

Texas Region 10 Delivers Spanish Instruction via Web

A leading-edge approach to delivering instructional content over the internet is found in the Region 10 Education Service Center, located in central northeast Texas. Building on a long tradition of broadcast and satellite transmission of educational programming, Region 10's Digital Media Resources department is moving towards web-based, downloadable and streaming video applications.

The Texas State Legislature established 20 regional service centers for the purpose of providing services to the school districts within a defined geographic region. Region 10 Education Service Center provides services that impact more than 500,000 students and 40,000 educators in 81 public school districts, several charter schools, and numerous private schools in the 8 counties (and portions of a 9th) in the region that includes the Dallas metropolitan area.

Texas education service centers respond to the needs and wants of the public school districts which are in the corresponding service areas. Region 10 has long been unique in its offering of broadcast, satellite, and now web-based instructional content. Digital Media Resources currently airs over 150 series, supporting

all areas of the curriculum in Grades K-12, during the school year. These series are curriculum based, and previewed and rated by classroom teachers before purchase.

"All of the video series available from Region 10 are aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)," notes Debrah Harman, utilization specialist in the Digital Media Resources department. "On the Region 10 website, a teacher can select a subject area and corresponding TEKS, and be directed to appropriate instructional content. This is a key benefit of Region 10's offerings."

"Spanish is part of our community, part of Texas, and part of our nation."

*Christine Motes,
Houston Elementary,
Lancaster ISD*

Elementary Spanish Instruction

Due to the large and growing Spanish-speaking population in Region 10's service area, parents, teachers and administrators recognize the importance of learning Spanish in Texas. Yet there is a shortage of bilingual elementary teachers. Region 10's

Digital Media Resources department helps school districts offer Spanish instruction by broadcasting three elementary Spanish series, including ***Español para ti***, as well as several secondary-level series.

In the 2003-2004 school year, Digital Media Resources is offering web-based, downloadable and streaming video-on-demand. "We are very excited to offer the content digitally," says Harman. "We believe more teachers will take advantage of our programs through the internet because of the increased flexibility and ease of use in their own classrooms."

The Houston Elementary Experience

Houston Elementary School in the Lancaster Independent School District (ISD) is able to offer Spanish instruction by tuning in to Region 10's broadcasts of ***Español para ti***.

Lancaster ISD, located just south of the city of Dallas, is a relatively small suburban district with a total of 4,350 students in Grades PK-12. Houston Elementary, a Title I school, serves a working and middle class community where the student population is currently 44% Hispanic, 38% African-American and 17% Caucasian.

The area around Houston Elementary School has experienced explosive growth in the last few years as many new housing developments have been constructed. Many of the newcomers to the community are native Spanish speakers.

"The need for Spanish language instruction and bilingual education is very clear," states Christine Motes, a former Grade 2 teacher at Houston Elementary who is moving into a bilingual teaching position. "Spanish is part of our community, part of Texas, and part of our nation."

At Houston Elementary, teachers and administrators made the commitment to offering Spanish language instruction to all elementary students. After investigating various alternatives, the broadcast curriculum offered by the Region 10 Education Service Center was chosen as a solid piece of curriculum which would deliver exposure to the Spanish language at Houston Elementary. **Español para ti** is a cost-effective program and requires little preparation time on the part of a non-Spanish speaking classroom teacher.

Positive Outcomes

The benefits of teaching Spanish are manifold among the students at Houston Elementary. All students, both non-Spanish and native speakers, participate in the **Español para ti** lessons. Non-Spanish speakers are given the opportunity to learn another language at an early age when



*Children don't hesitate to speak Spanish with **Español para ti's** friendly puppet characters.*

it is easiest for them to learn a second language. For these children, being proficiently bilingual will provide an economic opportunity and advantage in the workplace, according to Motes.

Native speakers of Spanish also benefit from the **Español para ti** lessons. **Español para ti** introduces a richer vocabulary than many of the children hear at home, as well as standard Castilian vocabulary and construction.

Motes continues, "By offering Spanish to all students at Houston Elementary, we are acknowledging the diversity that is the reality of where we live. Our native speakers feel accepted and validated during the Spanish lessons because non-Spanish speaking teachers and students look to them for the correct pronunciations and accent."

Each year, Spanish language becomes a greater part of the school day at Houston Elementary. The entire school learns a Spanish phrase of the week, an **Español para ti** activity that has been expanded by the teachers and administrators. These phrases focus on basic interpersonal communications skills, allowing the students to navigate in society and to control language in a variety of settings. Some of the phrases that the students have learned in Spanish are: "Thank you for helping me;" "Excuse me please;" and "Have a good day."

The Future

The web-based **Español para ti** application is highly anticipated at Houston Elementary. "The flexibility of streaming video-on-demand will help teachers use the program more consistently," suggests Motes. "All of the classrooms at Houston Elementary have internet connections. Being able to stream any **Español para ti** lesson at any time will be so convenient for the teacher, and students will be able to get so much more from the program."

For additional information on the **Español para ti** program, please contact us toll-free at 1-800-648-2970 and visit our Web site at www.WrightGroup.com.