GEMS-NET: Integrating Natural Resource Science into a Balanced Science Curriculum in Grades K - 8. (A01-gorres080102-Poster)

Authors:

- J.H.Gorres - *University of Rhode Island*
- B.J.Young - *University of Rhode Island*
- B.Sullivan - *University of Rhode Island*
- R.Pockalny - *University of Rhode Island*
- J.A.Amador - *University of Rhode Island*

Abstract:

Science education reform in K to 16 is one of the national priorities of NSF and professional organizations. Present reform is based on several pivots: hands-on, minds on kits; constructivism, a balanced curriculum; professional development; materials support. GEMS-NET curriculum covers earth and space, life, physical science and technology. Three of these themes are covered per grade level. The natural resources science strand crystallized from the science kit matrix. Earth science kits such as Pebbles, Sand and Silt in 1st grade, Water in 3rd, Land and Water in 4th grade, are complemented by life science kits like Plants in 1st, Insects in 2nd, Plant Growth 3rd, Microworlds 5th, Ecosystems in 6th grade. Physical science kits, including Solids and Liquids in 2nd, Sinking and Floating in 5th grade, further support the strand. Children learn science knowledge and process. Scientists are involved in professional development support and curricular development. The program is reaching over 700 classrooms in Rhode Island. GEMS-NET faculty from the University are changing their teaching style to include student-centered, problem-based learning in Natural Resource Majors and improve the science education for elementary education majors.

Corresponding Author Information:

Josef Gorres
University of Rhode Island
109 Coastal Institute Kingston
Kingston, RI 02881

phone: 401 874 7022
fax: 401 874 4561
e-mail: josef@uri.edu

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