



2009 Qwest Teachers and Technology Grant Program

Project Narrative & Lesson Plan

PROJECT LEAD: JAMES OLSON

PROJECT TITLE: WHERE WE LIVE-MAKING A DIFFERENCE

PARTNERS ON THE PROJECT (IF APPLICABLE):

SCHOOL DISTRICT: DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL NAME: NETTLETON ELEMENTARY

SCHOOL OR SCHOOL DISTRICT URL: www.duluth.k12.mn.us

Project Narrative

1. Innovative integration of technology into the curriculum and teaching practices

How will your project integrate technology into the curriculum in unique or innovative ways to improve student achievement?

How does this project change or improve the way technology is incorporated into the curriculum and teaching practices in your classroom and school?

2. Expected impact on academic achievement

What learning and skill development will result from this project?

How are the academic achievement goals of this project aligned with state academic standards?

How will improvement be measured?

3. Scope of impact

How many students, classrooms and grades will the project impact?

How will this project change instructional practice and result in 21st century learning (relevant, real world problem solving and critical thinking)

This proposal requests grant funding to apply toward the purchase of a mobile videoconferencing unit. This unit could be used in many ways; the attached lesson plan template outlines just one potential application. My colleague Ann Anderson is also applying for similar grant funding. This project would integrate technology into the curriculum in innovative ways to improve student achievement. First, videoconferencing allows teachers to address various learning styles. Instead of teachers disseminating

information in either written or verbal form, the students are actually a part of the information gathering process due to its interactive nature. Second, the teacher is able to present materials and resources that aren't usually available in traditional classrooms. These resources include virtual field trips, the ability to view presentations that would otherwise be inaccessible due to distance or funding, and interaction with content specialists and experts outside of the classroom.

The implementation of this project would improve the way technology is incorporated into the curriculum and teaching practices within my classroom as well as within my school. Through videoconferencing, I will be able to make the curriculum come alive and make the instruction more student-centered rather than teacher-centered. For example, instead of reading about a zoo animal, students would be able to interact with a zoo keeper who might have an actual animal to show to the students. The class would also be able to ask the zookeeper questions and receive immediate feedback. In this manner, the curriculum becomes a primary source rather than a traditional secondary source. Another example is the ability for an entire school to participate in an activity that would otherwise be difficult, if not impossible, to attend. Viewing a performance of the "Nutcracker" or learning about another culture's music can be experienced without having to take students out of our school. Destinations, resources, and events from throughout the world can now be an extension of my classroom. Through the implementation of video conferencing group collaboration and interaction are just a start to the learning and skill development that would result from this project. In the attached lesson plan template, students develop and improve their communication and management skills. They are required to prepare, to edit, and to provide feedback. They are also able to improve their presentation and speaking skills. Additionally, communication skills are enhanced through conversation and body language, student participation and motivation are increased, and cultural diversity is encouraged. According to Ewing, "student comprehension of difficult or abstract concepts is easily understood through the face-to-face interaction of videoconferencing...[and it cultivates] positive relationships among educators, students, and community members." The attached lesson plan is aligned with the following Minnesota academic standards in both language arts and science. In **I. READING AND LITERATURE**, the *Comprehension and Literature* standards are addressed. In **II. WRITING**, the *Types of Writing, Research, and Elements of Composition* standards are addressed. In **III. SPEAKING, LISTENING AND VIEWING**, the *Speaking and Listening* standard is addressed. In **VII. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP**, the *Civic Values, Skills, Rights and Responsibilities* standard is addressed. These standards are outlined in the Lesson Plan Template.

Improvement will be measured by completion of a KWL chart as a group both pre- and post- instruction. Self, peer and teacher assessment will be completed using 6 Traits of Writing rubric and a presentation rubric based on the Minnesota Academic Standards Benchmarks. The initial lesson plan my colleague and I are presenting affects approximately 60 children in grades one and five in two separate schools. I am working with grade five while my colleague is working with grade one. Ultimately the mobile videoconferencing equipment, with its use in any curricular area, would affect both of our K-5 schools, or approximately 900 students. It also has the potential to affect hundreds of Duluth teachers. Without having to leave their own sites, teachers are able to collaborate with other teachers and/or content specialists about instructional strategies, standard alignment, assessment, and technology integration. This is especially helpful when time constraints, distance, and weather can affect scheduling efforts. According to Ewing, video conferencing can change instructional practice resulting in 21st century

learning. In addition to the inquiry process being carried out using primary sources, it has additional benefits which assist with the transformation of the teaching and learning processes. Videoconferencing results in more technically qualified students, enhances students' technology literacy, facilitates innovative, student-centered instruction, and promotes community relations. With videoconferencing, the student can be interactive with the world rather than merely a spectator.

Lesson Plan or Unit Overview

TITLE: WHERE WE LIVE – MAKING A DIFFERENCE

CURRICULUM CONTENT AREA (S): READING/LANGUAGE ARTS, SOCIAL STUDIES

GRADE-LEVEL SPAN: 1, 5

PURPOSE: Through integrated lessons on community (family, class, school and local) students will recognize their role as community contributors. All lessons will be shared via videoconferencing.

ACTIVITIES: Each class (grade one and grade five) will utilize Theme 5 from the Duluth Public Schools core reading curriculum *StoryTown* as a springboard for further understanding of community and community service. The grade one focus of Theme 5 is *Where We Live - A Community Map*. The grade five focus of Theme 5 is *Making a Difference – What Our Community Needs*. Each class will be engaged in 6 weeks of whole group and small group reading and writing instruction on various topics related to community and civic responsibility. During this six week period and beyond students will assume the role of instructor as they present lessons or demonstrations of knowledge between classrooms via videoconferencing. The fifth grade students will work in cooperative groups to plan and facilitate interactive lessons to introduce the topic of community (family, class, school and local) to the first grade classroom. While lesson ideas will be generated by the fifth grade students, they may include but not be limited to: reading books such as *Town Mouse County Mouse*, *A is for America*; media presentations available via the Internet or video; PowerPoint presentations; picture presentations; graphic organizers such as KWL charts of Venn diagrams; and interactive games. Students will be encouraged to utilize the SMARTBOARD in their presentations. After taking part in the introductory lessons provided by the fifth grade students, the first grade students will work in cooperative groups to create a community map (home, school, local, other) that shows what can be found in that community. Each group will create poems, books, reports, word or theme webs, interactive games, charts or diagrams, or plays to present to the fifth grade classroom. Each group will be challenged to make each activity as interactive as possible, i.e., riddles that require the fifth grader to guess the answer. Classrooms will do weekly checkups and share a short discussion of the *StoryTown* theme 5 reading they are doing during that week. Fifth grade students will also share information about what community service is and how they are developing community service projects.. While the first grade students are preparing their lesson items the fifth grade students will begin to identify a community problem or issue they would like to address. This could be done as a whole group activity or within small cooperative groups. The fifth grade students will create and implement a plan for community service demonstrating an understanding of civic responsibility. Each group will follow these project steps: 1. Identify Community Issue (class, school, and neighborhood). 2. Gather information about the scope of the problem. Groups will take notes on their findings, recording

bibliography information. 3. Consider options: Have each group brainstorm ways that they could get involved in trying to solve the problem. Have them determine the advantages and disadvantages of each solution and determine the solution that seems the most effective for them to attempt. 4. Develop a plan: Compile their research in a report that includes an explanation of the problem as well as their plan for working towards a solution. 5. Present: Groups will develop interactive ideas for presenting their community service projects to the first grade classroom.

After learning about the fifth grade community service projects the first grade class will begin to create and implement a community service project. They will do this as a whole classroom project following the same steps as the fifth grade students (in a developmentally acceptable manner). They will connect with the fifth grade classroom weekly to share what they have done and to gain information from them about how to complete each step. At the conclusion of the unit students will travel together on a virtual fieldtrip to learn about community service projects.

MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

Language Arts:

I. READING AND LITERATURE. *C. Comprehension Standard:* The student will actively engage in the reading process and use a variety of comprehension strategies to understand the meaning of texts that have been read or listened to. *D. Literature Standard:* The student will actively engage in the reading process and read, understand respond to and appreciate a wide variety of fiction, poetic and non-fiction texts.

II. WRITING. *A. Types of Writing Standard:* The student will compose various pieces of writing. *D. Research Standard:* The student will locate and use information in reference materials. *B. Elements of Composition Standard:* The student will demonstrate emerging knowledge of a writing process with attention to organization, topic and quality of ideas.

III. SPEAKING, LISTENING AND VIEWING. *A. Speaking and Listening Standard:* The student will communicate effectively through listening and speaking.

Social Studies:

VII. GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENSHIP. *A. Civic Values, Skills, Rights and Responsibilities Standard:* The student will recognize the importance of individual action and character to shaping civic life. The student will describe civic values, rights and responsibilities in a republic. The student will understand the importance of participation in civic life and demonstrate effective civic skills.

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS: Videoconferencing Unit, Computer, SMART Interactive Whiteboard

SOFTWARE: No specialty software is required.

WEBSITES AND RESOURCES: <http://www.teachpeacenow.org>; <http://www.hud.gov/kids/>
<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/neighborhood/index.html> <http://www.hud.gov/kids/field1.html> . Theme 5
StoryTown whole group and small group reading materials. Additional trade books including: *Town*

Mouse Country Mouse, A is for America, No Mail for Mitchell, Sophie's Window, It's Our World Too! Stories of Young People Who Are Making a Difference, The Kid's Guide to Social Action, and The Kid's Guide to Service Projects.

STUDENT OUTCOMES: Students will experience, report on, and educate others about communities in order to achieve qualities of community contributors. Student will demonstrate learning by presenting to cooperating grade use many mediums.

ASSESSMENT: Scoring rubrics for presentations and 6 Traits Writing will be used to assess student work. At completion of unit both grade will journal about the learning experience and the impact it has made in their life.