

**Section of the USP states that Tucson Unified School ....**

Over the past months the GATE department in partnership with the Language Acquisition Department has been working to facilitate the creation of Spanish Literacy Kits to support the instruction and learning of students enrolled in the GATE Two Way Dual Language program in grades 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> at Hollinger Elementary. These kits will be as closely comparable as possible to the existing English counterparts, taking into consideration two factors, quality and appropriate texts in Spanish on certain topics are somewhat limited and the difference in the budget availability. Since the texts will support the teachers in creating a rigorous environment in their classroom, the current TWDL teachers were directly involved in the selection of the texts to be included in the kits.

The GATE Spanish Literacy Kits will consist of fiction and nonfiction text, with a heavier emphasis on nonfiction to support shift number 3 of the AZCCRS, building knowledge through content rich non-fiction. The informational reading selections will include content-rich nonfiction in history/social studies and the sciences that will support students in systematically developing knowledge about the world. Some of the kit themes are aligned to the unifying concept of the TUSD's curriculum maps for each grade level, and others are aligned to the themes of the GATE English Literacy Kits, especially in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade where the TWDL model calls for teaching the content 50% of the time in English and 50% if the time in Spanish.

In addition, the texts for each grade level will vary in reading levels, for example the kit for 1<sup>st</sup> grade will have books varying from Pre-K to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading level. The main reason for this is that the GATE TWDL program is accessible all students who meet the GATE requirements regardless of their language. This means that students who have never been exposed to or taught in Spanish may enter the GATE TWDL in 1<sup>st</sup> grade or any grade, so having books at lower levels will help facilitate the acquisition of the Spanish language for those students. In addition, the reading levels of GATE students vary, just as they do for students not in the program, so providing variety of reading level texts facilitates the teacher's ability to differentiate instruction in accordance with her/his students' reading abilities

Furthermore, some of the texts selected are part of a series that includes a teacher resource kit which contains lessons that align to the AZCCRS, videos links of topics that can be used to access students prior knowledge, projectable electronic copies of the texts, topic discussion cards, etc. All these resource will help the teacher create units of study that will be more comprehensible to the learners.

The texts in the kits will be utilized to support the implementation of the TUSD K-5 Integrated Literacy Continuum, see the following link: <http://tusd1.org/resources/curriculum/ela/K-5LiteracyContinuum.pdf>. Teachers will use them to conduct guided reading & close reading lesson that will emphasis the development of academic vocabulary and the ability to answer text dependent question. The texts will be made accessible to students in their literacy stations, such as read to self or read to a partner. In addition, the text in these kits will facilitate the

continued implementation of the Literacy Squared Strategies, Lotta Lara and Dictado, that have been the focus of the teachers' quarterly professional development and coach sessions throughout the year.

More importantly, students will utilize the text to carry out reciprocal teaching in small group reading sessions. They will use the information in the text to help them complete their task in their roles as summarizers, questioners, clarifiers and predictors. Some of the texts will also be used as mentor text to facilitate students' ability to identify text structures, which will allow them to use those structures as they complete informational writing assignments that focus on opinion, explanatory and research writing. Since many of the text are linked to the history/social studies and science themes in district's grade level curriculum maps, students will have easy access to resources in Spanish at varying reading level that will provide them with evidence to support their ideas.

In conclusion, providing the funding for the Spanish GATE Literacy Kits will ensure that the GATE TWDL program continues to maintain "rigor", as defined by Barbara Blackburn in her book Rigor is NOT a Four-Letter Word:

"True rigor is creating an environment in which each student is expected to learn at high levels, each student is supported so he or she can learn at high levels, and each student demonstrates learning at high levels."

The TWDL teachers at Hollinger in partnership with the district can fulfill Blackburn's definition of rigor by supporting the purchase of the texts that will comprise the GATE Spanish Literacy Kits.