

# MAKING CREATIVITY VISIBLE

## CATALYZING CREATIVITY THROUGHOUT LEARNING

Making Creativity Visible was a three-year initiative of the Columbus Museum of Art, in collaboration with area educators and supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services with additional activities made possible by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation. Making Creativity Visible explored what creativity looks like, feels like, and sounds like in learning and how educators can model, foster, and assess creativity in prek-12 settings.

Through Making Creativity Visible, Columbus Museum of Art educators collaborated with a core group of highly-committed teacher advisors – the Core Teacher Team – and participants in CMA's teacher professional development – so-called “Field Agents” who tested tools and strategies in their own classrooms. This process was grounded in research into creativity, innovation, and cognition from across sectors, and guided by the strategies of the Project Zero research institute at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education.



Making Creativity Visible was designed as a bold, collaborative venture to enable CMA to play a stronger role in supporting creativity throughout pre-k to 12 education. The investigations of MCV were designed to build participants' understandings of creativity, and guide the creation of trainings and resources to foster creativity throughout PreK-12 settings.

Specifically, MCV sought to impact teachers, and their students by extension, in three primary ways: **1) Increased understanding and awareness of creativity and how to recognize it and assess it, 2) Increased interest in advocating for creativity and using tools to assess it, and 3) improved skills in communicating, fostering,**

**and assessing creativity.** By supporting educators' capacity to nurture creative thinking, CMA creates a long-term ripple effect on children and youth throughout the region and beyond.

### Key Impacts of Making Creativity Visible

Evaluation conducted by Audience Focus, Inc. examined the ways in which MCV supported participants' ability to identify, foster, and assess creativity. Participating teachers strongly agree that being part of MCV influenced the way they think about their teaching or professional practice, saying it gave them more clarity and purpose to their work, made them more reflective of their practice, challenged previously held assumptions about teaching and learning, and encouraged them to experiment using new teaching and learning approaches with confidence.

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*“I am able to share all of these tools, resources, and new beliefs about creativity with a larger audience, and make a greater impact on our kids’ growth and learning”*

Teachers said participation changed the way they facilitate learning, saying they are now more likely to: encourage play, ask more questions, provide more choices and opportunities to experiment and take risks, acknowledge failures and setbacks as essential for growth, encourage more diversity and collaboration within creative learning groups, and let students lead their own learning.

### **Teacher participants consistently rated themselves higher after participating in MCV than before, in the areas of**

- Understanding creativity and the role it plays throughout the learning process;
- Recognizing what creativity looks like and sounds like in the learning environment;
- Awareness of a variety of creativity assessment tools and strategies;
- Interest in advocating for creativity and/or being a change agent in their schools;
- Ability to communicate about creativity, foster creativity, and assess student creative progress.

This suggests that MCV positively contributed to teachers' understanding of creativity, ability to foster creativity and assess creative growth, and confidence communicating the value of creativity to others.

Teachers also believe their participation in MCV positively impacts students, with teachers describing how participation in the Initiative led to students demonstrating:

- Greater ownership of their own learning, and ability to recognize their own learning;
- Deeper engagement and motivation;
- Increased comfort with ambiguity; and
- Increased ability to collaborate, take risks, and persevere.

**These results affirm CMA’s commitment to supporting creativity by fostering lifelong learning and nurturing leadership for creativity throughout our communities.**

**For more information, visit <https://www.columbusmuseum.org/resources/making-creativity-visible>**