

Blakely Minutes 12-11-14

Principal's Report

Hour of Code

Started last year, this year wanted all kids to participate. All the kids loved it. Kathleen Poole organized, had every tech resource dedicated to it. Big push for this in the district. District is looking at how to incorporate into curriculum, possible after school programs, possible 50 minutes of STEM instruction. Showed youtube video. Breaking down barriers, showing all kids that computer programming is something they can do. The kids all loved it and it was a great experience.

Holiday Shop

Balanced approach at Blakely – science, arts, community. Shop had huge turnout – long lines in the hallway, big success. Kids love it, joy and excitement. Great event that we all enjoy, great tradition at Blakely.

Art teacher had her baby last night! Rowan 7lbs 5 oz, everything went great!

Approval of Minutes. – approved

Guest Speakers

Pam Keyes

Went to see what school districts are doing with art funding, how they're bringing it into the classroom. Jen is her right hand in the program, doing all the work, handling art docent piece. We are so lucky – there are districts that don't even have a specialist. We have docent, artist in the classroom.

Kathy Haskin

Docent program and Arts in Education program are two different things. Program has been going on for 15 years. Work with public schools, have roster of artists that will bring their art into the classroom. Enhance non-art subject matter by using art. Had a group last year use dance to learn about air movement, for example. Connected with social studies, language arts, math, science teachers – across the board. Brought artists in from across the board, anywhere from 2 hours to 50 hours of time. Middle schoolers at Woodward – using Shakespeare to give them better presentation skills. Hard for teachers to find time for artists to come in. Created guide for teachers that lists artist, preferred age, medium and curriculum ties. So teacher can look at guide and fill in a curriculum that they need, for ex math. Guide is being sent to all teachers in the district. Goal is for all teachers to use program. Kathy is working with teachers who are having a hard time incorporating, helping them make it work.

Q: Explain how it's doled out to schools? A: School, PTO money to help pay for time with kids. School district and schools but it gets matched 2 to 1. Blakely has 40 hours to use how they want. Reese: have divided it up between the grades. Look at having different experiences each year, so not too much repetition. Has been very useful, beneficial. Kathy: Totem poles in hall last year were part of program

Q: How identify artists? Kathy: Need to apply to be part of program. Ask for full range of experience, references, lesson plans. Some tried and true artists have been part of program from beginning. Continue to add new artists. Want to have diversity. Last month added classical music, helps kids learn history by looking at music over time. Provide training to artists as well, not every artist can teach and not every teacher has art content skills. Can help facilitate.

Q: Are school hours all taken up? Are there hours to allocate or are they all planned for? A: Some repeated, some new experience. Depends on the school and how they want to handle it. They plan for how many hours, goals to target. Can be different every year because the artists can change. But there are also tried and true artists that come every year.

Jen Kochenash:

Excited to be working with Pam in this program. Want kids to have the confidence that when they look at art, have skills to pull something from that experience, to engage with and understand the art they are looking at. Background – interest came from going to the Louvre and not really understanding what she was looking at. Admiring, but not understanding. Decided to learn art, education, art docent training. After getting fully trained, she taught VTS, which is the program that the district has brought in. Visual literacy – similar to regular literacy. Can be taught through a series of steps to learn visual literacy. Highly vetted and respected program, supported by museums.

Look, wonder and discover. Teaching kids this. Satisfies early education requirements. Feed back from teachers was no time to teach art appreciation. But appreciation was part of early academic requirement, and wasn't being met. This program satisfies that requirement. Visual Literacy teaches a learning style that is also being applied in other fields – medicine, science, etc. Easy to learn program, can train parent volunteers, very rewarding. Docents are reporting that kids are engaged, asking lots of questions, not wanting time to be over. Rewarding for the volunteer docents. Slideshow exercise: What an art docent would do in the classroom. First: take a moment and look at the art. What's going on in picture? All kinds of layers, things noticed. Attendees provided input to what they're seeing – mood, feeling, composition, juxtaposition, contrast of colors and darkness, facial expressions, movement, questions that arise.

Liz: just was docent in Mr Cameron's class. Was worried wouldn't be able to fill 30 minutes. But was surprised, kids wanted more time, every child commented. Kids were so engaged. Kids had so many interesting ideas and interpretations. One thought pigs were truffle hunting, another thought scene could be Kosovo based on book they recently read.

Jen: Kids bring their own experience to what they're seeing and interpreting. Developmentally appropriate. Art appreciation has trajectory of 8 levels leading to PhD. Most go through 4 levels. Hope is to garner interest in kids so that they may be interested in pursuing those levels beyond 4 levels.

Lisa: Background in art appreciation. Comment that really fabulous to see this experience in the classroom. Kids are so open, have so much to say, wonderful to see wheels turning. Learns from the kids, walks away with new perspectives on a piece that the kids introduced. Seeing critical thinking skills and observation skills, more articulate.

Reese: Being articulate is what he's noticed – don't have to worry about having the right answer. Every answer is right – it's safe, comfortable, every kid can engage. Don't have this in other subjects. Critical thinking gets developed, kids don't rush – they go deeper and don't rush through to just get the answer right like they do in other subjects.

Pam: Write down observations of what they see in the fall, and again in the spring. Phenomenal to see the growth and depth of their observations. Also important component to make connections in paraphrasing what the child said, repeat it back to them, they know they've been heard. Reese: They will tell you if they got it wrong! Liz: Shout out to training – great intro by Pam and Jen, followed by training that was great. Helpful training on vocabulary – ex say flat and saying you're talking about perspective.

Pam: Take medical school student and apply this to seeing patients – go deeper and deeper and ask and look, keep going deeper. Reese – Success of program is integration piece – can't feel like one more thing. Show those teachers that it can be integrated as part of social studies or science lesson. Will get more buy-in and interests from teachers. April: once outside of school – teaches them how to look at art, seeing it in life, using the new vocabulary.

Pam: rarely tell kids who the artist is or background or history. That interest will come with time. But some kids have passion - example of child in program looked at painting by Wyatt and went home and researched the whole background of the image and brought it to the playground, shared with peers, was excited and enthusiastic.

Randy Evans:

Chinese course. Learn art, culture, critical thinking, using Chinese brush to write Chinese characters. Show videos to show cultural experiences in China. Mandarin

Learning Center. Been teaching in schools for last 8 years. Wanted it in classroom, but district didn't have the money. So Randy started program. Non profit, please spread the word. Important language. All teachers are native speakers with kids in the schools. Currently have 10 classes offered. 2 at Sakai, 1 Ordway (Blakely, Wilkes bus over) Student body is shrinking because new students aren't aware of program. Wanting new class to start in spring – need 5 students to make it go. \$295 for 25 lessons. \$11.80 per class. Before or after school. Program is from grade 1-8. Have another program for HS students to continue to learn and earn credit.

Q: Kids that have gone through whole program? A: Yes 2 or 3 in HS. Q? What is level of proficiency at that point? A: Yes, can speak. Don't think Chinese is hard – it's a pictograph. Kids can remember and make associations. Like learning letters, before reading. It is art that they can learn. Register by website - bainbridgemandarinlc.org. Hope to start in January, 2-3 weeks after schools starts again. 2 days a week, 45 minute class. Kids buy textbook. They provide pretzel snack.

Grants

Michele Hobbs

Best grants submission that we've had. Well written, well researched. Teachers are amazing what they've come up with, level of detail. Teachers open to suggestions on how to make grants better. Next year: subscription based grants will make line items – if they're successful, will be easy to renew. We were able to fund all grants. Some needed to be reworked, but all were granted.

Reese: our grant writing is getting better. Whole building came together to work on this. 3 year process. Had teachers talk about what's exciting, interesting, expanding curriculum. That's year 1. Year 2 is echo grant – share them out, take successful grants and have other teachers do same program. Year 3 – supplies. Need to replenish, supplies run out and are expensive.

Michele: Reworking the process – helped teachers look at grander scheme, how many kids will benefit, how can expand to more than one grade.

Reese: Common theme that we're beginning to see. Ex, can't just ask for books. Need to elaborate – literacy type. Classroom libraries are deficient and need help – maybe needs to be an auction item, to boost up those libraries. Michele: They haven't been updated in 15 years! Asked teachers to elaborate on what books and how used.

Blakely grant process tried to mirror BSF foundation process and also scheduled the Blakely grants process so that it coordinated well with BSF process.

Grant letters went out today and materials will be ordered ASAP, so that new items will be in classrooms by January.

Q: How auction proceeds are allocated to different PTO activities, including grants.

A: Auction chairs will provide examples from 2014 grant process to help illustrate what the funds are used for. It is important for people to know where their money is going to and to differentiate that there are BSF grants and Blakely PTO grants.

Karen: Makes sense for new process now that we have auction every year. Grant process can reveal a huge need, can become part of a paddle call at the auction. May make sense to share that information with the two teams – grants and auction – to coordinate that. Reese: sees PTO grants as being a line item from the auction that comes each year.

Q: What's the overlap? Blakely did so well through BSF this year. What was the overlap between the two, in regards to application and award? A: April – Reese got behind it, supported. Maybe two that didn't get approved by BSF, and those were covered by PTO.

No treasurers update.

Moving ongoing software into line items so continuous every year.

Enrichment update

Liz: author visit confirmed. Suzanne Selfors – meeting with 4th graders, probably March. George Shannon meeting with 1st, 2nd maybe Kinder. Kate DiCamillo hopefully coming to island! Kathleen trying to organize all 3rd graders in all schools to hear her speak at theater. Then Suzanne can meet with them as 4th graders, nice follow though. Probably Feb/March

Auction update:

Anna: Request link to auction website on main Blakely front page. Will work with Kyanne. Lisa: Childcare approved, offered at IslandWood. 50 spots, very affordable – subsidized.