Culturally Responsive Online K-12 Curriculum for the Native Learners

Abstract: How can we effectively integrate culturally-relevant, standards-based, multimedia into the Native American K-12 curriculum? This Poster/Demonstration displays how the TECH Share Project at Northern Arizona University has incorporated culturally-relevant material into interactive online curriculum that primarily serves the Navajo Reservation K-12 school districts. Demonstration participants will assess and provide feedback on the TECH Share curriculum as well as view the Traditional Navajo Multimedia Gallery available online at URL http://nettrain.unm.edu.

Proposal: The TECH Share Project at Northern Arizona University (NAU), funded through the Navajo Education Technology Consortium’s Star Schools Grant, is in its fourth year of producing technology driven, standards-based, culturally relevant curriculum. The project primarily serves 22 K-12 school districts on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. NAU is one of six partners participating in the project including Arizona State University, Dine College, National Indian Telecommunications Institute, New Mexico State University, and the University of New Mexico. One of the primary goals of the TECH Share Project at NAU is assisting the bicultural student to become successful in the dominant society while also maintaining and empowering them with regard to their traditional upbringing. Education is used to help preserve, rather than replace, Native American tradition. Consequently, the curriculum helps the student obtain power and self-identity that ultimately encourages lifelong learning and gives the student true purpose in life.

This session proposes to showcase the diverse modules created by the partners in the project and to provide an overview of how to access the modules including technical and plug-in requirements. Both the modules and the asset management database will be demonstrated. The NETtrain address is http://nettrain.unm.edu and the modules can be viewed through Tech Share menu tab.

The culturally relevant curriculum modules are interactive, multimedia-rich, web pages that are delivered to teachers and students via NETtrain. NETtrain serves as the online portal for the modules and other technology related resources for teachers. The portal provides a database search engine to assist teachers with finding modules linked to a particular state standard or by key word. The modules are linked to four sets of standards: Arizona State, New Mexico State, Utah State, and Dine cultural standards. In addition, the portal has a Multimedia Gallery that includes images, audio, video, and animations that teachers can use royalty free to produce their own materials for classroom use.