Innovators

Albemarle High School's TEAM19 is developing innovative, interdisciplinary experiences designed to increase engagement for students who previously had difficulty engaging with school. TEAM19 consists of teachers Sarah Lilly, Phillip Plowman, Andrew Ulrich, Joseph Frankfurth, Laura Shifflett, and Rodney Redd. The team collaborates as co-teaching partners each day to integrate the four core disciplines into one unified approach to instruction. A recent project based learning opportunity, "Lift Off," was built around astronomy and constellations, and highlights their unique approach to authentic learning. For this project, students studied Ancient Greek culture and mythology, read Homer's Odyssey, and used their study of math and astronomy to create scale models of constellations that now hang from the ceilings of their learning space. Through their team-based instruction, students have authentic learning experiences and see the connections between the disciplines they are studying. TEAM19's team-based approach helps students develop a sense of identity, purpose, and belonging at AHS.

ERIN PERCIVAL—Sutherland

Erin Percival, Science 6 and Creative Design Teacher at Sutherland Middle School, engages her students through the integration of iterative design process in her classes. An example of this work can be seen in a recent sixth grade science project. Students in her class were challenged to create a working windmill that could use wind power to lift a cup full of pennies. Students were given extensive choices of materials, but were left on their own to design, test, and redesign their creation. Iterative design can also be seen in her Creative Design classes with students challenged to design working, electronic "squishy circuits" using play-doh or creating 3D printed objects that they can use in their lives outside of school. The integration of iterative design in her lessons challenges students to harness their creativity and critical thinking while also developing perseverance as they modify their initial designs multiple times to meet the challenges Erin presents to them.

ANDREW SHEROGAN—Meriwether Lewis

Andrew Sherogan, Art Teacher at Meriwether Lewis Elementary School, brings a unique methodology to his art instruction known as Teaching for Artistic Behavior, or TAB. At its core, TAB focuses on giving children choice in the art room with the hope that they will have more authentic, personal artistic experiences than a one-size fits all art program. Andrew’s class is divided into multiple centers for students that include sculpture, drawing, painting, and many other maker-based creative opportunities for children. His focus on TAB allows his students to develop their skills around the four C’s, to integrate technology into their work, to solve authentic problems, to develop their perseverance and, perhaps most important of all, to be driven by their passions to create. Andrew’s students also develop digital portfolios of their work using Artsonia, “the world’s largest kids art museum.” Artsonia allows his students to archive a permanent collection of their art while they receive feedback on their work from others visiting the site. Andrew’s passion around art, creativity, and problem solving are all being passed on to his students and will benefit them for years to come.

TEAM19—AHS

Do you know an Albemarle Innovator who should be recognized? Click here to submit your nomination.