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***SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA ARTS IN ACADEMICS (SAAA)***

**The U. S. Department of Education invested over $890,000 through a grant funded for an Art Academics Model Program in Southern Arizona rural schools from 2008 through 2011. Culminating events for this grant are being prepared for the Spring of 2011.**

**Karen Husted** is the Director of The Arts for “Border” Children and is the facilitator for the Southeast Arizona Arts in Academics (SAAA) professional development project.  SAAA is a consortium of rural school which includes:

Ash Creek School Elementary, Double Adobe Elementary, Fort Thomas Unified School District (the lead school district for the project), Mt. Turnbull Academy – Bylas, Naco Elementary, Willcox Elementary, and Willcox Middle School.

The project is a unique concept to bring arts integration through professional teaching artists to the SAAA schools.  Teaching Artists include a mix of mediums such as visual art, dance/movement, photography and media arts, music, drama/theatre and creative writing.

Through the grant, teachers have learned the skill necessary to engage children and youth in learning the arts and have incorporated the arts into regular classroom instruction. Students have acquired positive experiences in increased skills, knowledge and understanding of the various forms of art and have realized improved academic achievement. These successes have the motivation to continue the arts integration through sustainability and mentoring of others.

**The climax to the end of the grant will be celebrated with two culminating events as follows:**

1. **The Student Culminating Event will be Thursday, April 28, 2011 from 10:00 - 2:00 p.m.  at the Safford Performing Arts Center, 980 S 14th Avenue, Safford, AZ.** The programwill consist of 5 main events:

* A "**dress rehearsal**" for the students who will also present at the Phoenix Art Museum.
* The performance of **"Wind in the Shadows"** from Borderlands Theater - which will be from student writings, and Directed by Alida Wilson-Gunn.
* A **student Taiko** event of Willcox students.
* A **professional Taiko** performance
* A **display of visual art and photography as well a visual artifacts** and documentation of the project.

1. **The Phoenix Art Museum, 1625 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ event will be in 2 parts and is scheduled for May 4, 2011:**

* A display of visual art and photography as well a visual artifacts and documentation of the project, May 2 - 8, 2011
* **An event day on May 4th:** Presentation of projects at the Phoenix Art Museum -- May 4, 2011 for teachers, artists, and selected students to present and perform for the Arizona Commission on the Arts,  Arizona State Dept. of Education, and invited dignitaries.

1. **Displays at the AZ State Capitol and Traveling Art Displays:**

* Following the presentation and display at the Phoenix Art Museum, many of the artistic selections will be displayed at the Arizona State Capitol for a period of time in addition to being displayed at twenty-two other locations throughout Maricopa Country.

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