



Laura Grundler: Well, welcome to another episode of the Creatively Connected Classroom. We're really excited to be here again today. I'm Laura Grundler and this is ...

Matt Grundler: Matt Grundler.

Laura Grundler: And we are here with Tisha Richmond and super excited to have her. She's the author of Make Learning Magical, and she recently hosted a K12ArtChat for us, so welcome Tisha!

Matt Grundler: So glad you're here!

Laura Grundler: Yeah.

Tisha Richmond: Thank you! I'm honored to be here. Thanks for having me.

Matt Grundler: Before we started our introduction, you were telling us a little bit about who you are and what you do exactly, so if you could kind of tell our listeners that would be awesome.

Tisha Richmond: Absolutely, so I have been in education 22 years. I was a culinary arts' teacher at South Lanford High School for 13 years in the Career and Technical Education Department. Just recently, this year, I took on a role at the District Office as a Tech Integration Specialist. This is my first time in [inaudible 00:01:18] the classroom and it's very different, but I love it. I love the opportunity to help support teachers and help them integrate technology into the classroom [inaudible 00:01:29] learning magical, that's my heart.

Laura Grundler: Awesome. As far as making learning magical, I mean that's the title of your book, but what does it mean to you and where did that come from? We had a lot of fun creating your promos for the chat just because it's so fun.

Tisha Richmond: Absolutely, really my story began in 2014. In 2014, I was ready to throw in the towel and leave education. I had these [inaudible 00:01:55] working as a barista at a local coffee shop and [inaudible 00:01:58] latte art. Those thoughts came to my mind more often than I'd like to admit.



Something happened [inaudible 00:02:06] in that as a career [inaudible 00:02:11] technical education [inaudible 00:02:15]. All of the culinary teachers [inaudible 00:02:17]. We were going to write a proposal [inaudible 00:02:17] Perkins Funding for iPads and at the time [inaudible 00:02:22] "That would be cool, but [inaudible 00:02:23]." We were going to use these iPads. But we received the grant and then I even received another grant through Century League and [inaudible 00:02:33] iPads.

Tisha Richmond: I want it to be more than a tool for just researching recipes. I wanted them to transfer learning in my classroom, but I had no clue how to do that. I had my own personal iPad, but I'd never used them for student learning before, and so part of our grant, we were able to get some professional development. So I decided to go to this conference called Ipad Palooza in Austin, Texas, and my mind was blown. I'm like, "Oh my gosh."

Laura Grundler: We've been there.

Matt Grundler: We've been there.

Laura Grundler: We probably crossed paths and didn't know it. [crosstalk 00:03:09]

Tisha Richmond: It was 2014 that I went and I was just like, "What in the world?" There's all these amazing things that people are doing...that educators are doing with technology and smashing these apps together and people are sharing their twitter handles and they're sharing resources and there was games where you can take profile pic's on twitter. I'm like, "What in the heck have I been missing out on?" And so that was really the catalyst that really started me on this journey, and that summer, I started to get connected on Twitter.

Tisha Richmond: I saw this conference for Miami Device in Miami and they were having people sign up to register to win this trip to Miami to go to this conference and I was feeling pretty inspired in that moment and I had literally two followers on Twitter. No one was following me and the contest said, If you can create something explaining why you want to go to this conference and share it with the world, then you'll be entered to win. I'm like, "What have I got to lose?" I have two followers; I just learned all these cool things; I got this. And so I entered to win, and I won.



Tisha Richmond: And so then I went to Miami Device, and same thing, I was just completely blown away, but what I found was my tribe. I found this tribe of educators that I could continue to follow after the conference, and I really started to learn what it meant to be a connected educator. And from there, I mean, Oh my goodness, I started taking risks in my classroom. I started trying new things. I fell flat on my face plenty of times, but with each win, it gave me more courage to try something else new, and so over the course of time, I just started to find that learning was really becoming magical in my classroom and I was a different educator. I no longer dreamt of leaving education to create latte art. I was [crosstalk 00:04:59].

Tisha Richmond: So I've had these adventures that have made up my story and that I want to help other educators find that too; find what they can do to create magical, unforgettable learning experiences in their classroom. We're all going to have a different story, but I have found there have seven keys to really unlocking magic in my classroom, and that's what Make Learning Magical is all about.

Laura Grundler: Wow.

Matt Grundler: Awesome.

Laura Grundler: I just got really goosebumps because we purposefully put the name "Connected" in the Podcast title because to us, it's about the creativity and the connections. And the connections are with the PLN. They're with all kinds of how everything comes together and it is magical how it all interacts and it all interweaves. And just sitting here and thinking, I know we were at the same iPad Palooza in 2014. And that's really where our adventure really started because I came back from that iPad Palooza and said, "Oh my gosh, we've got to do this, we got to do that."

Tisha Richmond: You know, it's very invigorating when you find your tribe, and when you find things start to click.

Matt Grundler: When you find that extra spark. For mean, you had already gone to iPad Palooza the year prior and then I went with you the next year and I started getting into the Teach Like a Pirate book and after going to iPad Palooza I was inspired to start a whole filmmaking club for my fourth and



fifth graders. And we had some pieces that the next year we had submitted for the next year iPad Palooza and it was amazing.

Tisha Richmond: I think what you hit on though is that I think that we all as educators, it's a hard job. It's not easy, and you look at it and you were thinking....and we had talked to another young lady about trying to simplify it in some ways. But to me, it's also about how you reenergize and get that spark going and start to see the clicking happen for your kids.

Laura Grundler: I thought it was really cool that you said the connected part because it's really the connectivity and creativity together. I'd like to hear a little bit more about how you used iPads in a Culinary Arts Setting.

Tisha Richmond: Yeah, absolutely. So I began [gamifying 00:07:10] my classroom and it was really after 2014 I met the author of Explore Like a Pirate, Michael Matera. He was one of those people in that tribe that I continued to connect with after and I think the very first step of bringing the iPads into my class was okay. I needed to figure out a new work flow. What were these going to look like? How were they going to be used? And I found Google Classroom, and I found this new work flow that I had to work with. But then, I started realizing the power of these devices being used to do things that weren't possible without them. And really get students creating and collaborating and critical thinking and those 4-Cs that we talk about about. I really wanted to see those come to life in the classroom. And so, really, as I started, one of the huge changes that I made in my classroom was that I [gamified 00:08:00] everything.

Tisha Richmond: And so, just to give you an example, in my Culinary 3 class, for a semester we learn about American regional cuisine. And so my students formed teams. They become food truck owners. They create a food truck name. They create a food truck logo and they create a concept. And so, for instance, I had a food truck this last year that was called "Crepe A Diem," so they were [crosstalk 00:08:24]. They were specializing in crepes, and they had to come up with a pitch to pitch to an authentic audience of investors of what their price point was going to be, what they are specializing in, what their menu is going to be, and then how they were going to adapt these crepes as they moved across the United States.



Tisha Richmond: And so, each food truck pitched their concepts. We brought in local food truck owners, we brought in our staff, some people at the district office, and students, they had a pitch, and they shared what they were going to do. And then our investors had play money that they allocated to the teams that they thought had the best pitches and they had rubrics that they evaluated on. And that launched us into this amazing food truck race across the United States.

Tisha Richmond: And so we would go from region to region of the United States and we would learn about the flavor profiles and the cuisine of that region and then students would come up with presentations to demonstrate what they knew about that part of America. And so some would create iMovie presentations. Some would be stop motion animation. Some would create infographics and menus on canvas. So they used these devices to demonstrate their learning in these powerful ways.

Tisha Richmond: And they were given choice. They were given choice as to how they wanted to demonstrate their learning, that they would create, and then we would invite these investors back as customers and the students would give their presentations, they would show what they created, they would have their crepe dish to match their flavor profile and the cuisine of that region, so their crepes would morph as we went to each region and really demonstrating what they knew about the flavors, and so that's kind of how the iPads really were used were for creation. And so we have the hands on...we are creating with food all the time, and so students are bringing their iPods into their kitchens with their recipes. And that sort of thing, just as like a work flow, but then they are using their iPads to create beyond the food and demonstrate their learning in powerful ways.

Matt Grundler: Wow. That's awesome.

Laura Grundler: Yeah.

Matt Grundler: That's really cool.

Laura Grundler: Well it makes me think of the fourth question you asked during the chat. Creative opportunities for students to be empowered learners. The whole chat was amazing because all of your questions spoke to any teacher from any audience just in general about creativity, but that's something I know that Matt and I are very passionate about is



empowering the learner and giving them choice in demonstrating their learning. What are some other ways you allow for choice in tech ed or culinary arts.

Tisha Richmond: One of my very favorite things that happens in my culinary class [inaudible 00:10:57]. Culinary 2 class, we have a whole other theme. We do the Master Chef competition that lasts a semester. We learn different areas of food within that class. So let's say we learn pies and pastries. So my students are learning the methods and how to make pies and pastries within this unit. But at the end of this unit, I have a Master Chef challenge. And I tell students, "Okay, you've learned how to make pies and pastries. Now you have a challenge. You are going to make a pie crust, but not only are you going to make a pie crust, you are going to it without the recipe. You are going to do it based on how you know to make a pie crust. But we're not stopping there, you are going to make it into something that blows our minds."

Tisha Richmond: And the first look on their face is horror. They are like, "Oh my gosh. What? We're not going to [inaudible 00:11:44]recipe. Are you kidding me?" And I'm like, "No, I'm not kidding you." And then to see them go back to their kitchens and to start talking and collaborating and communicating and realizing, we don't need a stinking recipe! We can make this pie crust! We've done it over and over again. And to see them own it and go, "Oh my gosh, we really do know how to do this. We can prove this." But then not stopping there, but saying, "not only do we know how to do this, we can make it into something that will blow our mind and all of the judges' minds that come in."

Tisha Richmond: And they do every single time. I mean, you would be amazed at the things these students create. There was one where they had made these turnovers to look like snow topped mountains and they had created a scene in the background with types of syrups and, oh my goodness, they made a S'more that the bottom and top crust was made to look like a graham cracker and then they had marshmallow and chocolate ganache in the middle with this spice combination and these chocolate dipping sauces on the side. And the things that they do are things that I would have never thought [inaudible 00:12:45] in the least.



Tisha Richmond: When you ask them to demonstrate what they know and then to take it further and to do it in a creative way that is all of their own and all of those 4-C's are engaged as they do that. And then we have judges come in, just like we do at the food truck race, or we have our staff come in and sometimes, depends, but it depends, sometimes we have others come in as well and they have a judging table and students bringing their dishes.

Tisha Richmond: And to see them come to life as they realize that they've made something pretty amazing and they are getting to show it and have others taste it that they respect, whether it's people in the industry or other teachers from other classes or staff members that they respect and maybe they don't shine in math or they don't shine in English, but they can shine as they [inaudible 00:13:32] this creation they made out of pie crust.

Tisha Richmond: And that is where, oh my gosh, they are presenting their food and sometimes the most introverted, quiet students are they just beam, and they can't wait to explain what they made. And it's almost awkward for the judges because the students just sit there. I mean just stand [crosstalk 00:13:54] What they are going to say. And sometimes they are like, "Okay you guys can go back to your class. Back to your groups, we'll debrief in a little bit." Just because the judges are like, "oh, my gosh, what do I say?" But they can [crosstalk 00:14:02] really really special, and I have had tears form in my eyes almost every time, just because it's so heartwarming to see these kids own their learning. It's just a powerful thing.

Matt Grundler: I know that Laura and I have seen that time and time again in our room. You have those kids that really struggle in other areas and then to see them pull all of that learning from everywhere else and pull it into their art and what amazing things they end up making. The pride level--

Laura Grundler: [crosstalk 00:14:32] Shine. It's that moment for them to shine. I tell our teachers all the time, one of our biggest missions is to allow kids that opportunity to shine.

Susan Riley: Hi there. This is Susan Riley, founder of Education Closet. If you loved these conversations with Team Grudler and friends, please be sure to check out k12artchat on Twitter. The chat is held every Thursday at



8:30PM Central, and it's a great way to continue the conversation. Just go to Twitter.com and search #k12artchat. We look forward to chatting with you over there soon. Now, let's head back to the show.

Matt Grundler: You know, you kind of hit on it. One of your questions was the opportunities for exploration; giving the kids a chance to really tap into their curiosity and tap into resources everywhere else and a willingness just to try. And so I think that is such a huge key.

Laura Grundler: Yeah. So, I'm curious too, do your students ever fail?

Tisha Richmond: Oh yeah, I mean we all do, right? [crosstalk 00:15:32] I tell students, I mean, sometimes I'll try something in class and I'll be like, "okay, we're going to try this new thing today. I don't know how it's going to work, but we're going to learn together. We're going to do this together." And it just becomes this safe space. I think it's really important as teachers that we create an environment that feels safe for them, that they can take risks and if they fail, they feel that they are going to do it in a safe environment where there's going to be encouragement. We're going to help them get back on their feet and try again and keep iterating. It's so important and I think it's really important as teachers that we are modeling that for kids. I'm taking a risk here too, and they see me fail. And they know that not everything works. But they feel more safe taking those risks if they can see that I'm willing to do it as well.

Laura Grundler: The whole chat was just like, "where do you go next" because there was so much great fodder between everybody that was participating. You even talked about the idea of gratitude. You know, how does gratitude fit into education?

Tisha Richmond: Right. I just think that it's so important that we appreciate each other and I know that in my classes one thing that I do at the very beginning of the semester is I really am intentional about creating experiences where we build team and we build, like I said before, this safe community. And [inaudible 00:17:01] every single day, just so students get to know each other because I'm sure that as in your art classes there's mixed grades. A lot of kids are with the same kids every single class period, but then they go to their electives and they are in this mixed class. And so they don't know each other, and so I think it just becomes this common language



that we appreciate each other and we appreciate all of the skills that each brings to the table.

Tisha Richmond: And students know that when they miss a class, their team is going to miss them because they have special skills that are going to be missing if they are not there. And so I think that just being really intentional about appreciating each kind and the individual skill sets and uniqueness that they bring to the team that they can see that in themselves and you know, sometimes my teams are so eclectic, such a mix of abilities and [inaudible 00:18:01] that they all know that they are valued and that they bring something special to the table, and I think that it's important that we are intentional about creating an environment where that happens.

Tisha Richmond: And we're showing appreciation and gratitude to each other. And I think that's one of the things that's heartwarming when we do these challenges, that even though there's this healthy competition going on between teams, I see teams going to other groups and going, "Wow, I love how you did that. Can you share with me what you did to make that happen?" Or "Wow! You guys really crushed it today." And they acknowledge each other even though they are competing against each other. There's this common love for each other. There's this team feel in the class where it's a family. It's a family of learners that are all helping to make each other stronger, and so I just think it's something you have to be intentional about creating from the very beginning of your class. That's what this class...this is the feel this class is going to have.

Matt Grundler: I want to be in her class.

Laura Grundler: I think the word intention is such a powerful word. As we go through the podcast there are commonalities that I keep thinking to myself as I'm talking to each person in these interviews and one of the words that keeps coming up is intention and being very intentional about how you-

Matt Grundler: Purpose.

Laura Grundler: Yeah, purposeful, intentional about how you build this space in your classroom about this safe environment. And really being purposeful about setting up the lesson plans and all of those things. I think that sometimes, especially when you get to be a veteran teacher, you kind of just sometimes are on autopilot and maybe it's a good reminder that you



can't always be on autopilot. That you really need to be intentional about the environment of your classroom, the lesson plans, each group, each period of kids being so different and unique. That's so important to remember.

Matt Grundler: So, your book that you wrote has just come out. It's called, [inaudible 00:20:00] [crosstalk 00:20:03] So, I know we've heard bits and pieces of it, but what was it that really came down to inspiring you to write this book.

Tisha Richmond: I just really wanted to share my story. And I feel like there are so many educators out there that are tired and burnt out and at the same place that I was, where they are ready to throw in the towel because there's a lot of initiatives; there's a lot of demands on educating [inaudible 00:20:36] being a teacher is very very hard and I felt that by sharing my story I would hopefully inspire other educators to realize that there's more. There's more to education and we can truly transform our classes into unforgettable places and create unforgettable experiences for students and transform our teaching, and that I had just found these keys along the way that had really untapped that magic in my classroom and I just thought, you know even if just a handful of teachers that I can save that are amazing teachers that are doing amazing things for kids that are ready to leave, then it will be worth it for me to be able to share the experiences that I have had as an educator and how my own educational [inaudible 00:21:24]

Laura Grundler: That's beautiful. Just thinking further, I don't know if you want to share the keys from the book, but are there any pieces of advice that you would give to the teachers that you are hoping to have them rethink their path?

Tisha Richmond: Yeah, absolutely. So I will share my seven keys. So the M is for Memorable Beginnings. So, just as I was explaining before, those first days are critical. How are we creating Memorable Beginnings for our students so they will feel safe and be willing to take risks in our classroom and they feel valued as individuals. That's so important.



Tisha Richmond: A is for Authenticity and Agency. So how can we be authentic in our profession? How can our students be authentic as learners? And how can we open up choice for our students so they have a sense of Agency.

Tisha Richmond: G is for Gamified strategies because that has been a real change in the way that I do learning in my classroom in that I've gamified each of my classes, and so it talks about how I've structured that gamified experience in my classroom.

Tisha Richmond: I is for Innovation. And I have definitely an innovators mindset over the four years, and so it talks about how we as educators need to continue to take risks and model that risk taking for our students, so that they see there is so much power in it. I will tell you that if it weren't for the risks that I've taken along the way, there's no way that I would be at this point as an educator; there's no way that I would have a book published by Dave Burgess Consulting. I've taken a lot of risks, and I'm not saying that all of them have been successful, but each one has made me more courageous as an educator and as a person. And, looking back, I just see how each step has opened up this world of opportunity for me.

Tisha Richmond: C is for Creativity, Collaboration, and Curiosity. And so just kind of sharing through the experiences that I have had, you can see how some of those things play into my classroom experience, that there's a lot of magical C's out there. I kind of had to narrow it down.

Laura Grundler: I like to narrow that one down.

Tisha Richmond: But those have been really foundational in creating that classroom magic.

Tisha Richmond: A at the end is for Authentic Audience and so every unit we bring in an Authentic Audience that is [inaudible 00:23:42] can demonstrate what they've learned, and that has been so powerful and so exciting and really one of the most favorite parts of my classroom is seeing students own their learning, become empowered, and shine in front of an authentic audience. And then we've also had global collaborations with teachers like Stephanie Crawford in Chicago and Randy Miller in Florida where we're not the same age student. Randy has first graders. I have high school students, but they were able to collaborate together which is really really powerful when we can take our collaboration on a global scale.



- Tisha Richmond: And then Legacy is the L. And as educators, we are leaving a legacy and we are empowering our students to leave a legacy. And so the last chapter of the book is really just empowering us as educators. We play such an important role where we can truly be life changers and make an impact on education and in our students' lives and so it's really empowering us to action to make that happen in our own educational worlds.
- Laura Grundler: I love the legacy and I think that it's hard to see especially if you've only taught a couple of years that legacy piece, but when you become older, more veteran, seasoned, a seasoned educator, you start to see that legacy come back. I mean, you start to see-
- Matt Grundler: Oh I taught elementary level for 13 years and then I finally saw as they would come ack getting ready to move on to college and we see that -
- Laura Grundler: The impact, that they remember their elementary art teacher and they wanted to make sure to say Thank you and sometimes you just don't know and you're not always going to see it and you have to remember that that legacy continues whether you see it or not, and I think that's something we lose sight of. I like that you ended that with legacy. I think that's really special.
- Matt Grundler: So I'm thinking as our last question, what kind of wisdom would you give, I guess, or how would you go about encouraging other teachers to be courageous? You talked about courage, how would you reach out to those teachers that might be a little bit hesitant about really trying to be courageous in the classroom?
- Tisha Richmond: I would say, get connected. I mean, really, there's so much power in becoming a connected educator. There's so much encouragement to be found when you're connecting on Twitter. When you create groups on Voxer where you're communicating. I have a group on Voxer that we communicate on a daily basis. We're always sharing ideas. We're giving encouragement just on life. You know, life happens. We have hard things happen and that constant daily encouragement with like-minded people that are all passionate about education.
- Tisha Richmond: And for a long time I lived in a silo. I was a culinary teacher. I was a singleton culinary teacher without anybody else - or so I thought - to



collaborate even within my PLC, I did not have other teachers to collaborate. Once we started connecting, I realized, I can learn from the Kindergarten teacher. I can learn from the art and the PE and the science and the health and the English teachers and I can take what they're doing and it may not look the same but I can take some of those ideas and I can bring it into my own classroom. Into my own experience and I can make it my own. And that really was a game changer for me in realizing that I don't have to teach in a silo. There's no reason in this day and age to teach in a silo because there's literally people all around the world that we can be collaborating and connecting and encouraging in this journey and that, I would say, that's where I started, was becoming connected and realizing there was this bigger world out there that I didn't realize existed.

Laura Grundler: We've seen it time and time again for connected educators and the impact it makes on their teaching and their students so, thank you so much for sharing with us today. Thank you for hosting the chat. Thank you for continuing to be a passionate voice for other educators and everything you do, Tisha.

Tisha Richmond: Oh, thank you so much. It truly was an honor to host the chat and it's an honor to talk with you today.

Laura Grundler: Well, as you know, we'll be in touch again.

Matt Grundler: Oh absolutely.

Tisha Richmond: 'Til next time.

Laura Grundler: I'll look forward to it.

Speaker 1: Heads up, seven up friends. If you've been enjoying these episodes, be sure to subscribe to the Creatively Connected Classroom Podcast. You'll get a notification every time we release a new episode each and every week. And take a screenshot and put it on your favorite social media: Twitter, Insta, Facebook, you name it. Tag Education Closet and K12artchat so we can reach out and say thanks. And if you really love us with all the feels, give us a review and/or a rating over on iTunes. It helps others find the show and connect with our incredible community. Thanks for all your support.

