



Cultural Arts

at Hawley

Cultural Arts at Hawley School currently encompasses enrichment programming in the areas of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) and cultural/visual and performing arts.

Thus far for the 2016-2017 school year, STEAM programming has been scheduled for kindergarten through grades 3 and will occur as a one-time, 90-minute program for each class presented by High Touch-High Tech and overseen by Hawley's math/science specialist Mrs. Connors. The class topics relate to the curriculum being taught in the grade-level classrooms and were selected by the teachers.

The kindergarten program, *Weather or Not*, held in early December, was hands-on and lots of fun! The students learned about weather and had the opportunity to create tornadoes, clouds and rain. They also saw some of the amazing properties of air pressure and 'touched' lightning! In upcoming High Touch-High Tech programming, students will learn about matter, habitats and much more!

In addition to the High Touch-High Tech programming, the Hawley PTA welcomed "Mr. Peace" to school on Friday, December 9 for two assembly programs for students, one customized for third and fourth grade and the other for kindergarten through second grade.

Kevin Szawala (aka "Mr. Peace") is a motivational speaker who found his passion for peace activism as an undergraduate at the University of Michigan - Ann Arbor. Kevin earned an MBA and worked in the corporate world but for the past 10 years has devoted his career to touring the country to visit schools and community centers to spread his passionate messages about peace, love, equality, and tolerance through spoken word and original hip-hop songs. Kevin's motto is "reaching hearts, changing lives."

Kevin customized a program for Hawley School on diversity. His diversity programs include the central tenets of seeing people for their heart and who they are, learning to appreciate the differences of others, striving for the desire to include all human beings, and encountering peace, love and compassion. Through firsthand accounts, brief video clips, spoken word, and audience participation, Kevin addressed many aspects of diversity and shed light on the necessity for each of us to see all human beings through our hearts and not just through the lens of our eyes. This presentation encouraged students to be more compassionate and open-minded with those who are different from themselves. They all saw a powerful video that depicted the ripple effect of kindness and how small, ordinary acts of kindness can spread and impact so many in powerful ways. This program, made possible through funding from the Hawley School PTA for cultural arts programming, was one of many activities at Hawley School in December to incorporate the school's new motto, "Be True, Be You, Be Kind." The Mr. Peace program was selected because it provides a natural tie-in to the school's new motto, as well as to the core beliefs of the Newtown Public Schools.

Stay tuned for more information related to upcoming Cultural Arts programming!