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This school-wide project involves leading students through a community-based initiative, Blessing Boxes. The teacher leaders will represent an arts integration team reflective of English, Visual Arts, IND, ESE, and IB. The team will embrace the social emotional learning paradigm as the core goal of this project. Students will identify a core need in their neighborhood, discuss, and examine the issues collectively and critically through visible learning techniques. Students will work across classrooms and after school on the construction of wood boxes to house supplies needed in the community. Students will invite the Mayor and community leaders into the school to provide their perspectives in helping contribute to making the community strong through philanthropic engagement. This project allows students to view local concerns/needs, discuss and engage with leaders in the community, and produce a product (Blessing Boxes) to promote positive social change in the area.

Blessing Boxes is a school-wide project that embraces community philanthropic engagement through an Arts Integration Model promoting positive social change.

The Blessing Boxes project engages students in meaningful discourse about community needs. Learning how to discuss and share ideas in a non-judgmental forum will promote ideas to be embraced, while engaging with community leaders, teachers, and classmates. Students interested in participating in this community-based project will sign up during the school's weekly advisory program. The team of teachers will introduce the discussions, engage with students on positive social change in the community while learning how to construct and design boxes to be placed throughout the community. Working with the Mayor's office, students will learn how to present ideas, design an action plan, and contribute to making the community stronger. The philanthropic nature of this project will help students across the academic and social spectrum learn how to give back to their local community in a meaningful and purpose-driven way. Social-awareness is an area of focus as students learn to collaborate, engage in positive social change discourse, and embark on actively constructing and designing boxes to supply the local community with items of need. This project is designed through the Transdisciplinary Pedagogical model, focusing on local needs and then moving toward global needs. The teaching team will become the foundation of the Arts Integration league at our school site, helping student see how active engagement in the community through the arts strengthens and uplifts the society. This project is designed as an open-ended inquiry model of instruction with aiding students across the academic spectrum to work together to help solve an issue in the community. Learning how to discuss ideas from multiple perspectives will elevate their understanding of diplomacy and bring forth the construct of philanthropy. Working closely with the rule and regulations provided by the Mayor will provide some structure to solving the issues discussed with the students. The design and construction of the Blessing Boxes is the structure of how the sharing will begin. Students will work together within small groups to construct and design the boxes collaboratively (in the advisory program). Learning how to reflect on their work through written narrative will support their self-awareness, while allowing them to begin a future of positive social change through the arts.

This community based, philanthropic project engages students in positive social change within the community through an Arts Integration Model. A team of teachers, across the academic programs, will help students discuss and determine the needs of our local community. Establishing a discourse with the Mayor will provide the students with guidelines to work with as they construct and design boxes, Blessing Boxes, for the community. This project will be designed within an Transdisciplinary Pedagogical Model (focused on positive social change locally and then moving toward global impact) with open-inquiry as the core teaching method, allow students to examine, learn to discuss, see issue through multiple perspectives, engage in community service, while creating Blessing Boxes to embark on positive social change with Arts Integration. The project has four phases of development: Phase 1 will include small group discussions surrounding and identifying community needs. Students will work with the teaching team during the school's advisory program developing a plan of action to serve the community through a creative product. The mayor will provide students and teachers with guidelines and regulations that need to be addressed as the planning develops. Working closely with the mayor will allow for a strong community partnership to form. Phase 2 will include how to construct wood boxes and create designs that represent positive messages established by the students. The teaching team will model how to use tools and equipment, how to measure and cut wood, and how to design and paint the boxes. Teachers will help students gain the necessary skills and techniques to construct and design Blessing Boxes through the school advisory program. Phase 3 will include installation of the boxes throughout the community. Working closely with the mayor, the teaching team will assist the students in locating and installing the Blessing Boxes (and maintaining them throughout the academic year). Phase 4 will include reflection and writing addressing the concept of philanthropy, working across academic disciplines, learning how to discuss issues diplomatically, embracing multiple perspectives, and guiding the next generation of learners as they take on the community-based project. Exemplars will be published as a booklet to share with community, parents, and school personnel. This project embraces the social emotional learning paradigm by allowing students to recognize needs in the community and work and collaborate across academic spectrum to provide for positive social change for this year and in



the future.