

# WEST SHORE SCHOOL DISTRICT

EXCEL VIRTUAL LEARNING ACADEMY



Christopher M. Konieczny  
Principal

September 19, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you, Masonic Lodge, for bringing "Student Author Movement" to the students of our ExCEL program. Stephen Kozan's passion for reading and writing were felt by the ExCEL students of the West Shore School District. He provided an engaging and hands-on experience for our online learners, which they thoroughly enjoyed.

Our ExCEL students are composed of students from throughout the West Shore School District. They began online during the COVID-19 shutdown and have many remained online ever since. It has been hard to find meaningful and engaging assemblies, and Stephen provided just that.

Stephen began his presentation by creating "insta-art". The students were able to select body parts of various animals while an illustrator, Tony Maulfair, brought their vision to life. This provided the students with a glimpse of an illustrator's role in the writing process. At the conclusion of the presentation they were able to see a black and white sketch of their creation. The students loved the opportunity to create an outrageous character and were thoroughly impressed by Tony's skills.

In addition to "insta-art", Stephen also had the students write flash-fiction stories. He gave them 20 minutes to write down a story or summary of a story that had been swirling in their minds. He explained that one student would be selected to expand upon their flash fiction story and become a published author. This was extremely motivating, even to the students that do not typically enjoy writing.

Stephen was an outstanding presenter who brought the writing and illustrating process to the ExCEL students. He shared his passion and excitement with our students, giving them an increased interest in writing. We are so thankful Stephen and Tony were able to share their talents and life-experiences with our students. Who knows, maybe they have discovered a future famous writer/illustrator at our school.

Thank you,

Kristi Colwell