



WISSIT

WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS *Connecting DC Educators with Project Zero Ideas*

We are pleased to report that the inaugural WISSIT was an unqualified success! The institute lasted five days, from August 11-15, 2014. Educators from across the DC area gave up a week of precious summer vacation to participate.

The institute focused on two major themes: Building a Culture of Thinking and Educating for Global Competence. The daily schedule consisted of plenary session talks given by two Project Zero senior researchers, Veronica Boix Mansilla and Ron Ritchhart; interactive courses led by prominent researchers and local educators; and learning groups where participants explored institute themes further and made action plans for the coming school year.

A “Day at the Museums” on the third day of WISSIT featured in-gallery sessions led by museum educators from the Freer | Sackler Galleries of Art, the National Building Museum and the National Gallery of Art.

Participants provided overwhelmingly positive feedback about the institute. Don’t just take our word for it; consider the following data points and testimonials.

WISSIT by Numbers

Goal set for total number of participants in first year of WISSIT: **100**

Total number of participants: **175**

Number of participants attending entire institute: **125**

Number of participants attending the Day at the Museums only or partially attending: **50**

Number of WISSIT faculty members: **55**

Participants completing the institute evaluation: **73%**

Evaluation respondents rating WISSIT overall as *Excellent* or *Very Good*: **97% (!!!)**

Public/charter school educators in attendance: **37%**

Independent school educators in attendance: **44%**

Preschool center educators in attendance: **11%**

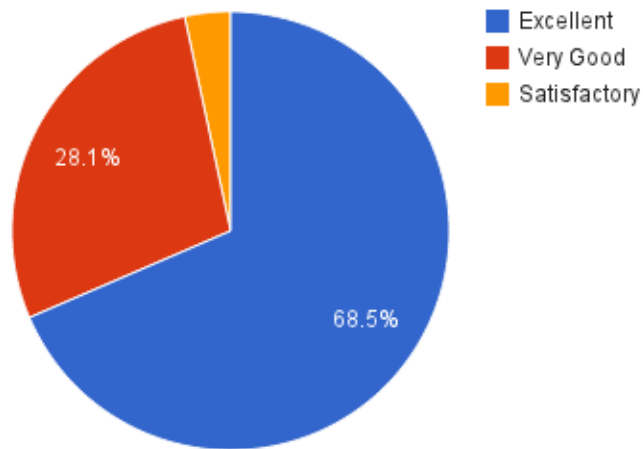
Other types of educators/education specialists (from museums, NGOs, education organizations) in attendance: **8%**

Amount raised toward \$250,000 matching 1:1 E.E. Ford Foundation Educational Leadership Grant, as of 9/1/14: **\$200,000**

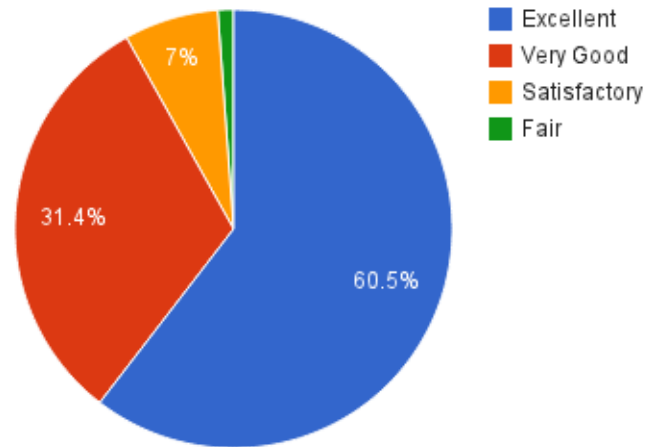
DC-based research projects inspired by and launched at WISSIT: **2** (*Children as Citizens*, focused on early childhood; and *Global Lens*, which will explore the development of global competence at the secondary school level)

Graphic Representations of Overall WISSIT Participant Evaluations

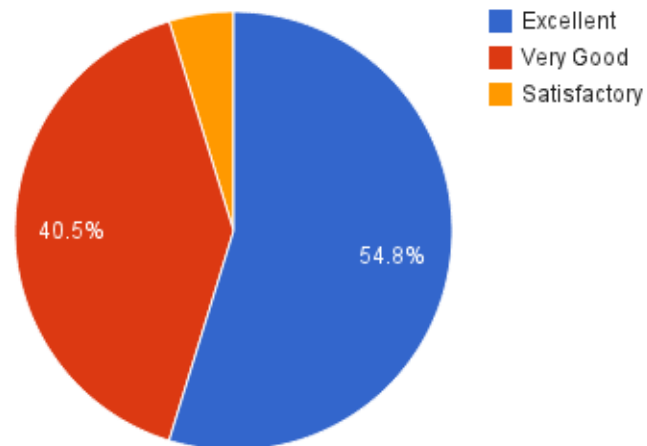
Rate the overall quality of the institute program in terms of your own professional learning:



Rate the overall quality of the learning group experience:



Rate the overall quality of the interactive courses you attended



Palpable Enthusiasm for WISSIT

Considering this was our very first institute, we were pleasantly surprised by the palpable enthusiasm expressed by participants for WISSIT. Some typical responses were:

“This was one of the most exciting weeks I have ever experienced in terms of professional growth. Each day something happened that wowed me more than the day before. The institute was a first-class operation, from submitting my application to the completion of the program.”

“Fantastic to meet, connect, and learn from teachers in the DC area. Having attended [a Project Zero institute] at Harvard a few years ago, this event was much more meaningful—in many ways. Local teachers, leaders, museums, you name it.”

“The time to reflect on what we were learning was crucial as was the chance to meet people outside of my school.”

“Learning perspectives of other participants who offered much knowledge about different disciplines enriched the experience.”

“Pulling together a final product helped me focus on essential aspects of creating a culture of thinking. Listening to others broadened my perspective. Participants were welcomed, appreciated for different perspectives. The learning group was a safe, unpressured place.”

“This was my first time experiencing a Project Zero institute. I found the program to be of high quality, well organized and facilitated. I am looking forward to attending next year. “

“I loved the interactive classes and practice with so many thinking routines. I'm energized about the school year. I saw a real benefit to the slow methodic rich thinking of the week. Thank you.”

“This was a wonderful way to spend the week prior to starting a new school year. I felt pampered and inspired. It put my thinking in just the right place for the start of the year.”

“This institute was amazing! I enjoyed connecting with other professionals that are engaged in rich teaching practices. The interactive courses were informative and I was able to walk away with strategies/tools that I could immediately put into practice.”

“I really loved participating in the institute. In general, it was a pretty intense week but the effect of the deep conversations, slow learning, and interpersonal connections will last a long time and are already being felt in my day to day work as an educator.”

“The program was well-organized and presenters' information was clearly linked to research.”

“I am convinced I took more away from this one institute than all of the in-services I've attended in 8 years of teaching combined.”

“I told people during the week and continue to tell people: That was the BEST conference I've attended as an education professional! Typically with 5-day conferences, I feel, ‘OK, I get it, I can be done now.’ But with this conference, I wanted to return and to remain there every day.”

Plans for 2015

We are now busy planning for WISSIT 2015. Soon, we will announce the dates for the next institute, and we will continue raising the remaining matching funds for the E.E. Ford Foundation Educational Leadership Grant.

Please visit our newly launched website, wissit.org, for further information.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Reese". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Jim Reese
Director of WISSIT