ABOUT THE READING AND WRITING PROJECT

Authored By: CNG’s Literacy Coaches

The Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) is a Teachers College Columbia University ongoing research initiative, that began almost three decades ago, under the leadership of Ms. Lucy Calkins and other eminent researchers, whose goal was to raise the quality of literacy learning, thus making all students, regardless of ethnicity or economic status, eligible for admission into a good university and/or ready to join the work force, at the end of their high school education.

This initiative, along with the adoption of the Common Core Standards, already operating in 46 of the 50 states of the United States, has also been embraced by Colegio Nueva Granada, that will soon become the first TCRWP member school in Latin America, when the second round of TCRWP training (the first round occurred in August 2012, before school started this year) has taken place, between November 2012 and February 2013, throughout our school.

Colegio Nueva Granada is staffed with committed literacy coaches¹ who have received intensive training at Teachers College in New York City and who have developed a comprehensive three-year plan for full implementation of both the Common Core Standards and the Units for Teaching Reading and Writing, that will allow a progressive acquisition of the reading and writing skills for all students, from K-4 to 12th grade, necessary to enter a highly competitive local or foreign university and/or the workforce in any country of the world. All levels of our school have begun implementing components of

¹ Becky McKay, Joy Verbon, Stephanie Steckerl, and Allison Lee
TC’s workshop model. By the end of next school year it will be fully implemented throughout the school.

In TCRWP’s own words, “TCRWP is currently working with the New York City Department of Education to create performance assessments that enable teachers to track students’ performances in relation to the standards. Hundreds of schools are now using the new performance assessments we have developed to assess readers’ progress along the strands highlighted in the Common Core, and we will soon embark on a gigantic effort to learn from those data. Meanwhile, we are currently developing two new writing continua, aligned to the Common Core Standards, one for opinion/argument writing and one for informational writing. These continua will also be closely aligned to the narrative continuum both in content and structure. Studied side by side, the three continua will show how the different types of writing that are highlighted in the Common Core Standards are connected and how work in one bolsters the others.”

We feel that if our school is aligned to the Common Core Standards in literacy, and develops a strong reading and writing bilingual program K-12, in English and Spanish to meet these standards, our students will soon be graduating with the best literacy and critical thinking skills available, in order to successfully meet the continuously more stringent standards for leadership and service in the 21st century.

This initiative is an effective way of honoring our traditions as we confidently make our way into a visionary future. [Revised October 17th, 2012 [529 words]]

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