

Paper No. 29-11

Presentation Time: 11:40 AM-12:00 PM

FOSTERING EXCITEMENT FOR SCIENCE IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH TEACHING LOCAL GEOLOGY

KINGSBURY, Esther M., Department of Geosciences, Idaho State University, Dept. of Geosciences, Mail stop 8072, Pocatello, ID 83209, kingesth@isu.edu and THOMASON, Carri, Geosciences, Idaho State University, Department of Geosciences, Mail Stop 8072, Pocatello, ID 83209

Idaho State University partners with Pocatello School District # 25 through the National Science Foundation GK-12 project. Currently three Pocatello Community Charter School combined third and fourth grade classrooms are partnered with an ISU graduate student. The partnership's primary goal is to generate interest in science through the example of teaching geology of the Yellowstone Hotspot. Pocatello's proximity to Yellowstone National Park and the Eastern Snake River Plain provides an exceptional opportunity for elementary students to understand how passage of the North American Plate over the Yellowstone Hotspot has impacted the local landscape. Students participated in trips to Yellowstone National Park, Craters of the Moon National Monument, Kings Bowl lava field and Lariat Cave lava tube. Future trips will explore local basalt flows and tuff deposits in Pocatello. Additionally, students complete bi-weekly labs teaching concepts like hand sample analysis, lava flow characteristics, affects of heating and cooling, plate tectonics, and earth layers. Broader scientific ideas like viscosity, density, convection, and the scientific method are emphasized.

This partnership reduces fear and increases elementary student enthusiasm for geology. Students can discuss basic geologic concepts and are more aware of and curious about the local landscape. Field trips are many students' first visits to National Parks and Monuments. Student response to trips has prompted parents to further visit public lands with their children. Junior high and high school partners have commented on older students' disinterest in science. Elementary students of our partnership are highly enthusiastic about geology and some are now talking about becoming scientists. This partnership may instill interest in science that persists through later years. The suggestion is that the elementary level may be fundamental to generating future competence and confidence in science education.

[Cordilleran Section \(104th Annual\) and Rocky Mountain Section \(60th Annual\) Joint Meeting \(19-21 March 2008\)](#)

[General Information for this Meeting](#)

Session No. 29--Booth# 0

[New Developments in Earth Science Education](#)

University of Nevada-Las Vegas: Student Union 209

8:00 AM-12:00 PM, Friday, 21 March 2008

Geological Society of America *Abstracts with Programs*, Vol. 40, No. 1, p. 91

© Copyright 2008 The Geological Society of America (GSA), all rights reserved. Permission is hereby granted to the author(s) of this abstract to reproduce and distribute it freely, for noncommercial purposes. Permission is hereby granted to any individual scientist to download a single copy of this electronic file and reproduce up to 20 paper copies for noncommercial purposes advancing science and education, including classroom use, providing all reproductions include the complete content shown here, including the author information. All other forms of reproduction and/or transmittal are prohibited without written permission from GSA Copyright Permissions.
