



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Woodland Hills Elementary
Charter for Enriched Studies*

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To Whom It May Concern:

I have been working with Jonas Basom and Drama Education Network since 2014 when I first saw his program at a statewide conference for gifted education. His curriculum materials and teacher training PD services are so outstanding that I have brought him to 3 different elementary schools where I have been the principal.

In 2014 I purchased his curriculum program, *The Drama Game File* (CD-ROM, companion book, and character cards box set) for all 35 teachers (grades K-8) at Yerba Buena Elementary in Las Virgines USD, and, with Jonas' guidance, developed a PD plan that included 3 full-day trainings, 3 afternoon workshops, and 10 virtual 1-on-1 coaching sessions for teachers. Jonas also led 10 model demonstration lessons for 3 groups of students (grades 1, 3, and 5) with teachers observing. His excellent work led to the district funding a group of 11 teachers from other schools to receive the curriculum and 3 full days of PD.

In 2016 I purchased his new curriculum program, *Drama Works! Teaching System* (online subscription, Companion Book of Lesson Plans, Creativity Cards, and Vocabulary Cards) for all 28 teachers at Stevenson Elementary in Burbank USD, and worked with Jonas to craft a PD plan that included a full-day training in August, 2 afternoon workshops, then 6 model lessons for 3 groups (grades K, 3, and 5) with teachers observing and Jonas leading guided reflection afterwards. In the spring, Jonas led 5 coaching days in which he worked 1-on-1 with teachers to design and teach a lesson integrating *Drama Works!* with a specific curriculum topic. The teacher led the lesson and Jonas provided guided reflection and feedback. Despite some initial reluctance, teachers felt this process was very beneficial. In years 2 and 3, we renewed our *Drama Works!* subscriptions, and Jonas focused his PD workshops, demo lessons, and coaching days on integrating drama with our new science curriculum.

In 2021 I purchased the complete *Drama Works! Teaching System* for all 32 teachers (grades TK-5) at Woodland Hills Elementary. During remote teaching, Jonas led 4 virtual PD trainings and 1 model lesson for every class TK-5. In year 2, returning to campus, Jonas led 3 afternoon workshops with teachers, 6 model demonstration lessons for 7 groups (TK-5) with teachers observing and reflecting afterwards, plus virtual 1-on-1 coaching sessions for teachers.

Drama Works! is a wonderful curriculum for elementary teachers. The lesson plans are comprehensive. The cross referencing helps the teacher find activities that integrate with ELA, the arts, and all school subjects. The Creativity Cards provide creative ideas to try during the activities while also building English vocabulary. This is not an add-on program; it trains teachers how to integrate drama with their existing curriculum. It meets Common Core ELA and CA Arts standards, reaches different learning styles, addresses social emotional learning, and develops 21st Century skills such as creativity and collaboration.

Jonas' work with my teachers and students has been exemplary. During workshops, he keeps teachers engaged and actively participating throughout the day while providing useful integration ideas across the curriculum. He makes them feel comfortable and confident to lead drama on their own with his detailed system of classroom management that balances creativity and control. He is professional and responsive to teachers' needs, challenges, and questions. Jonas is a master teacher of students. His in-person lessons are dynamic and engage students of all ages and abilities while demonstrating creative and effective ways to teach specific curriculum topics (my teachers have seen character, setting, plot, grammar, idioms, weather, biomes, states of matter, the Industrial Revolution, and the water cycle). His model lessons are powerful. Teachers have felt inspired by the positive impact on the students in only 6 lessons. When incorporating *Drama Works!* activities and strategies in their own classrooms, teachers have reported great success, noting high levels of engagement and effectiveness.

The customer service provided by Jonas and Drama Education Network has been superb. He is flexible, responsive, and clear in handling paperwork, contracts, pricing, communications, and scheduling. He provides free usage reports, PD evaluations, and teacher handouts. He continues to collaborate to discover new ways to inspire and empower my teachers. We plan to renew our annual subscription to *Drama Works!* and bring Jonas back to continue working with our students and teachers.

Sincerely,

Christina Desiderio, Principal