

# **Progress and Innovation Grants – 2005-2006 School Year**

## **Minnesota - Mexico Webcam Connection**

Author: David Reid

School: Robbinsdale Spanish Immersion School

Direct contact with students from another country opens up a world of opportunity for developing understanding of other cultures and improving language skills. However, travel options are limited and pen-pal exchanges are slow. Students from the Robbinsdale Area Schools will be partnered with students in Mexico to exchange personal information, as well as share ideas about common academic themes.

## **Implementing Link Crew, A Ninth Grade Transition Program**

Author: Dean Larsen

School: Robbinsdale Armstrong High School

Link Crew is built on the philosophy that students need role models, other students and teachers, to guide them through the transition into high school from eighth grade. Link Crew trains faculty members and junior and senior high students to lead freshmen students through their first year of high school. Increasing freshmen success is the goal.

## **Continuous Achievement Through Changing Hues (CATCH)**

Author: Talley Blazeovich

School: Neill Elementary

As research has proven, student achievement decreases due to lack of focus on academics over the summer months. This teacher-created program helps students continue focusing on school over the summer by developing goals, opening the school's computer lab and tying success into summer activities.

## **Join Hands - Lend a Hand: A Community Service Fair**

Author: Lauren Hildebrand

School: Sandburg Middle School

Community service is required for middle and high school students, but many students and families are not aware of the various opportunities available in our seven communities. This event brings in various organizations to share their missions and needs with students and families. Not only do the students learn about the organizations, but the organizations learn about our schools, students and families.

## **Latino Literacy Activity Kits**

Author: Cindy Bursh

School: Cavanagh Elementary School

Literacy is the foundation to success in school, and partnership with parents at home is critical in building literature skills. Research has shown that active involvement by parents enhances and improves the learning that goes on in the classroom, but it is a challenge when the parents do not speak or read English. These kits provide Spanish speaking parents the opportunity to support their children's reading efforts at home in the Spanish language using the same tools and techniques English speaking families have available.

## **Building Leadership Skills for At-Risk Youth Using the MAAP STARS Youth Program**

Author: Dawn Smith

School: Highview Alternative School

In high school, many at-risk students journey through their educational careers unnoticed with little or no leadership opportunities. The goal of this program is to empower these students with leadership training geared to the at-risk student so they return to school with a renewed sense of accomplishment. Students then spread their new behaviors and attitudes to other students through various activities improving the culture of the entire school.

## **Empty Bowls 281**

Author: Gale Minnice

School: Pilgrim Lane Elementary

Knowing about and understanding poverty is the first step toward eliminating it, and this program is aimed at educating our community about hunger and poverty. The program ties a community event into the visual arts and social studies curriculums. The aim is to educate our students and the communities about the struggles and challenges of poverty and hunger.