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Beyond Effective— Using Project GLAD® to Meet Student Needs, Raise Test Scores, and Align to the NM Teach Evaluation System

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As an educator, I chose this profession after serving in the for-profit business world because I am passionate about investing in our youth. If our citizenry is uneducated and illiterate, the demise of our country is inevitable. I believe the majority of educators became teachers because they too, wanted to positively impact and shape the future.

Recently, though, educators have been under attack to “raise the bar” and ensure every student demonstrates mastery of the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) on standardized tests. Along with the new standards, many states have also implemented new teacher evaluation systems; in New Mexico, it is the NM TEACH evaluation system that will tie student growth on standardized tests, as well as observation data, to a teacher’s evaluation. The New Mexico effectiveness rubric is grounded in the work of Charlotte Danielson’s “Framework for Teaching,” used widely across the nation. While the NM TEACH rubric loosely refers to practices

that support the diversity of our students, it falls short in explicitly identifying “effective” practices that support students learning in a second language.

I have always believed (and been proven correct) that if we teach standards to mastery using connected, meaningful, engaging, and rigorous strategies and practice activities, test results will take care of themselves. For students who have language needs or learning disabilities, the strategies we use need to be even more intentional and explicit. *Project GLAD® (Guided Language Acquisition Design—www.ocde.us/projectglad)* is designed to provide all students access to rigorous content

through meaningful and engaging instruction and practice. In these times of increasing accountability, *Project GLAD®* is one way we can accomplish our goals, fuel our passion, and maintain our hope and sanity!

BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND: DOMAIN 1, Planning & Preparation

As Stephen Covey stated in his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, you must “begin with the end in mind.” You have to know what you’re working towards before you can plan how to get there, and as a *Project GLAD®* teacher, you always start with the vision by creating a Year-Long Integrated Standards Plan. By mapping the standards, you not only identify the timeline for mastery of the standards, but you look across all content and ELD standards and integrate them into unit themes ensuring cross-content connections. Your standards plan will also identify the formative and summative assessments that will be used to study progress toward mastery (see template on page 12).

When developing your Year-Long Standards Plan, it is helpful to start with the template on a large piece of butcher paper. Then, print out all the standards and cut them so there is one standard per sheet, allowing them to be moved and manipulated. Once the standards are laid out and grouped, the assessments can be created and the unit themes identified. If you have a core curriculum for English Language Arts, you use it as a resource for text, questions, practice, etc., as well as for the scope and sequence of foundational skills. The standards drive the plan, while you, as the teacher, identify the resources that will support student mastery. By taking the time to plan this way, you will meet the indicators for

Inside this issue...

- ▣ Successful Biliteracy Teaching from the Middle East
- ▣ Mirando matemáticamente a la cultura hispánica
- ▣ Implementing Small Group Guided Reading
- ▣ Using Rubrics to Empower Student Writers
- ▣ Una nueva era: Estándares Estatales Comunes en Español para los Estados Unidos
- ▣ Informing Instruction with Student Feedback
- ▣ BUENO Policy Center: Teacher Evaluation Policy



—continued on page 12—

—continued from page 1—

“Highly Effective” in *Domain 1, Elements: 1A, Demonstrating knowledge of content; 1D, Demonstrating knowledge of resources; and, 1F, Designing student assessment.*

Once the Year-Long Standards Plan is complete, the next step is to develop the Thematic Unit Plans based on the standards. As you create each unit plan, you will address and meet the “Highly Effective” performance level in *Domain 1, Elements: 1B, Designing coherent instruction; 1C, Setting instructional outcomes; and 1E, Demonstrating knowledge of students.* There is not one “best” unit plan format; the key is simply to include all the components of a well-thought-out unit, which happens to align to the NM TEACH Rubric (see page 13).

After the Unit Plan is finished, you begin designing the *Project GLAD*® components that will support standards mastery. Start by developing the *Process Grid* because it contains the key pieces of information students need to know about the unit. Content Standards, along with the *Process Grid*, drive the development of all the other *Project GLAD*® components. The final step is to create a daily lesson plan that includes: daily objectives and formative assessments; daily scope and sequence of delivery; the practice activities; differentiation design; intentional questions to promote deeper thinking; and student groupings. The daily lesson plan is usually created four or five days out; daily reflection supports lesson adjustments based on formative data. With a solid plan, you are ready to tackle Domains 2 and 3!

PROACTIVE AND INTENTIONAL: DOMAIN 2, Creating an Environment for Learning
Positive interdependence, proactive teaching of expectations, and physical arrangement of the room

are major components of *Project GLAD*® and the foundation to creating an environment for learning. Through the use of the *Zero Noise Signal, Three Personal Standards, Literacy Awards, Scouts, Collaborative Groups, Numbered Heads, the T-Chart for Social Skills, and Team Points*, teachers create a classroom culture of high expectations, respect, inclusiveness, personal responsibility, and collaboration. These strategies are even more powerful when the teacher is explicit about the behaviors that support a learning environment and student teams are given daily opportunities to verbally process how they’re doing in meeting the expectations. The power is in debriefing, processing, and adding to the expectations through on-going dialogue. Students own the expectations because **they** produce them!

ART AND SCIENCE: DOMAIN 3, Teaching for Learning

This domain is the heart of our work; it is where we *deliver* on the plan, put it into action, reflect on the results, and scaffold for access. A *Project GLAD*® classroom is vibrant, engaging, and responsive. *Inquiry and Observation Charts* set the focus and motivation for learning, and students are drawn into units as specialists such as Paleontologists or Historians. Teachers are intentional about using academic vocabulary while providing scaffolds to ensure access for every student. Rigorous content input charts are created in front of students in order to “imprint” information, while students are regularly prompted with intentional questioning to process information verbally with partners. Review of the input charts is planned for the whole group, while students with needs (language or academic) are brought up an additional time for targeted support. As the unit progresses, students “add to the walls” by researching information, recording it on a card, citing the source, and posting the new information on the related chart.

—continued on page 13—

STANDARDS PLAN											
TIMELINE	ASSESSMENTS	UNIT THEMES	WIDA Standards	ELA - CCSS			MATH - CCSS		SCIENCE NM Standards	SOCIAL STUDIES NM Standards	
				RL	W	Resources:		Resources:		Resources:	
				RI	SL						
				RF	L						
				RL	W						
				RI	SL						
				RF	L						
				RL	W						
				RI	SL						
				RF	L						
				RL	W						

Planning templates: Vicki Chávez
CCSS: www.corestandards.org



—continued from page 12—
Project GLAD® teachers design for 100% student engagement. All components of the *Project GLAD*® unit are connected and designed to embed academic vocabulary and promote discourse. Students are regularly prompted through the 10/2 strategy to verbally process information, and they use their Learning Logs to write or sketch what they've learned and make a personal connection to it. Through *Team Tasks*, students practice content in a “safe” environment, while *Picture File Cards* and *Expert Groups* scaffold student comprehension. *Project GLAD*® teachers constantly monitor student progress and adapt to student needs.

Integrated Unit Plan					
UNIT THEME: _____			TIME FRAME: _____		
ESSENTIAL QUESTION:					
Unit Concepts & Learning Targets:			Writing Focus:		
Foundational Skills Needed to Access the Core:					
Key Vocabulary: (CCD & Intentional Language)			Resources / Supplies Needed:		
Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary	Vocabulary
Tier 2:					
Tier 3:					
End of Unit Assessment: (Evidence of Student Learning) Identify Focus Standards Assessed READING, WRITING, SPEAKING & LISTENING, LANGUAGE					
Differentiation: (ELL, SWD, etc.)					
Summary of Student Results from End of Unit Assessment:					
Unit Reflection: (Does this unit reflect one or more of the “shifts” in Common Core instruction? How did the unit reflect academic rigor? How did this unit cognitively engage students? How did this unit engage students in collaborative learning and enhance their collaborative learning skills?)					

REFLECTION AND GROWTH: DOMAIN 4, Professionalism

Working with grade-level and/or other disciplines, professionalism is embedded through collaborative planning, integration, and data analysis. As part of the design, *Project GLAD*® units have *Home-School Connections* and *Letters from Students* to families detailing what they are learning. *Student Portfolios*, *Personal Explorations*, *Action Plans*, and *Rubrics* are used to support students and their families in understanding and communicating expectations. *Project GLAD*® teachers are always in a growth mindset, seeking out professional development and collegial feedback to improve their practices.

FINAL THOUGHTS

A *Project GLAD*® teacher is a highly effective educator who understands the standards deeply, plans thoroughly, delivers

and facilitates instruction in a rigorous and meaningful way, designs and analyzes assessments aligned to standards, and reflects on practices so that every student reaches the grade-level learning goals. *Project GLAD*® is a complete and integrated curricular and instructional design system. By implementing every component, you can be assured that students will achieve and you will be **BEYOND EFFECTIVE** on the NM TEACH Rubric!

For more information about the content of this article, please contact Vicki Chávez at vchavez@swreanm.org.

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