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Fine Arts Department
Department of Curriculum and Accountability

Arts Infusion Teacher Advisory Panel Created

Teachers Will Facilitate Crucial Partnership With ArtsMemphis

On September 20, 2010, a historic meeting will take place between SCS and representatives from arts organizations across Memphis and Shelby County. The meeting is a direct result of the collaboration between Brad Foust, Art/Music Grant Facilitator, Karen Kitchens, Programs and Education Officer with The Assisi Foundation, and Peggy Seessel, Education and Outreach Director with ArtsMemphis.

The main purpose of the meeting is to facilitate a working relationship between the SCS Arts Infusion schools and arts organizations serving those schools. To this end, the Arts Infusion Teacher Advisory Panel was formed. This panel will represent the interest of teachers in the AI schools, and is comprised of both classroom and specialist teachers.

ArtsMemphis serves artists and arts organization throughout the Mid-South region by providing both financial support and advocacy resources, as well as working to expand the role of the arts in Memphis area schools. The ArtsMemphis Arts for Children and Teachers (ACT) program has served MCS for many years, and it is this model that will be adapted for SCS Arts Infusion schools.

The Assisi Foundation of Memphis also provides support for arts organizations in the Memphis area, and works closely with ArtsMemphis to offer experiences in the arts for students in MCS and SCS. Assisi will host the September 20 meeting, and will continue to monitor the efforts to form a lasting partnership between SCS and ArtsMemphis.

For more information, please see the People and Places sidebar on p. 2.

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Arts Infusion Teachers Receive VTS Training at
Memphis Brooks Museum of Art

Where the Southern Cross the Yellow Dog by Carroll Cloar

“What’s going on in this picture?” “What do you see that makes you say that?” These guiding questions serve to begin engaging, thoughtful discussions centered on works of art in an approach to teaching known as Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). VTS began as a collaboration between museum educator Philip Yinawine and cognitive psychologist Abigail Housen. According to the VTS web site, “Yinawine was primarily concerned with making museum education programs more effective. His research introduced him to the work of Abigail Housen in 1988. Housen, a Harvard-trained educator and psychologist, conducted empirical research exploring how viewers, experienced and novice, think when looking at art objects.”

Museums across the country, including The Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, offer VTS training to teachers in all subject areas. Kathy Dumlao, Associate Curator of Education at The Brooks, presented an introductory session to 20 AI teachers from 10 schools on Friday, August 27. Among the teachers in attendance was Candi Brewer, 4th grade teacher at Southwind Elementary School. Ms. Brewer took her knowledge of the teaching strategy and immediately used it in her classroom. Initially, her students began by listing items they saw in the picture, which is indicative of the beginning stages of VTS. “I noticed that my students are still in phase 1 and 2 of VTS,” said Brewer, a reference to the five levels of Housen’s aesthetic stage theory. “However, some told about a story in the print. They came up with reasons on why people and objects were placed in the painting, and why they were important to the art piece. I also had a couple of students describe the feelings of the people in the print. My students are doing great using VTS!”

VTS training sessions will be offered to SCS teachers throughout the year via My Learning Plan, including sessions on September 30 and October 14. For more information on VTS, visit their web site: http://www.vtshome.org

Upcoming Events

September 20, 2010
Arts Infusion Teacher Advisory Panel/ArtsMemphis Meeting- The Assisi Foundation, Memphis, TN

September 27, 2010
Tennessee Arts Commission Arts Educator Meeting- Playhouse on the Square, Memphis, TN

September 28, 2010
Arts Infusion School Visit- Tupelo, MS
Math and Visual Arts Merge at Rivercrest Elementary

Students in Camela Blanchard’s 5th grade class at Rivercrest Elementary have been busy applying their knowledge of math, language arts and visual arts to create unique works of art. Students researched the artist Piet Mondrian in order to synthesize the key points of his style (post 1914) and utilize this art style to construct original art works that represent decimals in the tenths and thousandths place values. Students then created a descriptive title of their work (staying true to Mondrian’s style) and used technology to explore the drafting step of the writing process by expressing their thoughts and feelings as a result of the arts infusion experience.

As part of the display, all related standards in math, language arts, visual art and technology were posted. Congratulations to Camela Blanchard and her 5th grade students for completing such an innovative project!

Math
GLE 0506.2.1 Extend the understanding of place value through millions and milliollths in various contexts and representations.

SPI 0506.2.1 Read and write numbers from millions to milliollths in various contexts.

Checks for Understanding: Use visual models, benchmarks, and equivalent forms to add and subtract commonly used fractions and decimals.

Visual Arts Standard
1.2 Develop skills in a variety of techniques and processes to produce original works of art that reflect ideas, concepts, symbols, and themes. (Level 3: Analyze an original work of art for its effectiveness in communicating ideas, concepts and themes.

2.3 Create artworks to meet various functions. (Level 3: Design, describe, and create an artwork that serves a specific function.)

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