

Abbie Anderson
L595: Grant Methods for Educators and Librarians
Fall, 2003
Carol L. Tilley, Instructor

Online Activity 3: Needs Statement with Goals, Objectives, Evaluation, Evidence
Mathers Museum Field Trip Program

School field trips to museums such as the Mathers Museum of World Cultures provide teachers with tools to enhance curricula through stimulating, concrete educational experiences unavailable inside the classroom. Museum visits introduce students to artifacts, ideas, and community resources they may not encounter otherwise, and acquaint children with museums as places of learning, beauty and fun that will be open to them throughout their lifetimes. In the current economic climate, however, school systems have been forced to slash and even eliminate their budgets supporting transportation and teacher time for field trips.

Goal 1: Financial obstacles to Mathers Museum school field trips will be eliminated.

Objective: By July 2004, the Mathers Museum will establish a school field trip fund to which any teacher in driving distance can apply on a per-visit basis to cover costs for each field trip. This fund will be modeled on a program the Museum administered in 2001-2002 as part of an Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) General Operations Support (GOS) grant, and on other successful programs run by museums of similar size.

Objective: Funds will be sought to cover two years of field trips. With numbers of field trips projected at 60 in the first year and 75 in the second year, and average field trip costs of \$75.00, plus \$750.00 for teacher workshops and supporting materials, a total of \$10,875.00 will be sought to support the program.

Activity: By November 1, 2003, the Curator of Education will identify likely sources for funding, write letters of intent as needed, and collect grant applications and instructions from at least three sources.

Activity: Assistance in writing each grant will be pursued, both from the funding agency and from City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources Department Technical Assistance Team, which supports the development efforts of local non-profit organizations.

Activity: Grant proposals will be designed, vetted with partners in the schools and with museum colleagues, and submitted for funding according to the deadlines for each funding agency.

Objective: Program funds will be available to any teacher bringing a field trip to the museum. However, planning and promotion will focus on the Monroe County Community Schools Corporation (MCCSC), which is the Museum's largest and most immediate constituency for such field trips.

Goal 2: Teachers and administrators will have access to a Mathers Museum field trip program that best meets their needs.

Objective: Teachers and administrators will be solicited for input and collaboration, including letters of support as well as direct participation in designing the program if so desired. Their involvement (and awareness) will enhance the usefulness and effectiveness of the program.

Activity: By November 1, 2003, the Curator of Education will contact at least five teachers who have brought field trips to the museum in the past in order to discuss field trip support, and build lists of other contacts within the schools systems who would support a field trip program.

Activity: By November 1, 2003, the Curator of Education will contact Aniko Bahr, MCCSC Director of Multicultural Education and Programs, for her input and support in preparing a field trip program and seeking funding.

Objective: The field trip program will be integrated with state academic standards, supporting curricula that teachers must follow in preparation for standardized testing. This will build on the Museum's history and current practice of supporting curriculum standards.

Goal 3: Teachers will be aware of and make use of the Mathers Museum field trip program as a valued support to lesson planning.

Objective: In each twelve-month period following initiation of the program, school field trip museum tours will increase by 20% over the previous twelve months. The Curator of Education will promote the field trip program to teachers and administrators both formally and informally. The network of contacts established during the planning period will be instrumental to this process.

Activity: In-person meetings with MCCSC school principals in August 2004 and August 2005 will introduce the program and its mechanics. Principals will receive printed materials describing the program.

Activity: Teachers visiting the museum for field trips in the months prior to initiation of the program will be informed of its upcoming benefits and will receive an informational packet.

Activity: With the permission of the superintendent, promotional materials will be distributed directly to MCCSC teachers at the beginning of each semester (mid-August and early January). These materials will include an attractive flyer explaining the program and its value, with instructions for submitting field trip costs to the museum for payment. The packet will also include information on the availability of pre-tour and post-tour classroom visits by museum personnel.

Activity: The packet of program materials for teachers will also be sent to teachers outside MCCSC who brought field trips to the museum in the previous twelve months.

Activity: The Mathers Museum website's Education page will feature information about the program, as well as instructions for submitting field trip invoices for payment.

Activity: Press releases about the program will be sent to local newspapers. A story or series of stories in the Bloomington Herald-Times' Education section (published each Tuesday) will be the desired outcome.

Activity: Three half-day teacher workshops will be offered at the Mathers Museum, in July 2004, January 2005, and July 2005. These workshops will present the full range of services offered by the museum for teachers, and demonstrate their usefulness in support of academic standards and lesson planning. These services include

field trips, pre- and post-field trip classroom visits, in-class presentations, the “Teaching with Objects and Photographs” curriculum developed by the Museum, and the School Loan Collection of objects available for classroom use. Effectiveness of the workshop will be assessed via a written survey at the end of each workshop. The format of the workshop will be revised as needed according to teacher response.

Objective: Teachers will report high satisfaction with the Mathers Museum tour program. At the end of the each school year (May 2005, May 2006), at least 70% of respondents for that school year will rate their field trip experience as “Very Good” or “Excellent”.

Activity: Teachers visiting the museum will receive a brief post-field trip survey soliciting feedback on the effectiveness of the tour, consisting of four scaled questions plus an area for written comments. The survey will be given on paper or via email, per the teacher’s preference. Survey results will be collated twice a year (December and May) to assess the success of the program and seek areas for improvement. The 70% “Very Good” or “Excellent” satisfaction rate will be assessed each May during the program.

Evidence:

In a survey of MCCSC teachers conducted by consultant Mary Anne Arnett on behalf of the Mathers Museum in 1994, 95% of respondents reported that field trips are an important activity that can enhance their curricula by providing hands-on, real-life contact with genuine artifacts or experiences.

A modest field trip fund was included as part of an IMLS GSO grant to the Mathers Museum in 2001-2002. The field trip fund was part of a Third Grade Education pilot program developed at the Museum targeting state academic standards for Social Studies, and was accompanied by the creation of the Museum’s “Teaching with Objects and Photographs” curriculum (TOP) aimed at teachers of all grades and subjects. Promotion of the program was limited for the pilot stage, consisting primarily of visits to four targeted MCCSC Elementary School principals to deliver a simple fact sheet about the program and ask for distribution of that sheet to teachers. While pre-tour classroom visits by museum personnel tripled in that year from the year before, from five to fifteen (with an “Everyday Artifacts” presentation designed for TOP), the number of school field trips to the museum actually dropped slightly (from 50 to 43). Planned expansions of this pilot program were not pursued in 2002-2003 due to personnel changes at the Museum. The current Curator of Education was hired in April 2003. It is clear that future efforts must promote the field trip program more effectively to a larger number of teachers, and must be closely tailored to their needs in planning field trips. Supporting the classroom work of teachers is a top priority for Education at the Mathers Museum.

Madeleine Gregg and Gaea Leinhardt, in a study published by *American Education Research Journal* in Summer 2002 (“Learning from the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute: Documenting Teacher Development”), found that museum visits allow for the exposition of topics that may be proscribed or uncomfortable in the classroom, such as race and racism or gender issues. Their study focused on the attitudes and knowledge levels of preservice teachers performing a museum field trip design assignment; however, the principles Gregg and Leinhardt emphasize apply equally well to classroom visits for students from the Elementary grades through High School. The idea of human unity and diversity is fundamental to the Mathers Museum and its exhibits,

and museum tours bring explicit attention to bear on the ways our ideas about human differences affect our perceptions and influence our actions.

Jan Nesor promotes the power of field trips to expand students' access to public spaces in an age of increasing isolation in his 2000 paper "School Field Trips and the Curriculum of Public Spaces" for the *Journal of Curriculum Studies*.

Timeline:

Fall/Winter 2003-2004: Pursue support for project.

- Identify likely sources of funding, obtain application materials, submit applications
- Recruit partners/consultants in program design and grant proposal preparation (teachers, school administrators, museum colleagues)

April-July 2004: Promote the project and prepare for its initiation.

- Create promotional materials, for school principals and for teachers
- Promote teacher workshop scheduled for July
- Conduct teacher workshop in July
- Collate feedback on teacher workshop and adjust as needed

August 2004: Visit schools; promote and initiate project

- Visit principals with information packet
- Distribute teacher information through MCCSC channels and to extra-MCCSC teachers who have brought classes to the Museum
- Seek coverage of program in local newspaper

December 2004: Evaluate; promote and prepare

- Collate results of teacher field trip feedback surveys from past four months
- Assess program: adjustments needed?
- Promote and prepare for teacher workshop

January 2005: Promote program: teacher workshop

- Conduct teacher workshop
- Collate feedback on teacher workshop and adjust as needed
- Distribute program information to teachers through MCCSC channels and to extra-MCCSC teachers who have brought classes to the Museum
- Seek coverage of program in local newspaper

April-July, 2005: Evaluate; promote

- Collate results of teacher field trip surveys
- Assess program: adjustments needed?
- Promote July teacher workshop
- Conduct July teacher workshop
- Collate feedback on teacher workshop and adjust as needed

August 2005: Visit schools; promote and initiate project

- Visit principals with information packet
- Distribute teacher information through MCCSC channels and to extra-MCCSC teachers who have brought classes to the Museum
- Seek coverage of program in local newspaper

Fall/Winter 2004/2005:

- Seek funding to continue program beyond period of original grant

December 2005: Evaluate; promote and prepare

- Collate results of teacher field trip feedback surveys
- Assess program: adjustments needed?

January 2006: Promote program

- Visit principals with information packet
- Distribute program information to teachers through MCCSC channels and to extra-MCCSC teachers who have brought classes to the Museum
- Seek coverage of program in local newspaper

April-July, 2006: Evaluate; report

- Collate results of teacher field trip surveys
- Assess program: adjustments needed?
- Prepare report to funders on program statistics and outcomes