MC900027489[1]MC900027489[1]

------La Clase de Español------

March 4, 2012

Dear Parents,

I have exciting news to share! We have begun an in depth study of the country of Ecuador. To enhance our learning, 4th grade Spanish students in Señora Nelson’s classes will be communicating with 3rd and 4th grade students from Guayaquil, Ecuador! This is our opportunity to use our Spanish in an authentic way, while learning about a unique Hispanic culture. Mrs. Nelson has partnered up with Mrs. Leisch, an elementary teacher from Ecuador, in order to make this learning opportunity a reality. Every student will be partnered with a student from Ecuador. We will begin communicating via written letters at first. Then, about once a week, we will communicate using a web blog. And finally we will have the opportunity to Skype with our pals, allowing students to see and talk with their partners. Sra. Nelson’s students will showcase their learning from this experience at the end of the school year with projects they create in class. The students are very excited about this language/cultural exchange. We hope you are also.

To answer some of the questions you may have, please read on. Feel free to contact me if you have further questions or concerns. Sincerely,

Jennifer Nelson

[jnelson@ashwaubenon.k12.wi.us](mailto:jnelson@ashwaubenon.k12.wi.us)

**What is a web blog?**

A web blog, or blog as they are commonly called, is a special type of web page that can be created and easily updated using a web browser. Each entry has a comments section where members of the blog may leave messages for one another. The specific blog we will be using is Kidblog.org.

“Kidblog.org is built by teachers, for teachers, so students can get the most out of the blogging process. Kidblog meets the need for a **safe** and **simple** blogging platform suitable for elementary and middle school students. Kidblog provides an authentic, engaging, and interactive learning experience for the students. Its tools allow students to publish posts and participate in discussions within a secure classroom blogging community. Most importantly, Kidblog allows teachers to monitor and control all publishing activity within the classroom blogging community.” For more information visit the following website: <http://kidblog.org/about.php>.   
 Our goal is to allow the students an opportunity to utilize this technology and practice their Spanish, while at the same time sharing their thoughts with a real audience! The use of blogs as a form of communication has already transformed many fields within our society (journalism, politics, business), and will soon transform education as well.  This will be a valuable experience for the students for many reasons.

This blogging experience will be completely safe for your child. It is a protected blog. Only class members from Sra. Nelson’s and Sra. Leisch’s classes will have access to this blog. As the blog administrators, Sra. Nelson or Sra. Leisch must approve any comments left on the blog before being published on the site. The only personally identifying information included in the blog will be the students’ first names. There will be no mention of our school name or our location. Students will not be allowed to post their age, email address, photographs of themselves, or other sensitive information.

**What is Skype?**

[Skype](http://www.skype.com) is the most popular voice communication service in the world. You can use Skype to make PC to PC communication. You pay nothing more than the monthly Internet service, which you would anyway have paid without Skype. From anywhere in the world, you can make unlimited and totally free calls to anyone in the world provided that person is using Skype too. You have to arrange to meet that person online at a time. Then both parties can see and hear one another on their PCs.

If you want to know more, check out this great video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1mflr-kQlk>

**How can I find out more about our friends from Ecuador?**

We will be communicating with 3rd and 4th grade students from Guayaquil, Ecuador. They attend a private school called InterAmerican Academy. Feel free to check out their school’s website to learn more about them. [www.interamerican.edu.ec](http://www.interamerican.edu.ec)

You are welcome to learn about the city of Guayaquil and the country of Ecuador by using my Jog the web on Ecuador. <http://www.jogtheweb.com/run/bn7Vwy9RJd1e/Vamos-a-aprender-sobre-Ecuador> .