

2015-2016 WITNESS Evaluation Highlights

Students demonstrate progress in meeting Minnesota education standards

- Nearly 81% of artists felt that teachers remained in the classroom and were engaged in the workshop, which is a moderating factor for this program goal
- 93% of artists felt that all or most of the students were engaged during the artist workshops.

“The WITNESS program is wonderful! It is a hidden gem in the education world of the Twin Cities. I truly believe every school in the Twin Cities would choose to be a part of this program and attend the concerts. As an adult, I have learned so much about topics that were unknown to me. I look forward to the teacher resource guide every year, knowing that inside of it is a wealth of knowledge and expertise that connects to music and other content areas. The concert itself provides an experience that my students otherwise would not have. Many of their parents, although spending their lives in the Twin Cities, haven't been to concerts at Orchestra Hall or the Ordway. It is a real treat for our students to be able to attend.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

“This program shaped about two months of curriculum for me in a way that I had never dreamed possible. Patricia Brown was tireless in her work with my students and the concert at Orchestra Hall was an eye-opener for most of our kids.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

Students demonstrate increased tolerance and understanding of diversity

- Nearly 81% of artists felt that teachers remained in the classroom and were engaged in the workshop, which is a moderating factor for this program goal
- 93% of artists felt that all or most of the students were engaged during the artist workshops.
- 85% of artists felt that all or most students increased their understanding of tolerance and diversity.

“The WITNESS program is a wonderful way for my students to have first-hand experiences which expose them to a culture different than their own. Cultural understanding and acceptance are so badly needed in our society right now, and this program is helping to create these important values in our young students.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

Students build self-esteem through positive role models

- 93% of artists felt that all or most of the students were engaged during the artist workshops.
- 98% of teachers felt that the artist was a positive role model for their students.

“About 10 years ago, I brought all the 8th graders to see the WITNESS Program at orchestra hall. One of my homeroom students did not want to attend, but I called his mother and she said he should go. This African American student struggled with truancy in school and felt like he had nothing to contribute. At

the Witness concert, one of the performers did a rap onstage. After that two other students read their own pieces. Following the concert, my student came up to me and showed me his writings/raps. He had no idea that what he was doing had any worth to it and here people were doing the same thing and were on the stage of Orchestra Hall! Thank you for helping him see his own worth. His school attendance improved and we were able to make a connection through the experience.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

“I want to give just one of MANY examples of how Patricia Brown positively affected my students. I saw a student respond to Patricia's dance instruction like I had never seen her to so with me in regular music class. It's as if she came alive. This student remained engaged with me the rest of the school year!” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

“There was a young girl in one of the classes that never speaks. She always held herself outside of the activities. She had been in special classes before this year, but was now in a main stream class. On our last day when we were singing the song that we wrote and using tambourines, I noticed her edging closer to the piano. I went to her and asked if she would like to sit by me. She did. Then I asked if she would like to play the tambourine. She would, and did. Then she played some notes on the piano, but she still did not speak. As the class was leaving, she turned to me and said, "thank you." Those were the most incredible two words I have ever heard.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teaching Artist

“One of the students that was very closed off at the beginning (wearing headphones the whole time), became interested the second time we were there. We got her to sing by herself and she was amazing!!! The other students were very supportive of her and I think she gained confidence as she sang another song!” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teaching Artist

Students demonstrate awareness of African American contributions to the arts

- 93% of artists felt that all or most students showed an increased level of knowledge of the contributions of African Americans to our shared American cultural heritage.
- Prior to the artist workshops, 29% of teachers rated their students' level of knowledge of African American culture to our shared American cultural heritage as **excellent**. After the workshops with the artists, that figure rose to 91%.

“It was quite a learning curve for our students--it was clear there was a lot of learning happening in regard to African American culture through music, history, and literacy.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

“The students were able to be exposed to a new culture and style of dance that they otherwise would not have. WITNESS encourages students to experience new things.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

Students demonstrate understanding of the program theme

- 89% of artists felt that all or most students were introduced to the artists, the WITNESS School Program and/or the WITNESS theme **before** the first workshop.
- 87% of artists felt that all or most students showed an increased level of knowledge or excitement for the WITNESS theme **after** the artist workshops.
- 91% of teachers strongly agreed that the artist workshops highlighted the WITNESS program theme of the history and legacy of Morehouse College and/or the Morehouse College Glee Club, their values, and the music that they perform, and that they effectively provided students with new enthusiasm for the subject.

“The Witness Program did a great job sending in a speaker who was and is extremely knowledgeable about the topics that were being presented. They brought in valuable background knowledge and personal experiences. The presenter was able to create a lifelong memorable experience for all students and staff that we can continue to use in the future.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

“Morehouse College was amazing! Our students still talk about seeing them perform. The example they set for students of how to behave in a performance setting was invaluable. Students had the opportunity to see what it could look like if all the performers were engaged and in sync.” 2015-2016 WITNESS School Program Partner Teacher

2015-2016 Facts and Figures

- 5,439 students (grades K and 2-12) from 43 schools (17 urban, 21 suburban and 5 rural) from the Twin Cities metro area participated in the WITNESS School Program.
- 17 of all public WITNESS Partner Schools have more than 50% of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch.
- Nearly half of schools who participated in the WITNESS School Program report a more than 50% nonwhite student body.
- 85% of teachers used the WITNESS Teacher Resource Guide in their classroom and 93% rated it as very effective in helping the to prepare students for the artist workshops.
- 70% of teachers rated the overall experience of the Young People's Concert as “excellent.”
- 76% of teachers reported that their students attend the WITNESS Young People's Concert annually.
- The top two reasons why teachers decide to bring their students to the WITNESS Young People's Concert are the celebration of African American culture and free artist workshops.
- 100% of teachers rated the overall WITNESS School Program experience as excellent.