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Charlotte, NC
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools
PreK-5th Grade

Peru Curriculum Project & Outreach Activities

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Purpose and Design:

As an elementary school principal, my curriculum project serves two purposes: to educate and impact change within my staff and to educate and impact change within the student body. Therefore, my curriculum project is non-traditional in design and in execution. The project, described in detail below, contains several hyperlinks, demonstrating the ways my learning in Peru has reached and will reach both staff and student populations at Lebanon Road Elementary School in Charlotte, NC.

Context:

Lebanon Road Elementary (LRE) is a large, diverse pre-k through fifth grade school located in a suburb of Charlotte, NC. We serve over eight hundred students, seventy-seven percent of whom are economically disadvantaged. Our student body represents diverse ethnicities, and our students speak over twenty languages at home. Fourteen percent of our students are English language learners. Fifty percent of our students are currently performing at a college and career ready level of proficiency in reading, math, and science. During the 2015-2016 school year, our school grew students more than double the expected rate in one year, meaning that our teachers are helping our students to make tremendous progress each year in the tested subject areas.

Objectives:

These learning objectives tie in directly with the standards the teachers in my building are evaluated on and also connect directly to the Common Core State Standards for student instruction in my school. The North Carolina Teacher Evaluation standards that connect with this curriculum project include: 2b Teachers embrace diversity in the school community and in the world, 3d Teachers make instruction relevant to students, 4c Teachers use a variety of instructional methods, 4d Teachers integrate and utilize technology in their instruction, and 5b Teachers link professional growth to their professional goals.

The Common Core State Standards that connect with this curriculum project include: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally; Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated

or appropriate; Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Part 1 - Introduction:

I chose to introduce my experience in Peru, as well as the goals for our school coming out of this experience, through my principal's address at our school's opening staff meeting. I included several excerpts from my experience within my opening [speech](#), including a few meaningful [photographs](#) to begin the day's professional development experience and help frame the importance of continuous learning throughout the 2016-2017 school year. Through these experiences, I aimed to teach my staff that no matter where you live or where you go to school, what matters most is that every student has a strong relationship with at least one trusted adult.

Part 2 - Understanding by Design:

One of the powerful learning experiences I had in Peru was at the gifted school. We had an opportunity to collaborate with teachers from all over the area and discuss instructional pedagogy. The presentation began with an outline of the backwards design process the school follows, beginning with essential questions and resulting in day to day lesson plans.

As I prepared to open the school year at LRE, I began with five day of understanding by design (backwards design) professional development to align learning experiences to high level outcomes in each grade level and content area at my school. I expanded my knowledge base after the school visit and created several professional development modules to prepare my staff to lead our students to new levels of success this school year. The five-part professional development series follows:

[Power Standards \(8/15\)](#)

[Assessment Calendars \(8/16\)](#)

[Common Assessments \(8/17\)](#)

[Curriculum Maps \(8/18\)](#)

[Common Tasks \(8/19\)](#)

Part 3 - Connection:

Another goal in bringing my experience in Peru to both staff and students is through connecting American students to Peruvian students using technology. I recently received an email from Julio Eduardo Castillo Aranda at Colegio San Antonio.

He is looking forward to connecting classes of students at his school with our school and students in the United States.

My goal is to connect interested teachers and classes to Colegio San Antonio through Skype and other technology platforms. I advertised this opportunity in a recent email to my staff and will intentionally pair up classrooms at LRE to classrooms in Peru once I gauge the interest of my staff, "Email me if you're interested in penpals/emailing/Skyping with a class from a Peruvian school, and I will connect you. What an amazing opportunity for our students!" I look forward to watching these experiences unfold in the coming months as I connect a class or classes through Skype.

I have reached out to the staff at Colegio San Antonio, and the principal forwarded my email to a second grade teacher who I will collaborate with during the Skype lessons. I am currently waiting to hear back from the teacher in Peru so we can set up the first Skype lesson. The class we are connecting with at Colegio San Antonio is an English class, so we will correspond in English during the Skype lessons. I chose this school due to their available technology resources and plan to schedule a time for the teachers themselves to practice the Skype interaction to troubleshoot before the students engage in the lessons. The second grade teacher at my school who will participate in this Skype lesson is looking forward to helping her students discuss their studies related to weather with the students in Peru. Students at my school have been completing a weather unit in preparation for this experience. Since the climates are so different, we believe the students will have plenty to discuss. Students will take a classroom assessment (exit ticket) to determine the knowledge gained through this experience. The essential standards that connect to the second grade study of weather are:

2.E.1 Understand patterns of weather and factors that affect weather.

2.E.1.1 Summarize how energy from the sun serves as a source of light that warms the land, air and water.

2.E.1.2 Summarize weather conditions using qualitative and quantitative measures to describe: • Temperature • Wind direction • Wind speed • Precipitation

2.E.1.3 Compare weather patterns that occur over time and relate observable patterns to time of day and time of year.

2.E.1.4 Recognize the tools that scientists use for observing, recording, and predicting weather changes from day to day and during the seasons. Unpacking What does this standard mean a child will know, understand and be able to do?

2.E.1.1 Students know that light travels from the sun to the earth. Some of this light is reflected back into space, some is absorbed by the land,

Part 4 - Lead Learner:

One of my job responsibilities that I find essential is my duty to serve as a lead learner within my school. I believe that I need to intentionally model the process of selecting and participating in high level professional development experiences throughout my career as a principal to inspire my staff to do the same. After reflecting upon my experience in Peru, I set a goal to promote learning experiences, particularly those that expose teachers to international travel and the study of other cultures, throughout the school year.

The platform I decided to use is my staff blog. On the blog, I post relevant professional learning experiences for my staff and then send out a weekly update every Friday with this information for staff members to review and apply for if they choose. I post this information on two different blog pages: "[Grants & Recognition Opportunities](#)" and "[Professional Development: Optional](#)". I have also included and advertised the link to Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminars through this format to promote continued professional development experiences for my entire staff.

Part 5 - Cultural Fair Demonstration:

The final opportunity I have selected to share my knowledge after returning from Peru is through our school's annual cultural fair. Hundreds of our school families and staff members set up stations in our gymnasium to promote cultural awareness through learning about dozens of foreign countries. I plan to create and present a Peru table at the cultural fair this year at our cultural fair in March.

The presentation will contain pictures, artifacts, and descriptions, to provide age-appropriate information for students. I will also provide artifacts, many interactive, for the students to manipulate on the table in front of the display board. Finally, I will attempt to provide a sample of Peruvian food. I will also have the opportunity to collaborate with my students and their families whose native country is Peru on this cultural fair display.

Part 1 - Conclusion:

I am confident that I have achieved and will achieve my intended outcomes for students and staff through the development and execution of this project and associated outreach activities. I have already seen the impact of the staff professional development on the quality of teaching and learning in my school building. I am most excited to implement the outreach portions of my project, including the classroom to classroom Skype scenario and the cultural fair display.