

Denver Public Schools

Background

The Perkins Field Council was impressed with the District's well-written Perkins Local Plan and relevant use of funds. There were several areas of interest to the Council and three were visited. This report relates to the visits by Council members to the Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy, Theater Technologies Program; the John F. Kennedy High School, High School of Business Program; and the Thomas Jefferson High School, Computer Magnet Program.

Key Innovation(s)

The Kunsmiller Creative Arts Academy, Theater Technologies Program

To support teaching students about audio engineering, this program requested audio equipment to set up a recording studio. The students learn the process for creating the sounds to be used as sound effects. They study the psychology behind sound and the human reactions to sounds. Students recently used this knowledge to create scary sound effects used during the school's Halloween season.

Each student records a bank of sound effects for their individual final project. These libraries are then used by the digital media department in their projects. The students become the techs for the school's stage productions. They learn to follow scripts and produce sounds on cue.

The instructor, Tony Abel-Pype, displays great enthusiasm and passion for this subject matter. Mr. Abel-Pype hopes students will learn a balance of recording sound, altering sound, and moving sound into live production recordings. These experiences and skills help prepare students for entry level jobs in the sound engineering field. They are motivated and have foundational knowledge to pursue advanced sound engineering studies.

John F. Kennedy High School, High School of Business

This very rigorous, project-based career and technical education program is available to students through an application process. Students must have a 2.0 GPA and commit to complete the entire program. Students who successfully complete the program will be awarded 9 college credit hours. The instructors for the High School of Business Program are Jerry Clayton and Rob Polete. In order to teach this program, the instructors must be certified by MBNA Research. At this time, 17 schools in Colorado are offering this

program. Perkins funds were used to help the teachers travel to the training needed for their certifications. Perkins funds also were used to purchase business simulation programs that align with the High School of Business curricula. The simulations represent different environments that might be encountered in the business world. They currently have simulations for a sporting goods store, a clothing store, a factory and an office simulation. Students gain experience in marketing and management in these different scenarios. The instructors are able to vary the scenarios. Students work in teams of 6 throughout the semester. The classroom had to be reconfigured to accommodate these working groups. Perkins funded 32 tablet computers, a computer storage cart, and computer monitors to help accomplish this needed reconfiguration. This new program curricula and design has also increased student participation in the Future Business Leaders of America organization which helps add national recognition to student resumes.

Thomas Jefferson High School, Computer Magnet Program

This program is available to students through an application process which includes references and a written essay. Students are accepted from feeder schools with a recommendation from the instructor. Students who successfully complete the program earn concurrent credit with Arapahoe Community College. Stacey Fornstrom is the instructor of this software engineering program. Perkins funded 27 Game Maker Studio Professional licenses, one Game Maker Android export license and one Game Maker iOS export license. This specific version has an accompanying version that students are able to work with outside of the classroom. Game Maker is a straight-forward, user-friendly software with diversification capabilities. Students are able to jump right into the process of game making without first learning code writing. The opportunity for students to program by writing code is also available. In level 2 of the program, students are assigned to analyze an existing game and then recreate that game themselves.