

EFAC DREAMS

Education for All Children;

Developing Responsible, Educated, Aware, and Motivated Students

Mission:

EFAC DREAMS (Education for All Children; Developing Responsible, Educated, Aware, and Motivated, Students) is a pilot program designed to work closely with schools to create learning environments that encourage students to become critical thinkers and problem solvers, effective communicators, responsible global citizens, and future leaders. We believe that by bringing children from around the world into classrooms, we promote rigor, relevance and relationships in learning. Children all over the world are able to reach their full potential through education. Helping students understand and take action on global issues will positively impact student learning and the future of our world.

Strategy:

EFAC DREAMS creates a multi-cultural experience by connecting students from multiple countries and varying cultural backgrounds. The platform for the connection is the non-profit organization Education For All Children (EFAC). Education For All Children's goal is to provide scholarships to exceptionally bright and underprivileged secondary and university students in developing worlds. EFAC currently operates in Kenya, East Africa.

(educationforallchildren.org)

EFAC Dreams brings an authentic learning experience to the classroom. It provides an opportunity for students to build relationships and communicate with EFAC scholarship students from Kenya. Standards are aligned with instruction to develop student leadership skills and enhance global awareness. Students learn what it means to give back and begin to understand how they can help make a difference in the world.

Objectives:

We will create connections and build relationships between the EFAC scholars and American students through rigorous and relevant instruction:

- Work with teachers to create lessons that promote 21st century skills (critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, collaboration, technology, media and information literacy).
- Help students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, ambiguous, and proactive and personally challenging.
- Develop knowledge, perspectives, and skills for global citizenship.
- Promote an increased understanding that our lives are intimately connected to others across our global community.
- Develop a global education unit that can be integrated with existing primary and secondary school social studies curriculum/programs.
- Evaluate the impact of this teaching and learning experience.

Pilot Program Process:

The Kenya American School Program was conducted in six second and third grade Colorado classrooms. The process began by meeting with the teachers and examining their curriculum. A standards-based social studies unit was collaboratively planned to fit the needs of the students in that particular school. The unit focused on building rigor, relevance and relationships for the 21st century learner. The unit was designed to integrate geography, civics, and economics with a large emphasis on technology, reading and writing.

Throughout the unit, students used interactive web pages to access information needed for lessons. These content-based web pages contained photos, video clips, and links to websites. Scavenger hunts were designed to help students learn about geography. Opportunities to locate places around the world and gain awareness about geography-based problems were provided. Students communicated with EFAC scholars through letters and the use of technology.

The instructional plans were implemented in classrooms. Students learned what it meant to be a global citizen. Lessons were planned and delivered with a focus on technology, critical thinking and problem solving skills, and cooperative learning. Groups of students worked together to create PowerPoint presentations. Each cooperative group created and delivered a PowerPoint presentation that included information about their learning, as well as a fundraising plan that would generate enough funds to sponsor an EFAC scholar for the following year. Students recorded their thoughts and learning in reflection logs throughout the unit.

An EFAC ambassador worked closely with schools to adapt, adjust, and evaluate the impact of the pilot program.

Teachers' reflections included the following statements, "The lessons are engaging for students. The connection and communication with an EFAC Scholar creates the relevance for learning. Besides the academic rigor, students gain life long skills and a deeper understanding of a global world. Students are able to see that their knowledge, efforts, and achievements can make a difference and create lasting effects in our world. Children's hearts and souls are connecting, while global knowledge and skills are developing."

Students increased their global awareness and experienced a sense of pride and accomplishment as a result of this unit of study. The leadership skills students developed and applied will stay with them for a lifetime.