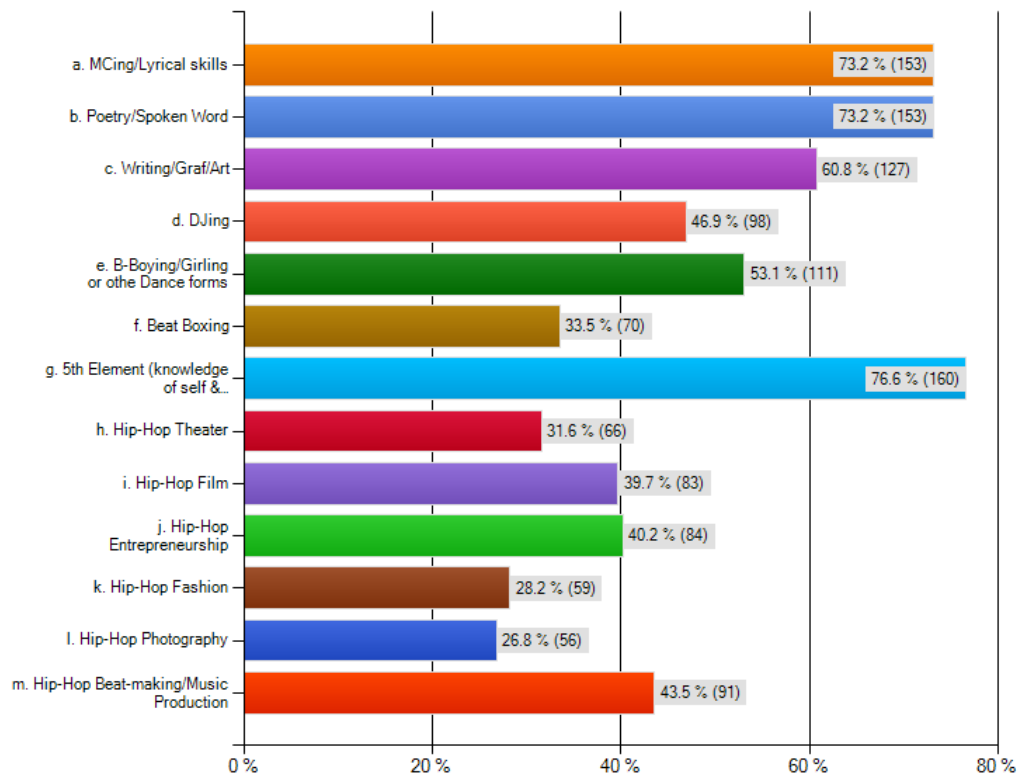
Nearly 10% of the courses and programs are in middle school classrooms, 21% in high schools, 14% in colleges and 22% include other settings within school. 37% are in after school programs, 2% Saturday programs, 3% summer camps, and 37% other settings outside of school. The other settings include juvenile correctional facilities, town halls, religious congregations, and human rights forum.

Fifty-five cities are represented in the survey including major cities such as New York, San Francisco, Atlanta, and Houston, and smaller cities such as Irvine, CA, Saratoga Springs, NY, and Evanston, IL. The greatest number of programs were located in New York State with 76 responses. The average state that participated only had 1 or 2 programs. Although the census was predominantly focused in the U.S., there were participants representing Canada, China, Russia, South Africa, Singapore, Germany, Uganda, Australia, New Zealand, and Brazil.

Program Components

In the survey, we asked what element(s) (spoken word, MCing, DJing, Graffiti (visual art), B-Boying/Girling (dance)...) of Hip-Hop culture were being utilized in the courses and programs. Table I provides the percentage of each Hip-Hop element used. An overwhelming 76% integrated the Fifth element (knowledge of self and the community) or self-actualization/citizenry, coined by the “Godfather of Hip-Hop culture” - Afrika Bambaataa. The Fifth element is usually combined with other elements, for example, MCing/Fifth Element, DJing/Fifth Element, Media/Fifth Element. It was also taught as its own discipline, meaning, the history and development of Hip-Hop culture was used to teach about community development, organizing, and social justice. MCing and spoken word were tied with 73%. Graffiti and B-Boying/Girling ranked well over 50%, while Hip-Hop entrepreneurship, DJing and beatmaking showed prospect by rating over 40%.

FIGURE I: PERCENTAGE OF HIP-HOP ELEMENTS USED IN PROGRAMS



Program Components

Figure II provides information on the most frequently used supplemental component in courses and programs. 82% include a performance as part of their curriculum, while developing a product was the least integrated component with 56%. We assumed that

developing a product requires additional curriculum development, resources and funding.

We also asked participants to highlight activities that demonstrate connections to common core learning standards. The most frequently cited skill building activities used with the elements of Hip-Hop include:

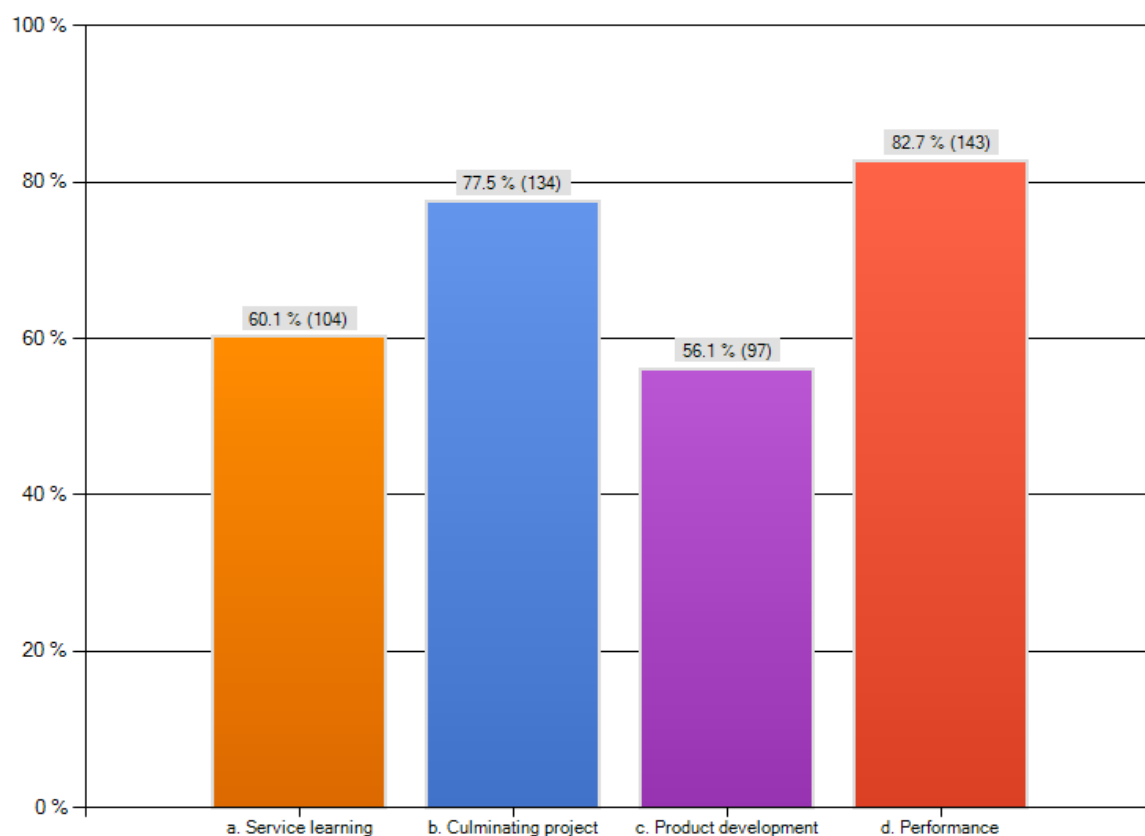
- Team building
- Career development
- Identity formation
- Community activism
- Media Literacy - video/digital production
- Graphic designing
- Gaming
- Storytelling
- Mentoring/tutoring
- Cross comparative historical/cultural analysis
- Writing skills
- Oral skills/debate
- Problem-posing/solving
- Negotiating/diplomacy

The most frequently cited academic disciplines are:

- English Language Arts
- Entrepreneurship
- Ethnic (Africana, Latino,...) Studies
- Gender and Sexuality
- Geography
- Interdisciplinary
- Leadership/Experiential Knowledge
- Math
- Media/Technology
- Performance
- Science
- Social Studies
- Theater/Drama
- College Prep

Finally, 73% of the survey participants indicated that students were involved in designing the programs.

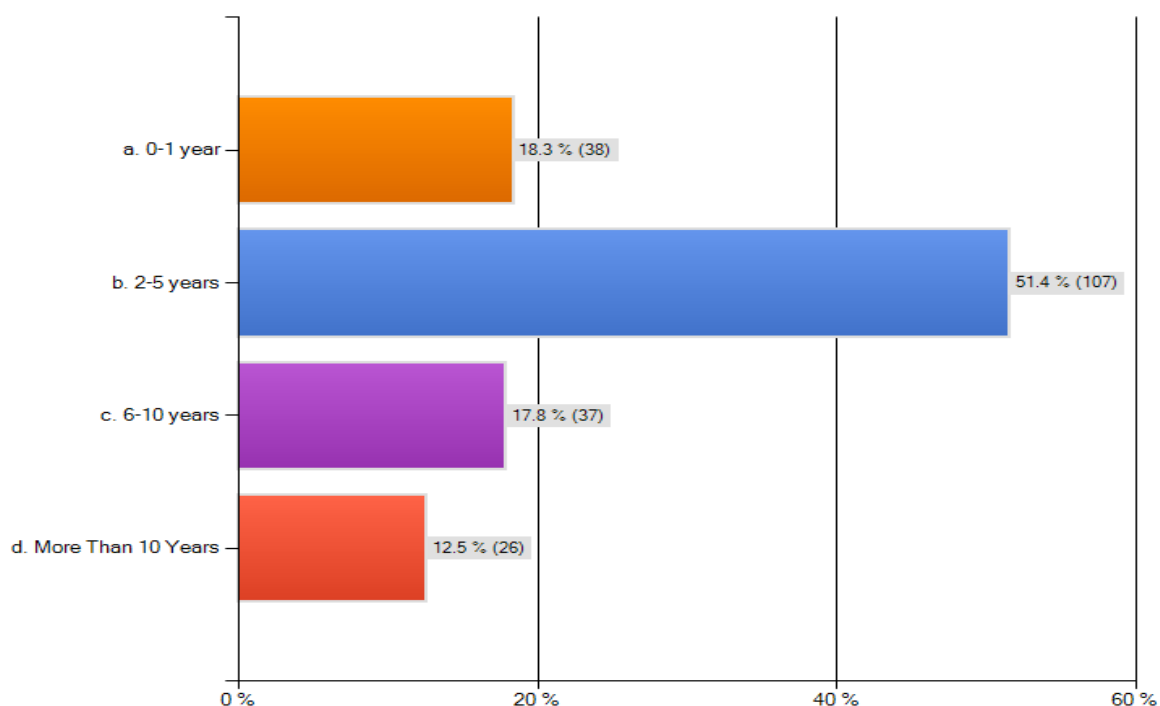
FIGURE II: PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS



Length of Implementation

Figure III shows the number of years programs have been in existence. 51% of the Hip-Hop programs have existed between 2-5 years, while only 12% have existed more than 10 years. Nearly 18% have existed 6-10 years, and 18% are new programs that have launched in the last year, indicating continuous growth in the field. In our comparative analysis, we found that the majority of Hip-Hop education programs which have been active for *a year or less* are on the East Coast. The city with the most programs coming into existence over the past year is New York City, NY. The Midwest, along with the South, has only seen one program created in the past year. The West Coast has seen most of its growth in Hip-Hop education programs in the past year in the Bay Area.

FIGURE III: PERCENTAGE OF YEARS IN EXISTENCE



Funding of Programs

Figure IV provides information on program budgets. Over 46% of the courses and programs have a budget of \$5,000 or less, while only 21% had budgets of \$50,000 or more. We assume that the programs with budgets of \$5,000 or less are start up and fledgling programs. The budgets for Hip-Hop education programs vary, but there is an evident gap that needs to be filled.

FIGURE IV: PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAM BUDGET RANGE

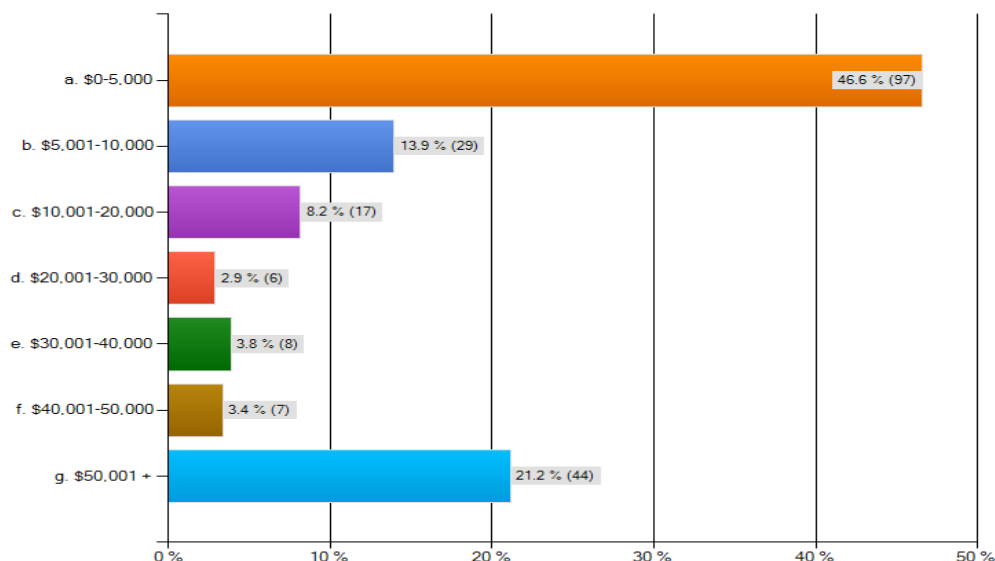


Figure V provides information on the different sources of funding. Nearly 48% of the programs are funded by schools, while the federal government and religious organizations support the least with 7.7% and 5%, respectively. The latter indicates that there is potential support within these untapped sectors. We assume that getting funding from the federal government and religious organizations pose a serious challenge that needs to be addressed and canvassed. Research shows that federal and local government provide the most grants to after-school programs. California alone provides \$550 million annually to support after-school programs. How can Hip-Hop programs tap into this funding pool?

Figure V also shows that 154 programs are supported by individual donors and foundations. Some of the philanthropic support cited in the survey and the review of literature include funding from the Ford Foundation, Jerome Foundation, Zero-Divide Foundation, Open Society Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Robinhood Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, and Gates Foundation.

Hip-Hop non-profit organizations are also flourishing and breaking ground across the country. Organizations like Word Beats and Life (Washington, DC), Urban Word NYC (New York), Hip-Hop Theater Festival (New York), Youth Speaks (San Francisco) and Brotherhood Sister Sol (New York) have each been able to fundraise between \$500,000-1.5 million dollars. These organizations and funders need further research to inform and involve decision makers of the grant making strategies that are currently taking place.

FIGURE V: PERCENTAGE OF FUNDING RANGE

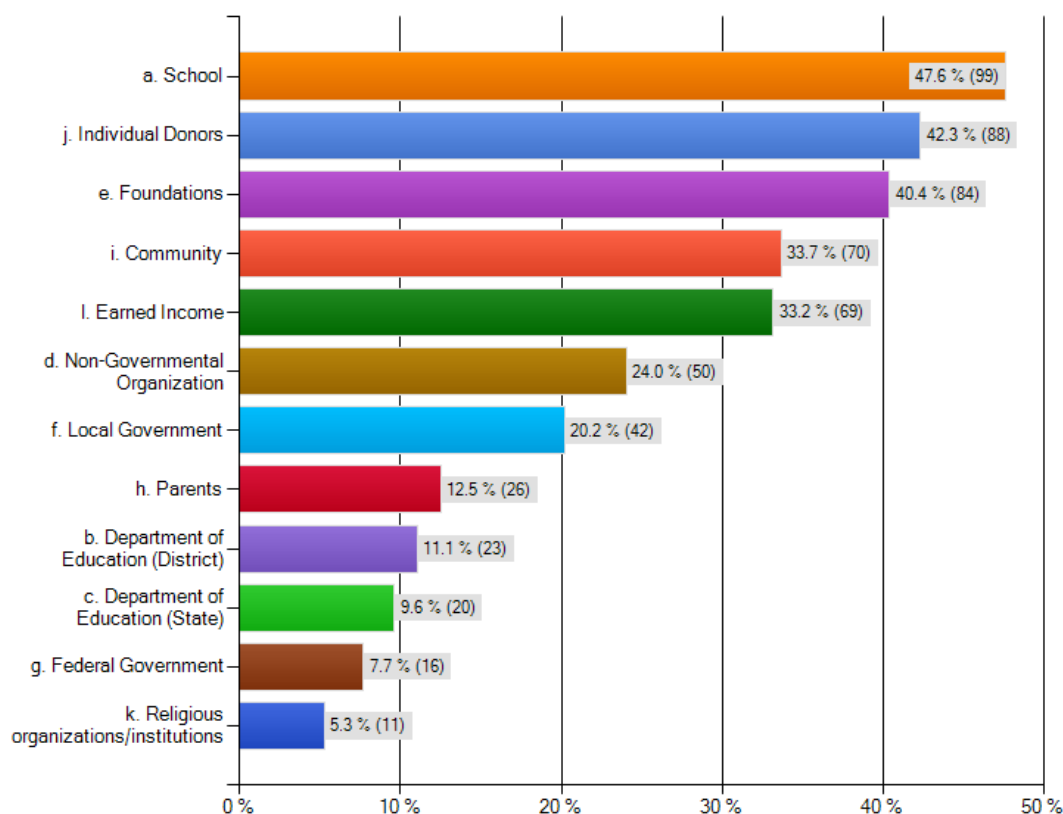
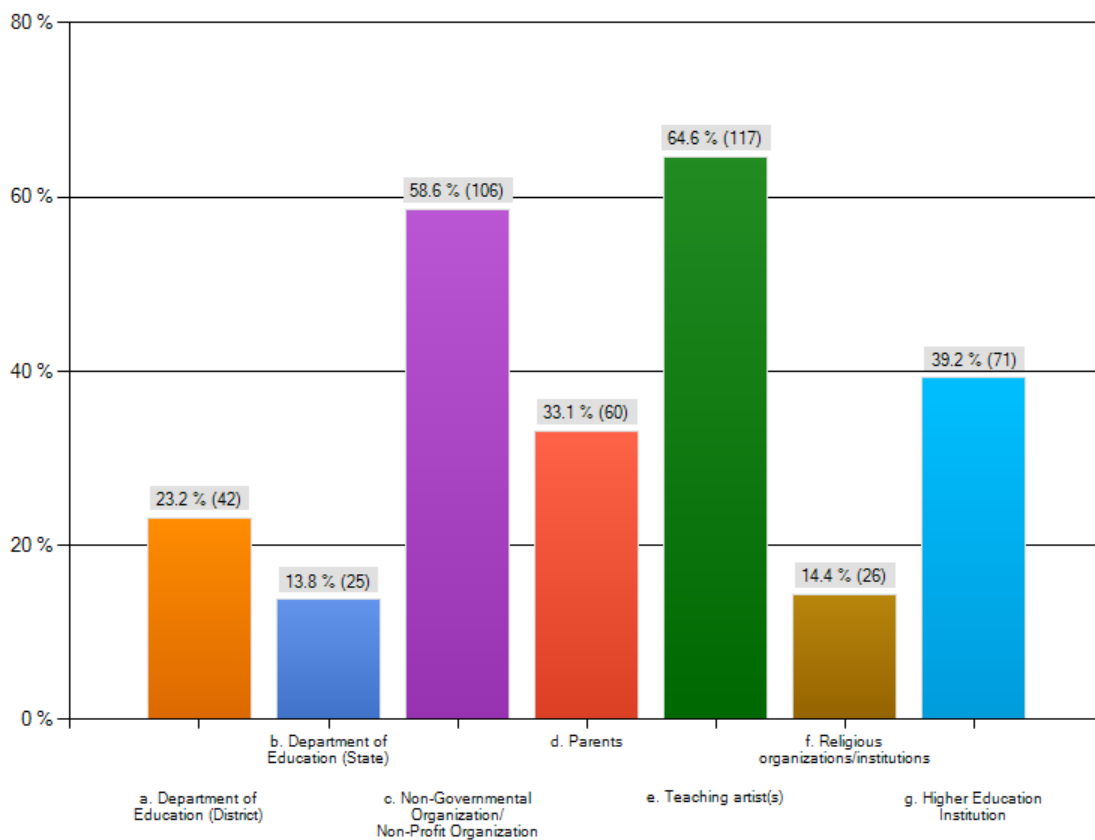


Figure VI provides information on the partners that support Hip-Hop programs. The programs participating in the survey have received financial and programmatic support from the Department of Education (state and district), NGOs, parents, teaching artists, religious organizations, and higher education institutions. The biggest contributors, listed in order, are teacher artists, NGO's/non-profit organizations, and higher education institutions. Parents support the courses and programs either by contributing financially, volunteering their time, or enrolling their children in a program.

FIGURE VI: PERCENTAGE OF PARTNERS, FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC



Program Participants

In figure VII we provide the age range of the students served. Over 81% or 150 programs serve youth between 14-18 years of age, while 115 programs serve youth between 19-22 years of age. This demonstrates that Hip-Hop programs are mostly serving high school age students with college age students coming in second, not necessarily attending school.

FIGURE VII: PERCENTAGE OF AGE RANGE

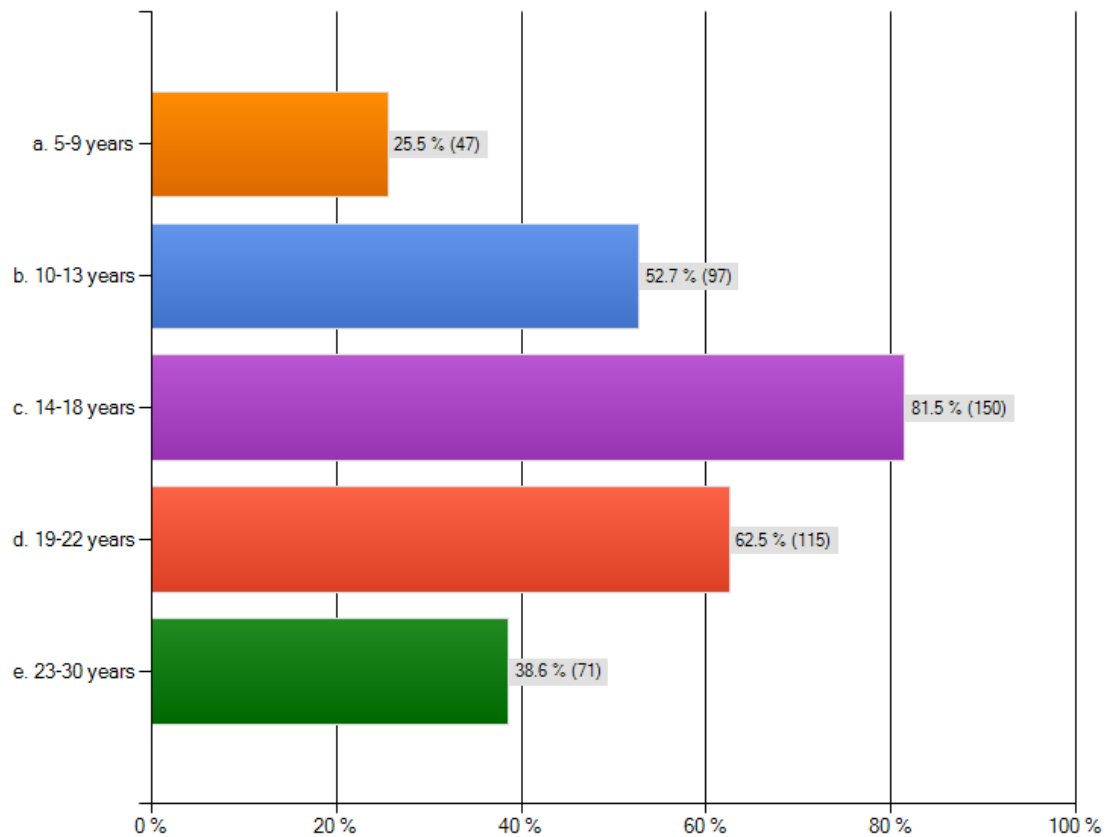


Figure VIII shows the breakdown of race and ethnic groups being served. The most frequently youth being served are African American and Latinos, while Native Americans were the least served. We assume that reaching different populations, especially those in rural areas and reservations, requires additional curriculum development, resources and funding.

FIGURE VIII: PERCENTAGE OF RACE/ETHNIC GROUPS

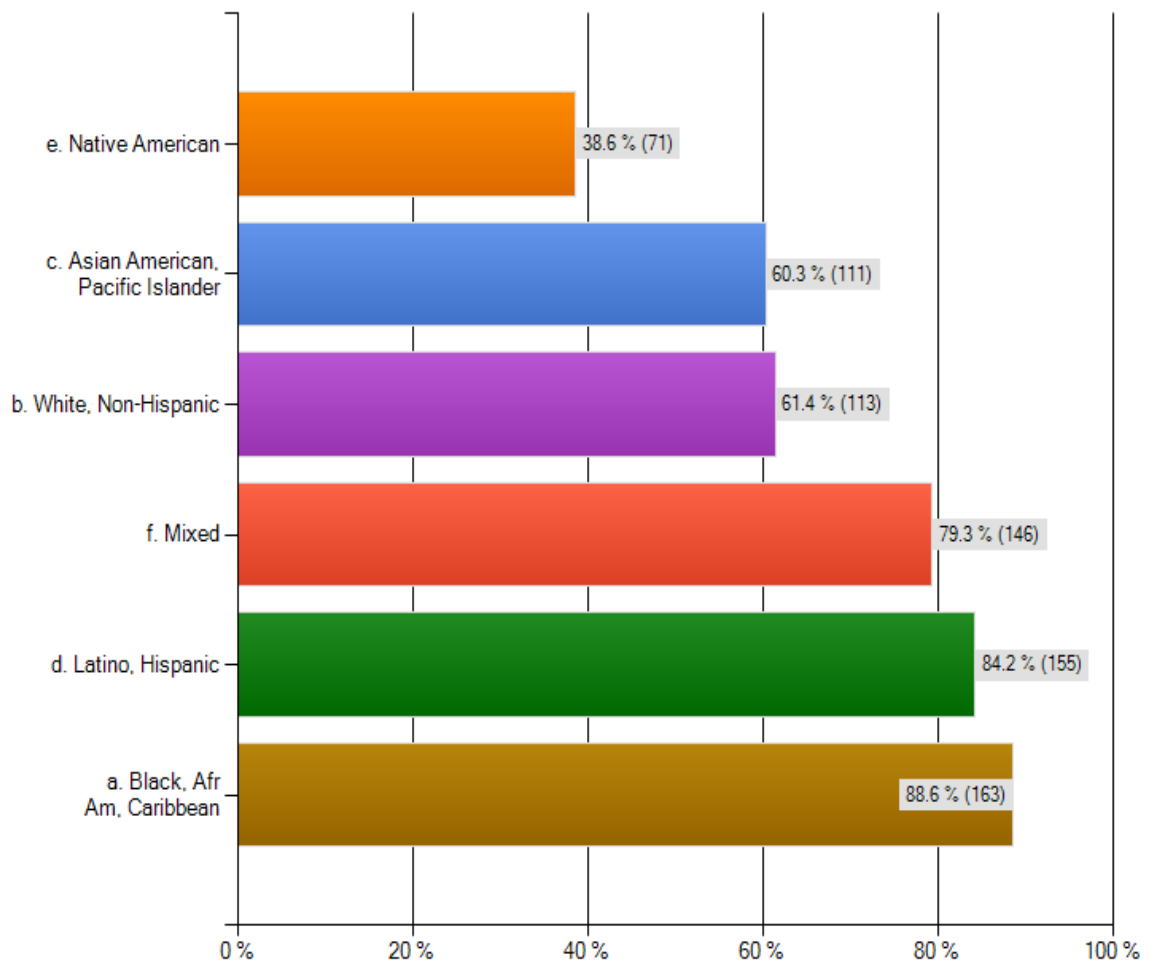
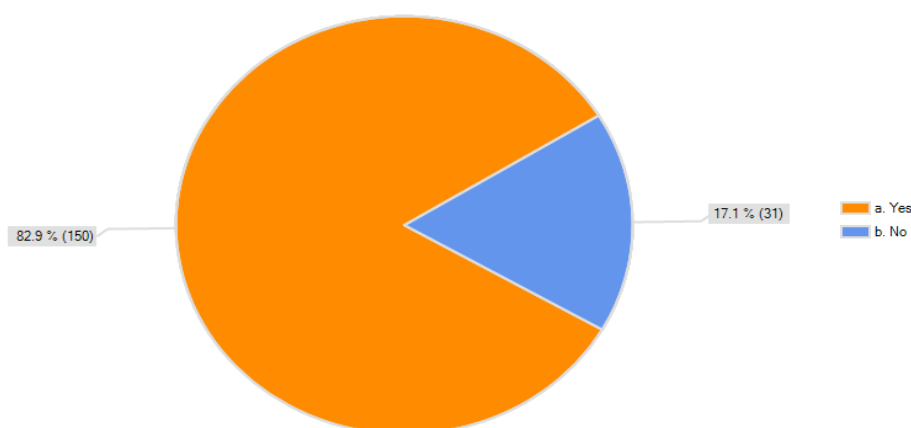


Figure IX shows the number of Hip-Hop artists that serve as co-teachers. One hundred and fifty-one or 82% of the courses and programs are taught with a co-teaching artist. This indicates the desire to work with Hip-Hop teaching artists, however; it does not demonstrate the success rate. More study in this area will be helpful in determining best practices.

FIGURE IX: PERCENTAGE OF CO-TEACHING ARTIST



The biggest challenges and issues expressed in the census were about the negative stigma associated with Hip-Hop and the confusion about Hip-Hop culture/history. In addition to, capacity building, infrastructure and professional development of the field of Hip-Hop education. As well as getting buy-in and administrative support, and the loss or lack of funding. Through this economical turmoil and depression, arts funding has been affected the most and Hip-Hop is disproportionately suffering severe cuts.

Notable achievements

- “We have served over 50,000 youth to date and we are incident free!” (Harlem, NYC)
- “Receiving "Educator of Distinction" award from the National Honor Society of Student Scholars, and collaborating with the International Visitors Council of Los Angeles to teach educators from around the world how to use Hip Hop education in their field.”(Los Angeles, CA)
- “Being successful and receiving accolades from the educational profession is the greatest accomplishment other than the successful graduation of our students.” (St. Paul, Minnesota)

Limitations and Challenges with Data Collected

- The survey was dependent upon the participant having access to a computer, Internet, and having the ability to understand and navigate an online survey.

- Most of those disseminating the survey have roots in New York City, or near New York City. It is very likely the results are skewed in that direction. Those disseminating the survey not from New York City, or near New York City, were for the most part from California, particularly the Bay Area. It should also be expected that this skewed the data.
- The fact that the Hip Hop Education Center does not have very strong connections to the South and Midwest very likely biased results against the South and Midwest.
- Issue of social affiliation: Since the survey was not widely advertised and marketed, most of those taking the survey were likely affiliated with someone or something connected to the Hip Hop Education Center. Likewise, it is likely those programs missing from the results do not have a connection to the Hip Hop Education Center.

Evaluations and Other Research

Much to our surprise, 100 out of the 206 Hip-Hop education programs were evaluated for success by students, internal staff, NGOs, institutions of higher learning, government agencies, and foundations. This is an indicator that there is a need to gather and assess the data that already exist in order to conduct short-term comparative and cross-reference analysis on best practices and models.

Here are few examples of these evaluations that have been conducted or are currently taking place:

- **Rap Cool Health** (RCH) is an innovative K-12 kid-centered intervention program that delivers messages of hope and health. Spearheaded by Diane Mulligan, RCH is a social enterprise based in Denver, Colorado that brings together corporate, social, and government partners. It incorporates Hip Hop music, dance, and hands-on demonstrations to teach children to make healthy lifestyle decisions and empower them to educate their loved ones. RCH is a research-proven method to teach children about preventing diabetes, obesity, heart attack, and stroke. The Harlem Pilot Project demonstrated that youth that participated in the program retained 80% of RCH messages at 7 months. New research will show that children are effectively teaching their parents healthier behaviors.
- According to the Good Life Foundation in Wisconsin, the **Fulfill The Dream [FTD]** curriculum is being implemented in five public high schools in Madison, WI. Funding for a longitudinal study evaluating the effectiveness of the FTD program has been granted from Purdue University to support Professor Chris Slaton in his research. The FTD program encourages students to develop personal leadership skills as they prepare for “making dreams a reality” as they discover their resources, develop a plan, identify action steps, and reflect on their

ideas of what “the good life” is. The ten workshops in this curriculum are strategically tied to youth culture because they use media, movement, and music to teach many lessons and communicate main points. In addition to this, the program has documented solid data proving its effectiveness. A pilot program including four classrooms in a middle school in the mid-west demonstrated youth academic and social improvement in the areas of G.P.A., attendance, and behavior. The average G.P.A. overall had increased half a point in just ten weeks, and interviews with youth, administrators and parents demonstrated that the major factor in the improvement was the program. In addition to this, another pilot was launched at an alternative high school with seniors. After going through the program, the school reported it’s first ever 100% graduation rates.

- The ***East Oakland Step to College*** (STC) Program is a collaborative effort between Mandela High School and the Colleges of Education and Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University (SFSU). STC students are part of a cohort of 31 Mandela High School students that take their English courses together for each of their four years in high school. These classes are taught by a university professor and are designed to use literature to train students in critical thinking, research, academic literacy, and technology. STC students receive transferable credits from SFSU as part of their participation in the program. Program participants also receive help filling out university applications for admissions and financial aid, and, when possible, scholarship support. Hip-Hop Scholar Dr. Jeff Duncan-Andrade has been teaching and coaching in Oakland public schools for 18 years. Jeff presently directs the East Oakland Step to College Program where he continues this looping approach as a volunteer high school teacher at Mandela High School. In 2010, the program received a \$450,000 grant from The California Endowment to document the strategies being used and to study their impact on the hope and well-being of the youth. The result of these students’ successes and the implications for rethinking urban school pedagogy are resonating around the nation and the globe.
- In ***Rethinking Student Participation: A Model from Hip-Hop and Urban Science Education*** (2009), Dr. Christopher Emdin, Associate Professor of Science Education and Director of Secondary School initiatives at the Urban Science Education Center at Teachers College, Columbia University argues that “educators need to rethink their definition or perception of student participation in the classroom in order to cross a growing divide that exists between youth, especially urban youth, and schools.” Emdin’s investigation includes conversations with students about their classroom experiences and considers their suggestions for teaching and improving classroom participation. He argues that “when students connect both to the classroom and the process of teaching, they become connected to what is being taught.” Emdin sees inroads to full participation through student citizenship and the use of Hip-Hop culture as a communicative tool. He redefines the meaning of participation as the process that involves new roles for both the teacher and the student. His unconventional

approach for engaging students in science includes the three C's for urban science education:

- Co-generative dialogues - engaging in dialogues with students
- Co-teaching - having students be the teacher
- Cosmopolitanism - having students develop responsibility for each others' learning both within and outside of the classroom.

Emdin asserts that the attributes of a Hip-Hop cypher will give students the understanding that all who partake in the activity at hand are experts in some way because of the unique life experiences that they bring to the exchange. This process supports inter-group behavior and works towards increasing dialogue, not only between teachers and students, but among all the students.

In addition to the research and evaluations that have been and are being conducted, there are other research projects across different departments at colleges and universities, foundations, and NGOs, which demonstrate the overlap and peripheral views of the influence of Hip-Hop education. For example,

- **Moments of transformation: A Field Lab for the Arts & Civic Engagement Impact Initiative of Animating Democracy** - A case study of *Rha Goddess's LOW and Understanding Social Change* by Suzanne Callahan and contributing writers Jane Jerardi and Caitlin Servilio. Rha Goddess is a writer, poet, and social activist who has developed a model for using the arts in civic transformation, coined Arts Based Civic Transformation (ABCT). In particular, she seeks to engage those from the most marginalized communities including immigrant, indigenous people, people of color, the working poor, and the LGBT community to address mental health and the mental health system. LOW is a 75-minute Hip-Hop theater piece that leads audiences to explore the mythology, stigma, fear, and confusion surrounding mental illness. This case study, conducted by Americans for the Arts, supports Goddess' theory that art can foster civic engagement, provide a visceral experience and can educate through emotional and kinesthetic connection. As a result, the Hip Hop Mental Health Project (co-founded by Goddess and Dr. Peter Fraenkel - Associate Professor in Clinical Psychology at the City University of NY) grew out of touring LOW. The Hip Hop Mental Health program focuses on reaching young people of color in urban communities and those who provide support to them, as they are most detrimentally affected by disparities in mental health diagnosis, treatment, and care.
- The ***Future Aesthetics: The Impact of Hip-Hop Culture in Contemporary Performance*** report released in 2003 by La Peña Cultural Center with support from The Ford Foundation, describes Hip-Hop's aesthetic power in activism:

"Hip-Hop aesthetics open up new and alternative spaces for marginalized and under-resourced communities to revision democratic ideas and practices in a

more diverse world that includes multi-generation practitioners, global cultures and regions, and underrepresented populations such as youth, women and LGBTs (Lesbians, Gays, Bi-sexuals, and the Transgendered) [...] Also, situating Hip-Hop culture and aesthetics more firmly within its global origins and influences illuminates how the expressive arts are intrinsic to social justice movements throughout the world, as well as within the United States.”

The report continues to build upon Hip-Hop’s inherent ways of unifying and educating:

“In addition to this framework, the presence of Hip-Hop theater, dance and performance artists of multiple generations opened a space for various modes of storytelling – from performance and oral history to factual presentations of statistics and theories to honest exchanges around process to sharing ideas of products, solutions, and changes to create and leverage better, more just and equitably-resourced communities throughout the U.S. and the globe.”

- In **Digital Media and Learning as an Emerging Field, Part I: How We Got Here**, Connie Yowell, the Director of Education for the MacArthur Foundation, suggests kids today are learning differently, socializing differently and engaging civically differently as a result of their participation with digital media, and our schools seem to be falling behind our kids. This study aims to develop a national database to track how young people are using and participating with digital media, within the context of Hip-Hop culture and also assess the quality of that participation. The emerging field of Digital Media Literacy (DML) is a crucial component to Hip-Hop Education and possibly the most pivotal to the learning needs of the 21st century learner. It is not just the study of how digital tools can enhance learning, DML is also the study of how digital tools and new forms of convergent media, production, and participation, as well as powerful forms of social organization and complexity in popular culture, can teach us how to enhance learning in and out of school and how to transform society and the global world as well (Gee 2009). Youth are gaining greater competencies in the skill areas pertinent to digital media literacy by way of engaging in Hip-Hop pedagogy in both formal and informal learning settings. Our schools are lagging behind the abilities of our students in this area as well as other competing nations who have already embraced the educative potential of digital media through Hip-Hop based programs.
- The essay, **Urban Youth and the Counter-Narration of Inequality**, published in the (2007) *Transforming Anthropology Journal*, states that recent studies shows that “poor students of color spend upwards of six and half hours per day engaged in electronic media.” The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy statement in 2001 “encouraging schools to develop a media literacy highlights curriculum.” As a result, scholars began to work towards “a critical media literacy pedagogy that would empower urban youth to deconstruct dominant media narratives, develop much-needed academic and critical literacies, and create

their own counter-narratives to the media's largely negative depictions of urban youth and their communities" (Duncan-Andrade 2004).

This essay highlights an action research media literacy project, or what some scholars call "socially engaged scholarship" that entails the examination of Los Angeles schools and communities. It uses counter-narratives to engender feelings of possibility that were then acted upon in the form of community case studies in four Los Angeles communities (Santa Monica, Watts, South Central and East L.A.). The results demonstrated that this method provides powerful pathways to the development of student agency on multiple levels. Duncan-Andrade asserts that it represents the expansive and wonderful abilities of urban students to contribute to the dialogue of social justice in ways that no standardized test could purport to measure.

- The ***Black Youth Project: Attitudes and Behavior of Young Black Americans***, conducted by Dr. Cathy Cohen at University of Chicago, explores the attitudes, actions, and decision-making of African American youth by highlighting their lives, ideas, and voices. Black Youth Project researchers surveyed 1,590 Black, White and Hispanic young people between the ages of 15 and 25 about their attitudes regarding rap music and rap music videos. According to the study:

The majority of Black youth say they listen to rap music everyday. The percentage of youth that listen to rap music daily are:

- o 58% of Black youth
- o 45% of Hispanic youth
- o 23% of White youth

Five times the percentage of Black young people watch rap music programming on television everyday compared to White youth. The percentage of youth that watch daily are:

- 25% of Black youth
- 18% of Hispanic youth
- 5% of White youth

Nearly a majority of Black youth report that they watch rap music (hip-hop) programming on television at least several days a week. The percentage of youth that watch several days a week are:

- 48% of Black youth
- 35% of Hispanic youth
- 12% of White youth

- In 2007, Durlak and Weissberg conducted a meta-analysis of after school programs (ASPs) that seek to enhance the personal and social development of children and adolescents titled, **The Impact of After-School Programs That Promote Personal and Social Skills**. Their analysis revealed significant increases that occurred in youths' positive social behaviors. Included in positive social behaviors were leadership behaviors, positive social interactions, and assertiveness. At the same time, significant reductions occurred in problem behaviors and drug use. Substantial differences emerged between programs that used evidence-based approaches for skill training and those that did not. The former programs consistently produced significant improvements among participants in all of the above outcome areas (mean effect sizes ranged from 0.24 to 0.35), whereas the latter programs did not produce significant results in any outcome category. These findings have important implications for future research, practice and policy. The first is that ASPs should contain components to foster the personal and social skills of youth because participants can benefit in multiple ways if these components are offered. The second is that such components are effective only if they use evidence-based approaches. When it comes to enhancing personal and social skills, successful programs are SAFE -- sequenced, active, focused, and explicit. In summary, ASPs and other programs show promise in influencing students' extraversion for the benefit of important academic and life outcomes.
- An article published in *The Urban Review* in 1997 by Marilyn L. Kourilsky and Mahtash Esfandiari titled, **Entrepreneurship Education and Lower Socioeconomic Black Youth: An Empirical Investigation**, reveals that effective experienced-based entrepreneurship educational interventions can be a key to providing lower socioeconomic black youth significant opportunities to break the poverty cycle.

Kourilsky and Esfandiari highlight a survey conducted by Gallup in 1996 on Black high-school students' attitudes and knowledge with respect to entrepreneurship. The following provocative results were revealed:

- *They think they don't know:* 75% of black high-school students rated their knowledge of entrepreneurship as fair to very poor.
- *And they are right:* the average score of black high-school youth on basic entrepreneurship knowledge was 38%.
- *But they want to know:* 84% of black high-school youth believe that there should be more entrepreneurship education in the schools.
- *And they want to do!* 75% of black high-school youth want to start a business of their own.
- *And they want to give back!* 80% of black youth believe it is very important for entrepreneurs to give something back to the community beyond providing jobs.

CONCLUSION

In this brief, we highlight Hip-Hop courses and programs that improve attendance, increase student engagement, prepare students for college and access to college, prevent drop-out for students at risk for school failure, reconnect out-of-school youth to school (drop-in), and provide character education (e.g., building self-esteem, citizenry, leadership), including mentoring or sports and recreation programs. Furthermore, we describe a landscape of the common strategies and artistic practices used to support cross-cultural, multi-generational, multiple-intelligences, and multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Given the importance and presence of Hip-Hop in the lives of youth, Hip-Hop has the potential to impact the educational experiences of youth. Hip-Hop education lives within Hip-Hop's power to adopt, redefine and D.I.Y. (do-it-yourself). Education is embedded throughout Hip-Hop history, making the study of its culture, leaders, literature, music, movies, and artifacts essential to the exploration and growth of Hip-Hop education movement. In communities around the nation, youth are learning to organize and build community, collaborate on music, publish books, start businesses through Hip-Hop. Not enough prominence is given to the ways that Hip-Hop-based education and pedagogy can be used to transform our society. Hip-Hop culture has rendered a movement that is intimately accessible, educational, visceral and real.

We hope that our report has shed light on Hip-Hop's impact and potential on the education field.

Recommendations

- I. Research and Evaluation – We have only just begun investigating Hip-Hop's education potential. We must continue to conduct longitudinal impact studies that will help us define and clear up understandings of terms posited in the such as "Hip-Hop culture," "Hip-Hop aesthetics," "Hip-Hop theater," "Hip-Hop activism," and "Hip-Hop philanthropy" (Future Aesthetics Report). Critical assessment of the work that has been evaluated is also necessary in order to develop and shape standards for the field. This includes analyzing and comparing methods and practices across disciplines and sectors. We especially emphasize continued research within:
 - Hip-Hop Arts integration across the curriculum
 - Youth Development programs (violence prevention, civic and leadership engagement, job skills and career development, the role of technology and popular culture)
 - Juvenile correction programs
 - Social entrepreneurship across the curriculum

In addition to launching new studies within uncharted territories such as neuroeducation, theology, and quantum physics.

Geographic Targets and Inquiry for Future Analysis

- Hip-Hop Education is thriving in the city of its roots, New York City, NY.
- Hip-Hop Education appears to be highly concentrated in a few areas (NYC, Bay Area, LA), but otherwise speckled in others regions.
- While one of the largest markets for commercially successful Hip-Hop is currently in the South, there does not appear to be any connection to growth in hip-hop education related programming.
- While it may be expected that the South and Midwest have less programs older than 10 years, why is it that the South and Midwest are lacking in recent growth?

II. Training & Certificate Program - Professional development training for educators, teaching artists, and activists must continue in order to increase skills and knowledge of Hip-Hop education. We believe an advance Hip-Hop education certificate for graduate students and existing teachers from a valid institution of higher learning will provide the credentials and specialized training to effectively facilitate Hip-Hop education courses and programs. In addition, there is need to establish a Hip-Hop Studies program that will offer a Hip-Hop a minor for undergraduate students.

III. Policy Development - Working towards a policy agenda in Hip Hop Education is one that is necessary in order to professionalize the field. The Hip-Hop education movement needs investment and serious support from government incumbents who want to solve the education crisis. The Hip-Hop education field requires funding to conduct research, implement programs, and to ensure these models are affective. There needs to be a mandate to provide professional development training for both pre-service and in-service teachers and teaching artists to establish a high standard for Hip-Hop culturally responsive pedagogy. We have identified existing policy areas that will help give credence to the Hip-Hop education movement. These policy recommendations are meant to link the pedagogical elements of Hip-Hop with existing curriculum theory and discipline.

- *Arts Integration*

The field of Hip-Hop education has a close kinship with the Arts Integration movement. There are many common areas we both wish to explore with respect to current studies addressing emerging issues in arts education, such as the availability of curriculum-based arts education activities inside and outside of regular school hours.

In reaching out to music teachers, encouraging the inclusion of Hip Hop in their teaching practice is frequently synonymous with proving the musical relevance of Hip Hop as an art form. In reaching out to general education policy-makers, the task becomes citing relevant research that demonstrates Hip-Hop education's

ability to help students make connections between their Hip Hop experience and “scholarly” endeavors in math, science, and language. Current education policies in most states place an emphasis on standardized test scores and readiness for the job market. The role of Hip-Hop education advocates will be to connect Hip-Hop education with higher test scores and greater likelihood of success in the job market. Finally, a policy agenda will need to include not only a formal definition for Hip-Hop education, but also the creation of opportunities for continuing studies in the field. Connecting Hip-Hop education with existing policy movements will be helpful, but creating a centralized movement of our own will also improve opportunities for scholars and students alike.

National Association for Music Education (MENC) has been working recently to create a suggested national standard for music education similar to those that have been adopted by many states in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. These standards are extremely general: singing, performing, improvising, composing, listening, evaluating, understanding cultural relevance, and making connections to other fields (National Association for Music Education, 2011) and could easily apply to a Hip Hop curriculum as well as a Western Classical one. In advocating for the inclusion of arts education in all schools, MENC says “...the educational success of our children depends on creating a society that is both literate and imaginative, both competent and creative” (National Association for Music Education, 2011a).

- *Technology Integration*

It is through technology that Hip-Hop culture has been able to capture the attention and imagination of so many people around the world. Technology and globalization have historically been important tools for the expansion of Hip-Hop’s creative zone, outreach and influence. From the record, radio, television, film and video, technology continues to provide ways in which to communicate and tell stories. The evolution of technology has churned turntables, mixers, sampling machine, record vinyl, CDs, MP3s and podcasts within the last 25 years. It has revolutionized the way music is created, played and sold. With the advent of media technology, Hip-Hop education focuses on strengthening the voice and involvement of youth to counter adversity and optimizing opportunities through the latest devices, mobile phone, gaming, and iPads.

- *Entrepreneurship Integration*

The integration of entrepreneurship in Hip-Hop education will accelerate students’ achievement and socioeconomic opportunities. It can help students synthesize information concepts, ideas, and plans of action through hands-on project-based experience that is demanded by entrepreneurship. The federal School to Work Opportunities Act and other education policies suggest that students learn more and perform better when tasks and skills demonstrate relevance to their current and future lives. Evaluation studies of high-school-level curricula in youth entrepreneurship report that students increase their occupational aspirations, interest in college, reading, and leadership behavior after participation. Six months later, 70 percent of the alumni in a recent

evaluation cohort were in college, 63 percent had jobs, and one in three ran a small business (Youth Entrepreneurship Education in America: A Policy Maker's Guide, 2009). In an effort to highlight the strong contribution that the arts make to the economy, Americans for the Arts has published a series of reports on the Arts and Economic Prosperity, detailing the high rate of economic return for small investments in arts projects and events (Americans for the Arts, 2011).

As advocates for Hip-Hop education in schools, the first political steps will include reaching out to organizations such as MENC, Americans for the Arts, and Aspen Youth Entrepreneurship Strategy Group for the inclusion of Hip-Hop education programs as part of their outreach and reporting.

- *A National Education Policy Reform*

The driving federal policy regarding education is No Child Left Behind, which has been amended under the Obama administration. This act combines policy with funding, tying educational grants to states' achievements of various standardized goals. Its Arts in Education section provides little direction, but encourages grant seekers to work in collaboration with local arts organizations (museums, collectives, etc.) rather than providing in-school programming (Department of Education, 2011).

In addition, while not a direct policy initiative, Obama's Race to the Top fund requires schools to compete for federal grant money based on their development of (and their adherence to) educational standards, their ability to quantify their success in reaching these standards (e.g. performance on standardized tests), and their efforts to improve test scores in struggling schools (Department of Education, 2011b).

The national educational focus is unquestionably centered around achieving high scores on standardized tests, on measurable learning, and with specific focus on ELA and on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Both No Child Left Behind and Race To the Top initiatives tie funding to test scores, and states with limited education budgets frequently focus on ELA and STEM at the expense of arts programs (Moran, 2004; Pazmiño, 2011). While Hip Hop is a musical art form, it also employs many elements of technology, engineering, and physics. Citing successful uses of Hip Hop to engage learners in STEM and ELA as well as studies that indicate the impact of empowering students by acknowledging the importance of their out-of-school literacies (such as Hip Hop) inside of school (Hallman, 2009; Froehlich, 2006; Coulson, 2010), can help to convince school administrators to include more programs like those detailed in this study. Further studies that show the effect Hip-Hop education programs have on test scores will bolster these claims and will also help in securing federal funding for schools that include Hip-Hop education programs.

- *Hip-Hop Education as its Own Field with its Own Policy Agenda*

It is important to recognize that Hip Hop has always existed simultaneously as a part of popular culture and a commentary on that culture. While inclusion in

existing fields of education and music education will help to make Hip-Hop education more accessible to more students, moving forward as a separate entity allows Hip-Hop education to maintain its own character and to stay true to the characteristics of Hip Hop that distinguish it. After all, Hip-Hop culture is American/African American culture and can be directly linked to the Blues, Ragtime, Jazz, Rock and Roll and R&B music. Honoring Hip-Hop culture will create a counter-narrative to allow students to see themselves and to view their skill-sets as beneficial instead of detrimental to society. The potential of Hip-Hop education research findings could shape educational policy and practice, especially if supported by neuroscience, which can provide models for new brain-based pedagogy. As neuroeducation reframes the most essential questions of education, the arts are poised to help provide answers.

IV. Think Tank Initiative - As we embark upon the next phase of the Hip-Hop education field, there is much room for both optimism and growth. We view this precipice as an opportune time to analyze, dialog and harness the skill sets, praxis and philosophy of Hip-Hop to catapult students and teachers to higher levels of success within both elementary and higher education. We recommend a think tank convening that will consist of Hip-Hop scholars, pioneers, practitioners, teaching artists, community leaders, administrators, business professionals, policymakers, and experts from the civic, government and business sectors to help us shape and strengthen our mission and policy agenda. The Think Tank will serve as a repository first of powerful questions and ideas that will be discussed, researched, analyzed, and answered by powerful people who are dedicated to the broader notion of education for liberation. It will also serve as a coalition-building process to develop networking and marketing opportunities, resource sharing, and long-term strategies and relationships.

V. Archiving Consortium - Forming a centralized online library (database) is critical for the development of Hip-Hop's education canon and educational praxis. With the advent of the Internet, we can, for example, expand Hip-Hop's archives by creating an online consortium made up of members with Hip-Hop collections to make it a comprehensive archive that can be accessed all over the world.

VI. Fundraising/Philanthropic Development – The most important recommendation that we can put forth is investment in the Hip-Hop education movement. Without funding, the field will never meet its full potential. We believe long-term investment in the financial well being of these individuals and groups is necessary to close the educational achievement gaps and digital divide, launch and cultivate non-profits and social enterprises that build community through youth-led programs, and develop leaders and citizenry for the 21st century.

The Hip-Hop and Social Justice Initiative Brief, released in 2008 by San Francisco-based ZeroDivide, shows some of the funding trends with Hip-Hop arts and activism that continue to be practiced today:

“From 2003 to 2005, The Ford Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Soros Foundation, and The Nathan Cummings Foundation funded independent hip hop

arts and activist efforts. Some of the impetus was the novelty as hip hop grew indistinguishable from America's youth. Other foundations recognized hip hop as a viable new "high art." Still others saw hip hop's pervasive grassroots presence as a local and national unified youth culture with the potential to mobilize youth toward social justice efforts."

We also believe there are opportunities for the Hip-Hop education field to receive federal, regional and local contracts from government agencies to implement programs and services mandated by the Department of Education, Department of Corrections, Department of Labor, and National Endowments for the Arts. In addition, Foundations seeking to launch new educational initiatives or expand programs will be able to recruit trained educators, teaching artists, and activists.

LIST OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

206Zulu

Amanda's Ray

Art in Motion- SOCUE

AS220 YOUTH

Ballet Nevada LLC

Beacon Center for Arts and Leadership

Beat Breakers & Beat Rockers

Bridge Da Gap

Bronx Berlin Connection

Brooklyn Academy of Music

Brown Paper Studio

CAPE League

Career Academy High School

C.A.S.A Middle School

Check Your Head

Child Center of NY Beacon at MS 226 Queens

ColloLearn

Colorado HIPHOP Elements

Community Rejuvenation Project

Community Works

Cornell University

East Oakland Step to College Program

Fordham University Department of African and African American Studies

FRESH! (Freshly Redefining Education for Students through Hip-hop!)

FRESH The Magazine

Fresh Prep - Urban Arts Partnership

Fulfill The Dream

Georgetown University

Global Awareness through Hip Hop Culture Program

Growing Up Hip-Hop
Guerilla Arts Afterschool Program/ H.E.L.P.
Hard N Da Paint
HCST Academy for Independent Studies
Heal the Hood Project
H.ighly I.ntelligent P.eople H.ealing O.ur P.lanet
High School For Recording Arts aka Hip Hop High
Hip Hop And Poetry Saved My Life
Hiphop Archive
Hip-Hop Association
Hip-hop Classic Styles Dance Class
Hip Hop Congress
Hiphop For Community
Hip Hop Culture Center of Harlem
Hip-Hop for Hope
Hip-Hop Humanities
Hip Hop Lives
Hip-Hop Lives Here
HIP HOP Ministries, Inc.
Hip-Hop On L.O.C.K.
Hip Hop Politics at Pace University
Hip-Hop Preserve
Hip-Hop Therapy Psycho-Educational or Therapeutic Groups
Hip Hop Think Tank, Cal State University Northridge
Hip-Hop Workshop
Hoods to Woods Foundation
Hush Tours Workshops and Seminars
H.Y.P.E.: Healing Young People thru Empowerment
I Love My Hood
Interstages

Janisaw Company
Justice by Uniting in Creative Energy (J.U.i.C.E.)
Kaos Network
Katalyst
KEXP 90.3 FM
KR Smith Elementary
Ladies of Hip-Hop Festival
Landmark High School
Listen 2 the Lyrics
Los Angeles Mission College
Lost Lyrics
Lyrical Minded
Man Up Campaign
Marion A. Bolden Newark Public School Student Center
Marrickville Youth Resource Centre
Media Education Lab, Temple University
Milwaukee Hip Hop Cypher (HHC414)
MindRap
Mirabal Sisters Campus Community School
MIT, Foreign Languages and Literatures
MLS & YMHA
Movement in Motion
Native American Health Center
NBK Nothing But Knowledge Dance Studio
New York University
North Carolina A&T State University
Northeastern University
Northwestern. University
NYU Gallatin School of Individualized Study
NYU Steinhardt English Education

Oakland Unity High School
Ocoee High School
OSD "The Class"
Parkway Heights Middle School
PATH (Preserving Archiving Teaching Hip Hop History)
Planet Rock: International Hip Hop Academy
Positive Entertainment And Creative Education
Project HIP-HOP
Rap Cool Health
Rhyme Like A Girl/Lyrical Embassy
Rhyme-N-Reason Foundation
Rhythm, Rhyme, Results
Rock The School Bells - Skyline College
Rutgers University
San Jose State University
Snap, Pop n Rock
Social Justice High School
Sound Art for the Blind
Stanford University
Street Styles
Summit Preparatory Academy
SUNY Empire State College
Syracuse University
TAS Theatre Company LTD (Singapore)
Teachers College, Columbia University
Teen Link Community Project
Telling Our Own Stories (Program)
The 411 Initiative For Change
The Brotherhood/Sister Sol
The City College Center for Worker Education

The Dance Co.

Thee Authentic Fewsion Dance

The Foundation "Celebrating Women in Hip Hop"

The Hip Hop Project

The Hip Hop Re: Education Project

The Hiphopscholar

The Peace Poets

THE POINT Community Development Corporation

Tiny Toones

TRUE Skool, Inc

Universidade de São Paulo/FAPESP

University Heights High School

University of California, Irvine

University of Florida/ English department

University of Washington

Urban Earth Leaders

Urban Word NYC

viBe Theater Experience

Words Beats Life, Inc.

W.U. School

Young Chicago Authors and Louder Than A Bomb: The Chicago Youth Poetry Festival

Young Players Theater

Youth Connection Charter School

Youth Speaks

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