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Burbank Unified School District



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To Whom It May Concern:

I first met Jonas Basom at a statewide conference for gifted education where he was presenting and exhibiting. Seeing the quality and value of his curriculum, I purchased materials and brought him in to train our teachers (grades K-8 in Las Virgenes Unified School District). **Jonas did such a great job that I had to bring him to my new school in Burbank USD!**

For school year 2016-2017 **Stevenson Elementary purchased the Drama Works! Teaching System complete kit** (online subscription, book, and both sets of flash cards) **for all 28 of our teachers, and implemented a comprehensive professional development plan to train our teachers** how to use the program and meet Common Core ELA standards through drama.

Drama Works! Teaching System is an exciting curriculum for elementary teachers. The lesson plans are comprehensive. The cross referencing helps the teacher find activities that integrate with language arts, social studies, science, the arts, and all school subjects. The Creativity Cards provide so many creative ideas to try during the activities while simultaneously building English vocabulary. This is not an add-on program; it trains teachers how to integrate drama with their existing curriculum in all subjects. It **meets Common Core ELA standards, reaches different learning styles, and develops 21st Century skills** such as creativity, collaboration, and problem solving.

Phase 1 of the PD plan was Jonas leading teacher-training workshops with our staff. We had 1 full day in August, then 2 afterschool follow-up sessions. As a staff development presenter, Jonas is on point. His expertise in arts integration was evident. **He kept the teachers engaged and participating throughout the day**, experiencing his drama activities and strategies while making connections to Common Core ELA standards, social skills, and integration ideas across the curriculum. **He made them feel comfortable to lead drama on their own** with his amazing system of classroom management that balances creativity and control. My staff also appreciated his flexibility in responding to their needs and questions.

Phase 2 of the PD plan was Jonas leading 6 model demonstration lessons with 3 different groups of students (grades K, 3, and 5) while teachers observed. He also led guided reflection sessions with the teachers after these lessons. **Jonas is a master teacher of students! His lessons were dynamic and fun.** He modeled his classroom management system, met Common Core ELA standards, and engaged students of all ages and abilities. The model lessons were powerful. **Teachers felt like they got a clear vision of the program and were inspired by the positive impact on the students in only 6 lessons.**

Phase 3 of the PD plan was Jonas providing 5 coaching days in which he worked one-on-one with teachers to use Drama Works! to plan a lesson integrating drama with a specific curriculum topic for their classroom (topics included antonyms, idioms, nouns, biomes, circulatory system, and the industrial revolution). **The teacher led the lesson and Jonas provided guided reflection and feedback notes.** Despite some initial reluctance, teachers felt this process was very beneficial.

Overall, this has been an exceptional experience! Teachers have commented on the effectiveness of the strategies and high levels of engagement in the classroom when using Drama Works! Each phase of the PD plan further empowered and inspired our teachers to use the materials successfully on their own. They now feel much more confident and competent.

The customer service provided by Jonas and Drama Education Network has been superior. Jonas was flexible, prompt, honest, and clear in handling all issues related to paperwork, contracts, pricing, communications, and scheduling. I am extremely pleased with all of our interactions with Jonas. **We plan to continue our annual subscription to Drama Works! Online and bring Jonas back for additional professional development services.**

Sincerely,

Christina Desiderio
Principal, R.L. Stevenson Elementary, Burbank USD