“Tools for Teachers: Didactic Materials for Literacy and Math Instruction”

Presenters:

Rebeca Martinez

Rebeca Martinez, MA is the Education Programs Coordinator for the DREAM Project in the Dominican Republic and in her role is in charge of expanding DREAM’s programs and improving teacher professional development. She has worked in education in Eastern Europe, the United States and Latin America and is dedicated to helping all children become fluent readers and critical thinkers. During her years in the classroom, she frequently taught in schools or programs with few resources and has learned to create instructional tools from limited materials. She has observed the positive impact the use of engaging materials can have on the ability of any student to learn.

The Idea

Having foundational skills in math and literacy are imperative to any child’s future academic success. For some students, however, gaining those abilities can prove to be an enormous challenge. The use of didactic materials, which teachers can easily create from inexpensive materials, can greatly increase the level of success students experience in learning to read or
improve their basic number sense.

Participants in this session will learn how to make and use several materials that are appropriate for students who are working on their basic math and literacy skills. They will be able to use these tools in the classroom to provide differentiated classroom instruction and to encourage independent work on the part of students.

**Why it Matters**

Didactic materials can positively impact the classroom in several ways:

- They significantly increase the engagement level of the students
- They allow for students to work independently so that teachers can focus on the specific needs of individual students.
- They can greatly boost students’ levels of learning.

**What we know**

Children learn best when they are given the opportunity to engage with abstract concepts in concrete ways, and didactic materials give students the chance to learn both visually and kinesthetically. By making learning to read or do math a sensory experience we know that children are more likely to gain the initial skills they need in order to continue benefitting from their education.

**Agenda**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.55am-11.00am</td>
<td>Technical testing (settings, and hardware tests).</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00am-11.05am</td>
<td>Introduction of the Inter-American Teacher Education Network (ITEN) and Webinar Series (Adriana Vilela, Education Specialist, OAS).</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.05am-11.45am</td>
<td>Rebeca Martinez Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.45am-12.00pm</td>
<td>Q &amp; A /discussion.</td>
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*Time Expressed in Local Time of Washington, DC UTC/GMT - 4h (Eastern Daylight Time)*