

Name of School & District-

A. Crosby Kennett Middle School, Conway School District, SAU #9

Team Members (names and emails)

Marcia Uhl m_uhl@sau9.org.

Lesley Woodsum l_woodsum@sau9.org

Eric Cullen e_cullen@sau9.org

Project Abstract (75-100 words "elevator speech")

(Including "essential question" for student inquiry)

The Kennett Middle School Global Communications Project

Kennett Middle School students will use 21st century tools to answer the essential questions, "How does my life compare to other Middle School students around the Globe? Will contact with students from other cultures change my preconceived notions about who they are?" Students will use digital tools such as iPod Touches and Netbooks in conjunction with ePals, Skype, and Voicethread in order to have authentic communication with students from other cultures. This project will increase their global learning, cultural awareness, and communication skills with a special focus on German and Spanish speaking countries.

Project Description

What the project is about

The Kennett Middle School Global Communications Project

This project is about improving the education of Kennett Middle School students and boosting it into the 21st century. Since the globe is shrinking, we need to provide our children with the technological skills to communicate with their global peers and to succeed in a competitive global market. The project will focus primarily on the Spanish and German classrooms, but has the potential to reach more classrooms through an interdisciplinary unit using Voicethread.

Students will start the year by being connected via email with a peer from a German or Spanish speaking country via the ePals program. This will allow students a way to be introduced to the written language as well as establish an initial connection with a foreign language peer. As their written skills improve with the use of the iPod Touch world language vocabulary and grammar applications and they are introduced to oral communication in their classrooms, they will slowly work their way into using Skype to have virtual face-to-face

communication with their global peer. The project will culminate in the Spring with an interdisciplinary project using Voicethread on a topic of choice such as “Spanish Art” or “German Music”. These projects will be posted on the NHEON website and on the school website.

Professional Development is a critical component of this program’s success. The lead teachers will be trained by consultants at NCES (North Country Education Services). They will deliver professional development periodically throughout the 2011/2012 school year that focuses on the three major components of the project: ePals, Skype and Voicethread.

Learning goals

One of the four core values for Kennett Middle School is *Students will work productively with a variety of people and respect their differences*. This core value complements the five learning goals of the NH Standards for World Language which are also the goals for this project. These learning goals are:

- Students will communicate in languages other than English
- Students will gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures
- Students will connect with other disciplines and acquire information
- students will develop insight into the nature and language of culture
- students will participate in multilingual communities at home and around the world

Indication of need for this grant project

This grant is being written on behalf of Conway School District’s Kennett Middle School. The Conway School District is located in the heart of the White Mountains. Kennett Middle School has a total enrollment of 316 students 7-8. The Town of Conway is located in the Mount Washington Valley in eastern Carroll County with a population of 9,178 (2007 Census). A year round resort area, Conway’s largest industry is the service industry. According to the 2008 Kids Count NH data book, Conway is a “Cluster 5 town” which means it is in the poorest economic cluster in the state. As of October 2010, 36.71% of Kennett Middle School’s students received free and reduced lunch. According to the 2007 census: 12.2% of Conway’s adults over the age of 25 do not have a high school diploma. This data clearly illustrates the economic need of the students we serve. The financial burden many of these families face make it difficult, if not impossible, for them to travel or experience other cultures. While we can’t ease the financial burden for families, we can help to break the cycle of poverty by giving children the best possible education and by keeping them engaged and excited about learning. We can also give them every opportunity to experience life outside of their small community.

Therefore, the goal of the Kennett Middle School Mini Grant project is to create an initiative towards developing 21st century classrooms that have more global awareness.

Kennett Middle School finds itself at a crossroads between what we are capable of doing, and what our current level of technology allows us to do. As our commitment to global learning grows, we are constantly faced with how to communicate with our global neighbors.

KMS currently serves five separate elementary schools; each with their own set of technology uses and standards. Incoming students, therefore, have inconsistent technology skills from which to draw. Best practices shows us that technology needs to “flow seamlessly alongside other learning tasks” in order for technology to be a valuable tool of which all students see the merit (Becker, 2000). Our job is to prepare all students to be able to take advantage of every educational opportunity available to them in their high school careers, without the limitation of technology skills. Our middle school program strives to integrate consistent ICT standards across all curriculum's as students transition into ninth grade and higher education.

At the heart of our school are our four Core Values. These Core Values are consistently used as a barometer for teaching practices, student activities, and everyday workings of our school. Many of the Core Values are supported by NETS criteria for integration of technology. These are again echoed in 21st Century skills where teaming, global awareness, effective use of real-world tools, and adaptability are all key components [1].

Implementation plan for the project (who, what, when, where)

Who

The Kennett Middle School German and Spanish teachers (Lesley Woodsum and Marcia Uhl) would like to teach Middle School world language students to use 21st Century skills to communicate with their Spanish and German speaking global neighbors. Our technology technician (Eric Cullen) will manage the hardware, connectivity, software subscriptions and any other support issues that will arise during the course of the project.

What

The Spanish and German classrooms will be doing several projects throughout the year. Students will start the year by being connected via email with a peer from a German or Spanish speaking country via the ePals program. This will allow students a way to be introduced to the written language as well as establish an initial connection with a foreign language peer. As their written skills improve with the use of the iPod Touch world language vocabulary and grammar applications and they are introduced to oral communication in their classrooms, they will slowly work their way into using Skype to have virtual face-to-face communication with their global peer. The project will culminate in the Spring with an interdisciplinary project using Voicethread on a topic of choice such as “Spanish Art” or “German Music”. These projects will be posted on the NHEON website and on the school website.

When (timeline)

- Professional Development will begin in the summer of 2011. The teachers involved in the project will be trained through NCES on how to use ePals, Skype and Voicethread.
- The training and support will continue throughout the year. The ePals project will begin in the Fall of 2011. Students will get a Spanish or German speaking ePal and begin correspondence.
- Students will begin using Skype during the second phase of the project, which will occur in quarter three (January 2012) It's important that students have the basic skills in place for oral communication before this phase starts.
- The final phase of the project will be the student presentations on Voicethread. These will be due in June of 2012 and may be interdisciplinary in nature

Where

Kennett Middle School and beyond!

Content areas involved

Professional development needed by teachers

Kennett Middle School will contract with (NCES) North Country Education Services to provide appropriate professional development for the completion of this project. Training will be conducted either on-site or at NCES. In addition to the three project participants, the training will enable us to open this learning to a set number of other interested teachers. In addition to teachers from Kennett Middle School we will also invite teachers from our three elementary schools and the high school. The training will include the following items

- Video production training
- Integration of the Ipod Touch into the classroom
- VoiceThread training for classroom use

Ties to content standards

Alignment to digital and media literacy skills

1. Creativity and Innovation

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop

innovative products and processes using technology. Students:

- a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- b. create original works as a means of personal or group expression.

2. Communication and Collaboration

Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:

- a. interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media.
- b. communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats.
- c. develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures.
- d. contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems.

Capacity to implement the project

Conway School District's Kennett Middle School is ready and prepared to be a part of this statewide effort. Using the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (ISTE 2007) Essential Conditions as a guide, the District has created a shared vision and implementation planning through its District Technology Committee. Technology is budgeted to support technology infrastructure through its five year purchase plan.(SAU #9 Technology Plan). The Conway School District's ICT program integrates technology into all curricula for all K-12 students. The intent of this plan is to improve technology literacy for all students, provide for equitable access and student-centered learning. We have very skilled personnel as evidenced by the members of the Kennett Middle School Tech Committee. These committee members include the grant manager, Eric Cullen, teachers, Principal Kevin Richard, Guidance, and the previous Title II-D Program Co-Director and Tech Leader for the Kennett Middle School.

Teachers at Kennett Middle School have already been involved in a multitude of collaborative technology efforts. As this is a Tech Committee sponsored project there will be substantial experienced support for the participating teachers. The combined experiences of the middle school Tech Committee include, service on the District Technology Committee, participation in writing the SAU #9 Technology Plan, designing technology integrated laboratories for renovated science labs and leading the collaborative design and launch of a dynamic-interactive school web site. Tech Committee members offered and sponsored school wide professional development opportunities including: Blogging for teachers, Best Practices in Embedding Technology into Classroom practice, online grading, online publishing, and web design.

The KMS staff has become much more comfortable and proficient in the use of technology as a means to enhance the educational process. Staff have led professional day workshops, put on presentations for the local community and have demonstrated a willingness to examine current educational practice in favor of best practice. The staff has demonstrated a willingness to implement and evaluate programming to best meet the needs of a diverse student population. This willingness has been demonstrated in a number of educational arenas and provides a structure for future areas of growth, most notably in this grant. The availability of technology on a 1:1 basis would be an initiative that has the commitment of staff, students and administration and would be fully supported in its implementation and evaluation.

Through the years KMS staff has demonstrated a commitment to the integration of technology into the educational process. Technology is not seen as something that compliments content area teaching, but hopefully infused into the content area seamlessly.

At the end of a recent visit by B. Justin Reich of the Harvard School of Education, Kennett Middle School was described as "tipping the balances towards [becoming] a national model school for 21st century learning". Kennett Middle School is the right place and this is the right time to inspire educational transformation in the Mount Washington Valley.

Budget Narrative

Budget (Describe as appropriate)	TOTAL
Hardware 1 Laptop for teacher use, 12 netbooks for individual student use, 11 IPOD Touch for student use of various apps and added video capability, 2 web cams for use in each classroom(Cost calculation from vendor quotes). These purchases will be to meet the goal of improving our collaborative learning environment and communicate globally using the video technology these devices provide.	7,180.00
Software 1 Year subscription to VoiceThread for the school	320.00
Professional Development (in-house) Stipends to support 2 staff @ 24.00 per hour for five hours per day for five days. \$1,200 FICA \$92 Ret \$96 Supports train-the-trainer model. Total \$1388 Professional Development (contracted services) Job-embedded professional development provided by consultant- One or two visits during the project.	2,500.00

North Country Educational Services can provide this
\$650 a day plus mileage to come to us
\$15.00 per person for meals
\$500 for the instructor

TOTAL

10,000.00