

# Visual Arts Academy



**Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation is Making it Happen!**



**WE ARE** Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation is located in St. Joseph County and has been serving students since 1963. The community is considered suburban, and the corporation encompasses 135 square miles. There are 10,720 students in the P-H-M school district with 11 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, and Penn High School.

**OUR STUDENTS** At the Elementary School level, approximately 4,600 students are enrolled in grades K-5, and nearly 45% of these students are enrolled in our five Title I schools.

**OUR TEACHERS** The Vision and Mission of the Visual Arts Academy (VAA) has been shared by a core group of teachers and administrators at P-H-M and the Snite who have created the curricula "from the ground up" as well as having developed the professional development for all teachers who participate during the Academy. Over 25 elementary writing and secondary art teachers are teaching in the Academy this summer.

**OUR PROMISING PRACTICE** The Visual Arts Academy represents an innovative partnership developed by Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation and the Snite Museum of Art at the University of Notre Dame that engenders innovative learning experiences in the Visual Arts through literacy for elementary students.

The Visual Arts Academy is comprised of six one-week programs in June and July 2016. Each week, students from a different grade level experience a diversely rich curriculum that focuses upon the creation of an identity as an artist with words as well as images. The Academy features art making and writing through the examination of original works of art from both the Snite Museum and museums around the world.

The Indiana Academic Standards for Visual Arts and the National Visual Arts Standards, cultural, verbal, and visual literacy based on the Calkin's writing workshop model are the building blocks of the well-articulated curriculum. Each day, students work with the Visiting Artists and art teachers in art making; elementary writing teachers for writing workshop and Visual Thinking Strategies; Multi-media experience to learn about art such as glass blowing or architecture. Students spend one day at the Snite Museum each week.

**OUR STEPS** The Visual Arts Academy has been made possible through significant contributions such as a \$50,000.00 grant through the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County, the P-H-M Education Foundation, Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation, the Snite Museum of Art, the Law Offices of May, Oberfell, Lorber, and various other contributions. We began with a pilot program four years ago with 75 children, and this year nearly 1,000 students are registered for the 2016 Visual Arts Academy over the course of six weeks. Through these generous contributions, the Visual Arts Academy is provided for all children free of charge.

**IN OUR OWN WORDS** The mother of a 1<sup>st</sup> grade student exclaimed, "It's brilliant! The curriculum is so intentional, and the writing-art connection is outstanding. We are thankful for your passion to do this!"

The family of a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student explained that "he doesn't normally participate in things. This is the most open he has been, and he now has something he feels is his!"

One child was proud to ask, "Did you know that I am an artist?"

For more information about our school or corporation, email: [Jerry Thacker jthacker@phm.k12.in.us](mailto:Jerry.Thacker@phm.k12.in.us) or visit our website: <https://www.phmschools.org/summer-visual-arts-academy>