



**CAMAS SCHOOL DISTRICT:
ELEMENTARY LEVEL ART CLASSES**
Proposal to the U.S. Department of Education

Abstract

A sample grant proposal written for a course with the American Grant Writers' Association

Margaret Koch
margaretaileenkoch@gmail.com

This is a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education for a student enrichment grant to support elementary students in the Camas School District. Currently, children enrolled in Camas's five elementary schools do not receive regularly-scheduled art instruction; in fact, they meet solely with a visiting art teacher in the fall and spring, receiving a total of just 10 weeks of art education within the academic year. Our Growing with the Arts initiative creates an opportunity for these children to increase their exposure to the visual arts both in the classroom and outside in the community. Our program is built around the belief that the arts are an integral part of a child's education and can, with regular exposure, improve children's performance in the lateral fields of math, science, reading and writing.

Between the years 2011-2016, Camas eighth-graders scored, on average, 5 percentage points below their state peers on the Art Assessment portion of the Washington State Classroom-Based Performance Assessment. And of the nearly 400 students tested annually, fewer than 100 state that they receive some form of extracurricular art instruction. Notably, the City of Camas's youth art workshops fill up—and generate long waitlists—every quarter. City officials have stated that while waitlists are increasing, they are unable to increase the number of workshops offered due to budgetary and logistical constraints.

Elementary children are white canvases for learning; in their wide-eyed state of wonder they should be exposed to as many subjects as possible – including the visual arts. It is for this reason that we seek \$10,000 in funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Future of Our Children Grant. We hope that by giving Camas students further exposure to the arts, we will be helping them to build a solid platform for future learning.

The collaborating Parent Teacher Organizations from the Camas School District propose to provide students with extracurricular, hands-on visual art activities. Aligned with the Washington State K-12 Arts Learning Standards, the program will make use of existing classroom facilities and will include virtual field trips and traditional field trips to locations within the community. Each trimester-long program will culminate in community-based art shows—open to the public—during which students can display their own works. Our aim with this program is to bridge our students’ classroom learning to the outside world of art.

Our program will be implemented by parents and dedicated community members, and it will reach all K-5 students who wish to participate. We have based our program on an all-volunteer teaching model currently in place in the school district. Following this model, students will enroll for program sessions during the first week of each trimester and will at that time submit a registration fee of \$40 per student. Enrolled students will then meet on a weekly basis for one-hour art instruction taught or led by a designated team of parent and community volunteers. All program plans and activities will be coordinated by our program lead and will be based on input received at the end of each trimester from students, parents, and community volunteer. Once program plans have been finalized, they will be given to and implemented by members of the teaching team. Finally, fiscal details for the program—including holding fund raisers, collecting tuition remissions, purchasing art supplies, and securing a bus and driver for field trips—will likewise be handled by a volunteer member of this program. All monies will be tracked by a volunteer budget director.

Program activities will be held on a twice-weekly basis with students in grades K-2 participating on Mondays and Wednesdays, and students in grades 3-5 participating on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On days when sessions are held on school grounds, students will meet inside

each school's "rainy day room" which is a dedicated, open classroom space where students gather for educational activities during inclement weather. These areas are likewise used to house student art activities during the 10 weeks per academic year of in-school art instruction currently offered within the district. The spaces are regularly cleaned and maintained by paid school staff members.

Our Growing with the Arts initiative will be sustained in future years by income generated through participant dues, fundraising campaigns, and funds secured from the Camas Educational Foundation. We have further drafted a levy proposal in support of our program; the initiative will be placed on the November 2018 ballot.

Camas, Washington is a small-town suburb of vibrant Portland, Oregon and shares a border with the equally diverse Vancouver, WA. The Camas school district serves over 3,500 children and is home to five elementary schools. Elise Vogt is a kindergartener at Camas's Grass Valley Elementary. At six years old, she is already active in swimming and gymnastics. She enjoys tending to her family's flower garden, drawing colorful chalk pictures on the sidewalk, and playing with her puppy, Albert. Elise's mother makes all her daughter's clothes; she, along with Elise's father have been active members of Portland's Newmark Theater for over a decade, working on set construction and costume design. Elise states that she too wants to one day participate in the behind-the-scenes world of theater and expresses a strong interest in designing sets. The kindergartener regularly participates in the City of Camas's youth art programs, but owing to such high demand for the program, she has been put on a waitlist twice this past year. Elise is an excellent example of a student who is likely to participate in our art initiative: she shows a strong interest in the visual arts and is looking for extracurricular opportunities to supplement her current in-school instruction.

Evaluation Plan

Once our Growing With the Arts initiative has begun, our team of volunteers will name five program evaluators—one representative from each of the district’s five elementary schools—to come together every three months to evaluate the program in its entirety. This role will serve three purposes: 1) to solicit written and oral feedback from the program’s students and stakeholders, 2) to analyze the program’s progress based on this feedback and other quantitative data, and 3) to create an annual written report summarizing all data input and giving recommendations for future operations based on these results.

Feedback will be collected through anonymous hard-copy and online questionnaires which will be written and revised by the initiative’s program coordinator. Questionnaires will be made available at the end of each trimester. Quantitative data will be collected by both the coordinator and the budget director and will be gathered through permission slips, attendance sheets, volunteer hours, tuition submissions, fundraising revenue, and receipts.

Process Evaluation Chart:

OBJECTIVE	DATA TO GATHER	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TIME FRAME	BY WHOM
During the first week of each trimester, students will voluntarily register for program sessions taking place during the ensuing 3-month time period	# of students enrolled in programs	# of registration forms submitted # of tuition payments submitted	September, December, March	Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) Coordinator
Throughout the school year, x students will voluntarily participate in regular 1-hour art sessions	# of students attending each session at each school	Attendance sheets	Weekly	PTO Coordinator

At the end of each trimester, students will display their favorite artwork from the program at 1 art show out in the community.	# of students participating in each show	# of pieces displayed Photo and video documentation	November, February, May	PTO Coordinator/Program Instructors
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------------------

Short-Term Evaluation Questions:

During program year 20xx...

1. Was a volunteer core teaching team formed at each school?
2. Did x students participate in x program sessions per trimester?
3. Did x% of students enrolled in the program participate in each community art show?
4. Were x field trips taken over the course of each trimester?

Long-Term Evaluation Questions:

During program year 20xx...

1. Has the program been self-sustaining for at least two years?
2. Did the program foster new relationships between the school and the community?
3. Have the Parent Teacher Organizations incorporated lessons learned to enhance the program in future years?

Impact:

Our program will be successful if we reach a wide swath of elementary students in the Camas School District, helping them to raise their statewide performance scores in the visual arts and fostering in them a love of and appreciation for the arts both in the classroom and as members of our local and global communities. Our aim is that our children's lives will be wholly enhanced by the lessons they learn through art.