TTSD Best Practices in Social Studies

In TTSD, we believe that a quality Social Studies program is integrative, addressing the totality of the human experience over time and space, connecting with the past, linked to the present, and looking ahead to the future. It is characterized by…

A curriculum that…

- promotes civic responsibility, awareness, and engagement.
- explores multiple perspectives, time periods and cultures.
- adapts for the specific needs of diverse learners.
- is multi-modal (reading, writing, speaking, listening), rich, and organized to be easily accessed by the teacher and students.
- actively engages students by placing them in roles and situations from historical periods, or encompassing social science concepts.
- Intentionally incorporates and actively adapts to the cultural diversity of our school, community and world. Honors and engages the identities of adolescents.
- connects to today and strives to represent all voices, with a specific focus on historically marginalized groups.
- Creates opportunities for critical thinking and student evaluation of sources.

Instructional practices that…

- cultivate reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills.
- engage all learners through a variety of interactive strategies (i.e. small groups, gradual release of responsibility, collaborative conversations).
- are differentiated to meet students' rate of learning and level of learning, based on formative assessment data.
- develop skills to synthesize and evaluate informational text.
- identify and analyze the value and limitations in primary and secondary documents.
- require students to write argumentative text using claims and evidence.
- Provide clear learning targets, guided practice, and formative checks for understanding.

Assessment practices that…

- promote proficiency at a grade level standard for all students, with appropriate scaffolding for their individual needs, expecting students to demonstrate critical thinking with Depth of Knowledge level three and four questions.
- provide personalized, ongoing feedback in a variety of meaningful ways (i.e. peer to peer, teacher to student, self-assessment with rubrics, technology).
- prompt students to synthesize multiple sources on a central topic or theme.
- require students to select and integrate textual evidence to support a claim.
- guide instruction on an ongoing basis through collaboration and calibration between colleagues.
- prompt students to critically reflect through writing.
- allows for and encourages students to articulate their unique ideas/perspectives.
- are structured to support student learning and provide clear approaches to improvement.