

**North Thurston Education Foundation  
Learning Improvement Grants**

**Application Form**

**Applicant's Name:** Kevin Rus

**Home Address:**

**Home Phone:**

**School Name:** North Thurston High School

**School Phone:** (360) 412-4411 ext 41814

**Proposal Date:** 2008-2009 school year

**Title of Proposed Educational Improvement Project:** What is the area of interest and focus of the project?

- **Improving student writing by developing skills to distinguish between fact (concrete details) and opinion (commentary) and identifying details to support elaborate their writing.**
- **Using technology to connect class content to students' lives through pictures and writing.**

**Needs and Objectives:** Why do you want to undertake this project? What are the results you want to accomplish through this proposed project?

- Students in special education are having difficulty understanding the difference between facts and opinions, and finding details to support and elaborate their thinking and writing.
- Students will use digital cameras to take pictures that relate to the content of class: democracy, freedom, hatred, misunderstanding, racism, exploration, etc.
- The students will then use those pictures to develop and write an essay.
  - The picture will provide concrete visual information for the student to use in his/her writing.
  - The visual cue will help the students distinguish fact (what is happening in the picture) between opinion (what they think of the event).
  - The picture will also provide a cue for the students elaborate writing as they will be able to describe what was happening before the picture was take, as well as what happened after.
- I and the students will use the projector to share their pictures and writing.
  - The projector will allow me to model how to process for students
  - Students will share their writing and reading to the whole class. We will be able to examine both the pictures and the writing as a whole class.
  - By using other students' pictures to elaborate their writing students will practice using a source that is not their own to develop their writing, but still support it with the concrete visual information.
  - Students will get practice peer editing as a large group. By doing the writer will be able to improve his/her writing. More importantly the editors (the rest of the class) will learn how to improve their writing as well. Students in special education tend to focus on one area they are good at (spelling, paragraph indentation, thesis statements). Whole class editing will allow them to share their expertise and serve at the teacher.
- Upon completion of the project students will be able to distinguish between facts and opinion in their writing. They will also develop skills that will help them elaborate and support their thinking and writing.

**Description of Educational Improvement:** What student learning requirements including Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) and Grade Level Expectations (GLEs) will you address: What will you do to address them? What instructional strategies or materials will you use?

- **EALRs/GLEs**
  - Writing
    - EALR 3: The student writes clearly and effectively
      - 3.1 Establish and maintains a manageable thesis and elaborates using details
    - EALR 4: The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of written work
      - 4.1.1 Analyzes and evaluate writing using established criteria
      - 4.1.2 Analyzes and evaluates own writing using established criteria.
  - Communication
    - EALR 2: Students use communication skills and strategies to interact and work effectively with others
      - 2.2 work collaboratively, solve problems, and perform tasks
    - EALR 3: The student uses communication skills and strategies to effectively present ideas and one's self in a variety of situations.
      - 3.2 Uses media and other resources to support presentation
- **What will you do the address them?**
  - Writing EALRs/GLEs:
    - Student journals for tracking writing
    - Place student writing examples up on screen in class to have students evaluate the writing improve each others' writing
    - Place student pictures on screen for students to practice using sources not their own to develop writing.
    - Access to rubrics for essays
    - Students will use pictures to find facts (concrete details) to support their paragraphs.
    - Students will use pictures to cue opinion (commentary) to support their writing.
    - Students will elaborate their writing with details that happened before or after picture was taken.
    - Students will connect classroom content to their lives through writing.
  - Communication EALRs
    - Students will use cameras, computers and projector to present their work
    - Students will work as a whole class and small groups to evaluate peer work.
    - Students will clearly communicate when
      - EALR 3: The student uses communication skills and strategies to effectively present ideas and one's self in a variety of situations.
      - 3.2 Uses media and other resources to support presentation
- **What instructional strategies or materials will you use?**
  - Doug Fisher and Nancy Frey writing to learn strategies: writing will connect content to student lives. Through writing students will develop better understanding of writing process.
  - Robert Marzano: creating metaphors (pictures to represent concepts), nonlinguistic representations (pictures to represent concepts), cooperative learning (peer editing)
  - Maryann Manning, visual cues strategies, and Gerald Grow, writing for visual thinkers strategies: Using pictures will help the students find the details to elaborate and support their writing.
  - Jane Schaffer essay development: This will provide students with a format, so we can focus on content.
  - Media projector: whole class peer review sessions, share student work, and to model process

**Intended Impact on Student Learning:** How will the proposed project assist student learning? What will students know and do as a result of this project?

- Technology (student): will allow students to:
  - Become independent learners by extending the learning outside of the classroom.
  - Connect their experience and lives to classroom content
  - Have a visual support for their writing
  - Share their work with peers
  - Edit peer work as a whole class
- Writing: Students will improve writing scores:
  - through peer editing
  - by learning to elaborate writing
  - by learning to distinguish between facts and opinions
- Technology (teacher):
  - Teacher will be able to model writing and edition process to whole class and share examples of writing to students through visual presentations that will engage student learning (good for visual learners)

**Evaluation Plan:** Action Research is an integral feature of the mini-grant program. What evidence will you collect to demonstrate your project is making a difference to student learning? What types of data, assessments and evaluations will you use?

Data collection:

- Pre-assessment essay – before they begin program
- Essay scores
  - break down components of essay and track where successes and problems are
- Final written and photo essay
- Student comments on positives and negatives of program.

Assessments:

- Pre-assessment essay
- Essays 3-4 times a month
- Final written and photo essay

**Project Report:** Recipients of the mini-grant will be expected to provide a description of their project proposal at the annual meeting of the North Thurston Education on January 27, 2009, and to make a report at the following annual meeting in 2010. The complete report is also to be submitted in writing to the Foundation board. Please indicate your commitment to submit reports both orally to the Foundation and in written form that may be shared with other educators and posted on the website.

- I commit to both an oral and written report to the foundation and give permission to share my work with other educators.

**Proposed Budget:** How will you use the \$1,500 in mini-grant funds? What are the needs and costs involved in the proposed project?

Staff development activities:	\$ _____
Materials and supplies:	\$ <u>LCD/Multimedia projector= \$650+, five digital cameras</u> = \$660, cables \$50
Substitute reimbursement:	\$ _____
Other costs:	\$ _____
 Total:	 \$ <u>1400</u>

**Principal/Supervisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_