2011-1012 Featured Grantee Summary

Grantee Name: Patty Bode, Ed.D.

Title of Project: Digital Visual Culture Project

City, State: Boston, Massachusetts

Grant Period: June 2011 - June 2012

NAEF Grant Amount: $10,000 (Research)

Project Contact: Patty Bode

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Related Webpage: http://sites.tufts.edu/digitalvisualculture

Photo caption: Cristian and Jalil build website (in the Digital Visual Culture Project at Boston Teachers Union School)

Project Description:
The Digital Visual Culture Project funded by NAEF was a collaborative effort among a university art educator, a university multi-media specialist, a public school art teacher, a third grade classroom teacher, a university research assistant and 25 third-grade scholars. The university research team made weekly visits to the school to plan and co-teach third grade interdisciplinary lessons that blurred the boundaries of art class, technology and English language arts curriculum (ELA). The university researchers worked closely with the art teacher, Ms. Laura Davila-Lynch and the third grade teacher, Mr. Jeffrey Timberlake at the Boston Teachers Union School to plan curriculum, implement new technology tools while also supporting the third graders’ traditional studio skills such as drawing and painting integrated with their reading and writing literacy skills. The collaborative nature of the team made for a highly responsive teaching environment with differentiated instruction and culturally responsive practices guiding each decision.

Project Goals and Objectives:
The goals were to investigate these four questions by placing new media in the hands of early childhood learners: How does integrating digital visual technology in art curriculum, help meet the needs of multicultural classrooms? What is the impact on student learning and on the broader context of visual art curriculum when digital technologies are integrated into urban art classrooms that have previously maintained traditional studio art instruction? How can art teachers in K-8 urban public schools become researchers and be valued for their expertise, insights and multicultural perspectives? How can K-8 student knowledge and voice influence how multicultural art teacher preparation programs may be reshaped for the postmodern era?

Description of Activities Supported by this Grant. For Research Grantees, include a summary of research methodology.

Through participatory action research methods with data analyzed and presented in case study format, the activities aim to contribute to use of digital visual technologies in K-8 classrooms in the art education research agenda and classroom practice. Activities included the exploration, teaching and learning of the following projects by third grade students: animated video productions of their personal narrative stories, animated video reflections of their chapter book readings, Voicethread participation in online discourse community, video interviews, culminating with each third grade student built her/his own weebly web site as an electronic portfolio of this work.
Results: Lessons Learned or Findings of Research: Preliminary implications point to the power of Participatory Action Research when university researchers work side by side in the classrooms of public school teachers. By collaborating and re-shaping stances on student knowledge and harnessing digital native student-expertise, integrating digital visual technology in art curriculum can help to meet the needs of multicultural classrooms and contribute to preparing diverse teachers and students for a globalized 21st century learning. Interdisciplinary approaches with the English language arts curriculum and art curriculum shift student and teacher perspectives on what counts as literacy paving avenues for critical digital literacy practices. Student knowledge and voices influenced the researchers’ thinking.

Impact of Receiving this Grant: The NAEF grant funded the effort of a university multimedia specialist without whom the project would not have been viable. It also supported honoraria to a public school art teacher and a third grade teacher for their time, innovative vision and generous access to their classrooms. Essential materials and supplies were also funded.

Grantee Biography: Patty Bode is Visiting Associate Professor at the Ohio State University in the Dept of Art, Administration and Policy. At the time of the study, Patty was Director of Art Education for Tufts University. Patty’s seven years as a social justice educator of art teachers in higher education along with her 16 years as a public school art teacher with a critical multicultural lens, allowed her to collaborate with an innovative team in this project to re-imagine the possibilities for the role of art education and technology in the school life of our youngest children. Patty was recognized as Eastern Region 2010 Art Educator of the Year for Higher Education awarded by the NAEA. She is co-author with Sonia Nieto of Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education, 6th ed (2012) and has an array of other publications on critical multicultural ed and social justice.

About the National Art Education Foundation
NAEF supports visual art educators and promotes the teaching of art through professional development, research, and program sponsorship. As an independent, philanthropic organization, NAEF assists with efforts to represent the teachers of art in America, improve the conditions of teaching art; promote the teaching of art; encourage research and experimentation in art education; sponsor institutes, conferences, and programs on art education; and to publish articles, reports, and surveys about art. The Foundation has supported 260 projects since its inception in 1985. NAEF funding supports a wide variety of professional activities, including research in art education, scholarships for professional development, promotion of art education as an integral part of the curriculum; establishment and/or improvement of art instruction in public and private K-16 schools; promotion of the teaching of art through activities related to the instructional process, curriculum, student learning, student assessment, classroom behavior, management, or discipline; purchase of art equipment and/or instructional resources. Donations in support of NAEF, a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, are tax deductible and greatly appreciated.

Photo caption: Risna and Justice listen and provide feedback to one another using Voicethread (in the Digital Visual Culture Project at Boston Teachers Union School)