CRAFTING MEANINGFUL RELECTIONS FOR ePORTFOLIO
by Kris Sward

Evidence: Quality Post

OLTD Outcome Addressed: Develop skills to optimize learning experiences through personalization based on characteristics, needs, stages of development, current personalized learning mandates, and misconceptions.

In order to show evidence of my learning in 502 I chose to share a blog post that I created to showcase a 'lightbulb' moment that I had in my classroom. One of the most important things that I see this program providing me with is tools and ideas to take back into the classroom right away so that I can improve my teaching practice and the learning environment for my students. This post currently resides in my personal webspace under the 'where am I now' tab.

When starting the OLTD program we were introduced to many exciting programs, tools and activities to use in our own teaching practice. At one point we were introduced to personal projects done with Avi Luxombourg's class that were meant to encourage students to make an improvement to the world in which they lived. When watching the video presentation I was moved by how much students were doing to help others and recognized what a great project it was.

I took the premise back to my own classroom and introduced it to my students as a way to help out others and make a difference in the world. And now, a month and a half later, they are proving just how community focused they are in the projects that they are bringing forth in order to help others in their school, community and world. I am so impressed with the initiative they have all taken, the projects that they have come up with and the difference they are making in the world.

One of the key aspects of this project was the amount of direction or control I DIDN'T have. I simply raised the question 'what bugs you?' and directed the class in watching a few videos to motivate their sense of helping others and encourage them to plan out their projects. Each student chose a charity or project that was close to their own heart and related to their own personal interests. Students have chosen to fundraise for various charities, organize garbage collections to help beautify our surroundings and collected items that will help provide necessities to those in need. The reason that they were so excited about helping others was because they got to choose how and who they would help. And because they are such amazing kids!

A large part of the project will be to reflect upon the projects and understand what made them work, what didn't and what could have made them better. We are not quite to that part yet, but I am eager to see where they can take their learning, and their helping, next!