

On Saturday, October 8, 2016, The WCCUSD Visual and Performing Arts Dept. hosted an event called the VAPA Kickoff. This morning was planned to:

1. Provide the rationale for including the arts as a vehicle for reaching all of our students while speaking to each students' unique story in the teaching of core curriculum in ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science. To open our eyes to culturally responsive practices and the ability of the arts to facilitate implementation in the classroom.
2. Celebrate our colleagues' arts integration and lessons at the elementary and high school levels through a brief presentation of PowerPoint Slides with verbal and interactive descriptions.
3. Introduce teachers to specific lessons and activities for integration through workshop participation with our community partners.
4. Introduce teachers to the WCCUSD Visual and Performing Arts Master Plan v. 1.0 and its current state of implementation.
5. Introduce teachers to the Integrated learning Specialist Program (ILSP) from the Alameda County Office of Education that is being brought to our district to support our Site Arts Liaisons.

The day began with a presentation by Molly Raynor and Donte Clark (former WCCUSD student) of the RYSE Center in Richmond. Through a spoken word poetry performance and discussion, it was made clear that historically we have implemented instruction without really knowing our students and that we need to see and hear all of our students and to get in touch with each one's unique life challenges in order to support them in academic and social/emotional growth while in our classrooms. A discussion of culturally related practices through the arts was initiated along with multiple sign-ups for the RYSE Center to present at various sites as well as field trip opportunities for students.

We continued with a "Curriculum Slam" in which David Flores from Grant School, Avilee Goodwin from De Anza H.S., and Juanita Flores Mejia from Ford School presented power point and spoken word descriptions of their approaches to teaching the arts while relating to other academic areas and the ways that arts are integrated into their lessons to affect behavior and learning on many levels.

The third component was a group of concurrent workshops given by community partners and the ILSP representatives.

The East Bay Center for Performing Arts presented "African Dance and Storytelling": as a means of accessing K-2 ELA curriculum. The Richmond Art Center presented: "Making Meaning Through the Arts": in connection with the 3-4 curriculum. The ACOE ILSP Instructors presented "Arts Integration in the Upper Grade Curriculum" for 4th-6th grades.

Our secondary teachers were given time to collaborate and plan or to attend one of the workshops.

We ended the morning by providing a brief presentation of the VAPA Plan and an introduction of the ILSP program to be implemented this winter.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and we accomplished our goal of generating excitement for the work and for developing site support for Arts Integration while providing our teachers with tools to proceed.