SEM in the Nation’s Capital: Tapping into the Social Justice Passions of Our Students

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District of Columbia Public Schools
Demographics (2016-17)

- Total Student Enrollment: 48,555
- Schools: 115
- % Student Population Black: 62
- % Student Population Hispanic/Latino: 20
- % Student Population Other Ethnicity: 4
- % Student Population White: 14
- % Student Population in Special Education: 14
- % Student Population ELL: 12
- % Student Population Economically Disadvantaged: 77
## Current SEM Schools (2017-18)

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<th>Elementary Schools</th>
<th>Middle Schools</th>
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<tr>
<td>Burrville</td>
<td>Hardy*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hearst</td>
<td>Johnson*</td>
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<td>HD Cooke</td>
<td>Kelly Miller*</td>
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<td>JO Wilson</td>
<td>Sousa*</td>
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<td>Murch</td>
<td>Stuart Hobson*</td>
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<td>Stoddert</td>
<td>West Education Campus (K-8)*</td>
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Stuart-Hobson Middle School
Students Against Gun Violence
~Danyelle Kensey

July 2018
Stuart-Hobson Middle School

Location: Capitol Hill, WDC

Demographics:
Black 84%
Hispanic/Latino 3%
White 11%
Multiple Races 1%

Economically disadvantaged 47%
Special Education 12%
Museum Studies at SHMS

- Designed to re-establish Museum Magnet program and prepare students for museum studies program at Duke Ellington School for the Arts
- About 10 proficient and advanced students, many are talented in the arts
- Focus on history and overview of museums, types, careers, artifact analysis, exhibitions
- Visit museums--Smithsonian museums and support facility
- Create and display mini-exhibits in the school library
Museum Visits

Analyzing paintings at the National Museum of Women in the Arts

Behind the scenes tour of the Smithsonian Castle led by an Exhibit Designer
SHMS Students Become Activists

- February 14—deadly shooting at Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL
- February 15—viewed clips of the CNN Town Hall & song by the MSD theater students, discussed Parkland shooting and school shootings, safety at SHMS
- Students researched gun violence statistics, wrote reflections and letters to administration about their concerns
- Maddie, Elizabeth, & Callista emerged as leaders
- Began to brainstorm ideas: design and sell t-shirts through Custom Ink, fundraisers through local restaurants
Joining the #neveragain Movement

- With help of PTA, decided to design and sell buttons, create posters, developed into gun violence prevention campaign
- Group quickly expanded as students in the building came to my room during their lunch times and at the end of the day to create button designs and help with planning
The Campaign

- Students designed posters to raise awareness, created Twitter account
- Designed and made buttons to sell to students as fundraisers with dress down day as incentive
- Provided homerooms with gun violence statistics, had students sign anti-violence pledge
- Designed and silk-screen printed t-shirts
Designing and Silk-screening T-shirts
1 of 3 button sales to raise money for the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation
SHMS Mini-March on National School Walkout Day

- Our mini-march, held in conjunction with the National School Walkout on March 14, 2018 (about 80 students from theater program, Museum Studies, and NJHS participated)
- Some students also attended the March for Our Lives on March 22

Students marching to the U.S. Capitol, singing “The Power of One” and chanting
More from our Mini-March
Students were interviewed and featured in The Washington Post and on Bernie Sanders’ Instagram
TOGETHER WE CAN END GUN VIOLENCE
SHMS SAGV members were invited to testify at the DC City Council in support of Eleanor Holmes Norton and the Council’s efforts to block the Rubio-Garrett bill. This bill would allow guns in DC schools and assault weapons in the city.
Our Impact

- Raised over $700 to donate for Sandy Hook Promise Foundation
- Used button designs to create notecards and postcards, sent handwritten notes and buttons to Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, Mayor Muriel Bowser, Councilman Charles Allen, MSD students, Sandy Hook Promise Foundation
- Working on website, plans to sell on Etsy, sell in local store
July 2018

SEM at West Education Campus
~Casey Davidow
About West

• West serves 330 students grades Pre-K through 8th grade in DC (upper NW, near Petworth)

• Our school’s demographics:
  • 53% Black
  • 34% Hispanic/Latino
  • 8% White
  • 2% Asian
  • 3% Multiple Races
  • 19% English Language Learners
  • 100% Economically disadvantaged
  • 12% Special Education
SEM at West

• West just finished its 5th year as a SEM school
• Our Principal and leadership team are very supportive—there is a schoolwide commitment to being a successful SEM school
• Every Wednesday we have clusters from 2pm-3pm for 8-10 weeks. We have two 8-10 week cycles per year that end in schoolwide showcases. We have one showcase in the winter and one showcase in the Spring, which coincides with International Night.
• All teachers and administrators are required to lead a cluster
About My Role

• Coordinating and providing planning support for clusters on Wednesdays
• Pulling small groups of students for interest based groups and for Type I, II, and III experiences
• Building relationships with community members for field trips, and school-based experiences
• Supporting math and literacy instruction for students who have mastered the grade level content
• Planning Type I, II, and III experiences with teachers that will fit into their units.
Inspiration

• Weems Elementary School in Virginia
• PS 188 (The Island School) in New York
• Our visits inspired us to make our clusters and SEM work more meaningful
• We wanted more of a community-service, social justice focus
• Working towards Clusters with a community-service, social justice focus every Wednesday.

• EX: **Friendship Bracelet Cluster** not only researching and learning how to design/make bracelets, but also researching and learning about how they could use their bracelets for good (they ultimately decided to donate their bracelets to children at a local hospital).

• EX: **The Nature Cluster** learning about environmental needs in the region and creating inventions that would help the environment (each student ended up doing an independent project, with many students choosing to build bird houses).
• I added a social justice focus to all of my pull out groups, and we had one teacher bring social justice projects into her classroom!

• **EX:** my 3rd grade reading group read and learned about chocolate, and then based on student interest we began a discussion on the treatment of the workers who pick the cacao beans, and came up with ways we could help and will continue our work next year!

• **EX:** All of the 8th graders got involved in independent social justice projects. They were able to pick an issue they were passionate about, research and create something to help address that issue!
Depression

**Myth**
- Kids can't have depression only adults.
- People with depression are "violent".
- Only doctors can help some one depressed.
- Having depression means your a "loser" who can't handle life.

**Facts**
- Kids can develop a mental illness.
- Most people with depression aren't violent.
- You can help by not calling them "crazy".
- Having mental illnesses like depression isn't caused by who you are or any.

Depression is different for everyone.

Depressive sadness.

Depressions is all-consuming.

Drains your energy.

Made by: Anonymous person.
Artifacts

• These are materials I either used last year, or am in the process of editing to use for this year.

1. How could this work in your school?
2. What adjustment could make this more effective?

Go to http://bit.ly/2IX5AgU for the link to the Artifacts
Sample Videos for Student Viewing

• https://drlahana.com/2017/09/01/whats-your-problem/#domestic

Child Abuse Infographic--
• https://s3.amazonaws.com/techbrarian/images/IOM_childabuse_neglect_infographic_sized.jpg

Taking a Knee--https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-V3OtQwLpdw

Depression--
• https://s3.amazonaws.com/techbrarian/movies/Sabrina%20Benaim%20-%20Explaining%20My%20Depression%20to%20My%20Mother-.mp4
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Final Announcements / Closing
THANK YOU for joining us!