**Statement of Purpose: 3rd grade Science**

In the news there is constant talk about how American schools are falling behind the rest of the world in the subjects of math and science. In order to make up for this deficiency, the United States is on a push towards getting American school children educated in math and science. We are trying to construct classrooms where children can be innovators instead of by-standers. However, with the constant strain of No Child Left Behind, schools are struggling to meet the demands of the world. According to the Phi Delta Kappan, “Schools are spending more time on reading and math, sometimes at the expense of subjects not tested,” (Jennings, & Rentner, 2006). The Phi Delta Kappan also stated, “To find additional time for reading and math, 71% of school districts are reducing time spent on other subjects in elementary schools,” (Jennings, & Rentner, 2006).

The curriculum design unit of rocks and minerals in third grade has numerous benefits for not only the children, but for the future of our world. This unit will allow the children to connect nature to their classroom. Students will be able to observe and measure the different characteristics of rocks which include size, shape, color, and texture. “The characteristics of the rock can help to determine the environment in which it was formed,” (“New science education,” 2011). In addition, the study of rocks can help the students apply the knowledge they acquire to learn about the layers of the Earth. There are many aspects the students will learn about including the different kinds of rocks and the characteristics of rocks that will help them to possibly solve some of the future problems. For example, their knowledge will help them to better understand weather, erosion, and the changes on Earth’s surface. In addition, they can learn about some of the problems that the Earth has encountered before. “By studying how the Earth worked in the past, we can better understand how we are working today,” (Scanlan, 2011). As children grow up, there are many misconceptions they have about why things occur, and it is our job as educators to correct these misconceptions. Rocks and minerals need to be taught in third grade to guide students. One main misconception with rocks is that children feel that rocks and minerals aren’t important to their lives. “Almost every product we use in daily life contains or depends on minerals that have to be mined,” (Hapkiewicz, 1999). “It is estimated that every person in the United States will use more than a million pounds of rocks, minerals, and metals during their lifetime,” (Rocks and minerals). Students need to be aware of the rocks and minerals around them and how they influence their life. Without rocks and minerals, life would be hard to live, and it’s important that students realize how important they really are.

**References**

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