

July 10, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to commend Mr. Jonas Basom and Drama Education Network for their outstanding curriculum materials and professional development services for teachers that we have implemented in Tyler ISD during a four-year span. We chose him to help us empower our elementary classroom teachers to meet the K-5 theatre TEKS (Texas standards mandated by state law) and learn how to integrate the arts across the curriculum. We purchased licenses and print components for more than 250 teachers K-12, and arranged for 18 teacher training days with Mr. Basom here in Tyler, Texas.

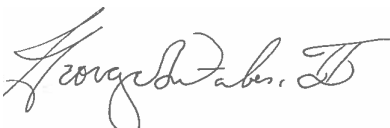
Mr. Basom's drama curriculum and lesson plans are very teacher friendly. Our teachers love how easy it is to find fun and effective activities to meet state standards, develop creative and academic skills, and teach content in any school subject. The flash cards provide the teacher and students with creative ideas to select during activities while building English vocabulary. After making our Curriculum and Instruction Executive Director aware of the benefits of the drama curriculum for ESL and literacy development she made funds available to help assist the purchase for additional kits and professional training. She understood that this was not an add-on program, but a way of training multi-subject teachers how to integrate drama activities with their existing curriculum to develop literacy, reach different learning styles, and develop 21st Century skills such as collaboration and problem solving.

We hired Mr. Basom to lead full-day workshops with our teachers during the summer. Teachers were fully engaged and participating throughout the day, laughing, learning, and reflecting on Mr. Basom's versatile drama activities and strategies. He made teachers feel comfortable and excited about taking a risk to try another strategy to teach their subject. They enjoyed his classroom management system, which is perfect for enhancing creative expression while maintaining structure and fostering respectful behavior.

We followed up on the initial PD training for teachers by bringing Mr. Basom to lead model demonstration lessons with our students at four different elementary campuses. Teachers observed lessons, then reflected on what they learned with Mr. Basom's guidance. Mr. Basom is a master teacher with students. He encouraged students to think for themselves in a supportive and caring way. It was amazing how he established a demanding yet nurturing environment in such a short time. The model lessons caused principals and teachers to realize that they needed more of these skills and strategies.

We also scheduled video conferencing sessions with Mr. Basom from Los Angeles every few months throughout the school year. By scheduling different grade level groups for each session, Mr. Basom was able to address concerns and curriculum specifically for that group. During these follow-up trainings, Mr. Basom answered questions, addressed new topics, and even led hands-on activities remotely. The "share screen" mode allowed him to show teachers where to go in his digital curriculum to find appropriate lessons, posters, or other content.

Working with Mr. Jonas Basom and Drama Education Network has been a wonderful experience for our teachers and students. Each of the professional development services we used helped our teachers use the curriculum materials more frequently and effectively. Teachers have applied what they learned and have used the curriculum materials with numerous positive benefits for their students' academic and social development. Having been an educator, principal and now Director of Visual and Performing Arts, I have tried to help others understand that the Arts are the 4th "R" (Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and the Arts) that develop the whole child. I would recommend Mr. Basom's products and teacher training services for any elementary teacher and for any school looking to meet the K-5 theatre TEKS, incorporate arts integration, move from STEM to STEAM, or bring creativity to the classroom.



George Faber

Director of Fine Arts

Tyler Independent School District, Texas