



Hazelton Elementary School

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Anthony Amato, Superintendent

To Whom It May Concern:

Jonas Basom, founder of the Drama Education Network, was contracted to provide Visual and Performing Arts training, specifically relating to Theater Standards, for the staff of Hazelton School during the 2007-2008 school year. An award of funds through the Elementary School Fine Arts Grant provided for the purchase of a School Site License for The Drama Game File, Companion Notebooks and Character Card Box Sets for all teachers, and four three hour staff development trainings spread out over the course of the year including; "Introduction to the Drama Game File", "Integrating Drama Across the Curriculum", and "Story Dramatization".

Mr. Basom was extremely helpful throughout all aspects of the planning and implementation process. The Hazelton School staff desired to integrate Performing Arts Standards into the core curricular areas to increase access for all students, especially English learners, to positively impact levels of interest, motivation and achievement, and to promote a life long appreciation for the fine arts.

I learned of Mr. Basom through the S.U.S.D. Visual and Performing Arts Department. From the moment I contacted him he carefully listened and asked questions to ascertain the specific needs of both our student population and teachers. He assisted me in putting together a product and staff development package that was complete, cost effective, and tailored to match our goals and needs. In all areas the products and services met or exceeded our expectations.

Mr. Basom is a wonderful presenter. The staff development trainings were attended by Kindergarten through 8th grade teachers with drama experience ranging from zero to novice. Mr. Basom effectively provided the tools to immediately begin to integrate Theater Standards into the daily core curricular areas in a fun, engaging format. He presented information to increase understanding of Theater Standards; classroom management for successful drama lessons; practical use of The Drama Game File, Companion Notebook, and Character Cards; integration of drama across the curriculum; and story dramatization. All trainings were completely "hands on" and positively evaluated by the entire staff. Teachers commented on the thorough scope, organization, high quality, and user friendliness of all products. They found the trainings fun, motivating, and energizing, and left with the confidence and knowledge to begin implementation of the strategies. Many shared successes as they used the drama games and techniques with their students and observed their increased levels of interest, motivation, comprehension and retention of academic content. The games and strategies Mr. Basom shared with us were particularly helpful for our English Language Learners in improving literacy skills and vocabulary development.

Mr. Basom's customer service was exemplary throughout the entire process. He tailored each training to our needs and objectives. He provided follow-up questionnaires and assignments to our teachers to use the The Drama Game File between each of our staff development training sessions. This helped ensure greater use of the materials we purchased and helped our administration track the positive effects of the program and the trainings.

I would highly recommend the products and staff development services of Jonas Basom and the Drama Education Network to any school interested in integrating Performing Arts Standards into the core curricular areas to increase access for all students, to positively impact literacy development, levels of interest, motivation and achievement, and to promote a life long appreciation for the fine arts.

Sincerely,

Lydia Valentin
Program Specialist
Hazelton Elementary School
Stockton Unified School District