



Successful Impacts of L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program

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Two hundred Mansfield ISD students participated in a L.A.N.D.S. Intensive field investigation day.

We could express the impressive impact of TWA's L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program by simply reporting our 2017 numbers: how we took nearly 10,000 students outside to learn about their local ecosystems or how we engaged nearly 700 community volunteers to help us reach our mission. While the quantity of engagements is impressive, the best way to communicate our incredible impact is through the direct perspective of the educators who are implementing our programs every day in classrooms across Texas.

TWA has created many amazing programs, but it is truly the statewide community members who make our organization the influential powerhouse that it is!

In North Texas, Mansfield ISD's Asa Low Intermediate School has been involved with TWA's L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program for two years. In those two years, Patricia

Londono, a *L.A.N.D.S. trained teacher*, has used this program to increase her students' engagement in science and to deepen her community's engagement in their local ecosystem and open spaces.

Please enjoy getting to know Patricia Londono.

How long have you been an educator, why did you get into the education field, and what keeps you coming back every year?

I just completed my 13th year of teaching.

I became a teacher when I realized how much I enjoyed watching my own children learn and how much I loved creating those learning experiences for them.

The students keep me coming back year to year. The excitement they show when they finally master a concept or feel successful at something they are learning gives me so much pleasure. Sharing my

passion for science with them does not even feel like work. I get to play all day.

What about the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program piqued your interest and inspired you to attend a training?

I learned about the training while attending Hamline University's "Rivers to the Sea" training. Leslie and Sarah were there and demonstrated the rainfall simulator, and I could not wait to see what else they could teach me because the simulator is amazing. I was not disappointed.

Did you enjoy the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program Teacher training and why? How did it compare to previous trainings you have attended?

I loved the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Teacher training. My time was not wasted. Every minute was utilized to enhance my learning experience and those of my fellow teachers. Quality lessons and discussions took place throughout the training.

What were some of the most important or impactful elements to the training?

The most impactful part of the training besides the amazing lessons were the individuals brought in to teach the lessons. Having people come who are experts, and very knowledgeable about the content makes a huge difference in the quality of instruction given to the teachers. The lessons are TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, standardized by the state) based and hands on so they keep you busy and constantly learning. The location my training took place, Falcon



Point Ranch, was so beautiful, and it was great to experience the lessons in a natural habitat for the animals, birds, etc. that we were learning about.

How did it compare to previous trainings you have attended?

I consider myself to be a lifelong learner. I think as educators it is in our best interest, and that of our students to continue to grow and learn. Science is an ever-changing field of study; new things are being discovered all the time. In my 13 years of teaching I have been to many trainings around the state and a few outside of Texas. The L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Teacher training is by far one of the best science trainings I have attended.

Does implementing the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program lessons in the classroom engage students to a high degree? If so, please describe how you have seen this occur.

Using the L.A.N.D.S. lessons in my classroom keeps my students engaged and focused on the concept being presented.

1. They love the L.A.N.D.S. Outreach Distance Learning life cycle videos because they show the real life cycles.
2. The students continue to sing the water cycle song long after Field Investigation Day.
3. The activities pique their interests and gives them an opportunity to ask higher level questions.

If you have a favorite memory from a L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Field Investigation Day, please share it.

The pure joy on the face of a student who caught a fish. Absolutely priceless!

Describe the benefits you see that the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program provides to individual students and your school as a whole.

Students enjoy being outside. Some have never been that close to farm animals. Any experience that can be given outside with skilled and knowledgeable individuals (volunteers) helps them make a bond with the outdoors some have never experienced before.

I want them to have a better understanding of what it means to be stewards of the land and animal populations we are responsible for as the humans living on the land.

How do you think participating in the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program will affect your student population on a long-term time scale?

I honestly cannot say for certain, but my hope would be that some of them join 4-H or FFA when they get into high school to investigate agricultural careers. It only takes sparking the interest of one student to find someone who will help the environment.

Based from your previous experiences with the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive Program, how have you attempted or successfully engaged your community further into our program and/or your outdoor community?

I have encouraged other campuses to send teachers to the training; now you have two Mansfield schools involved in the program!

I invited the curriculum coordinator for the district to the Field Investigation Day so she could see what we were doing and to help encourage principals to send more Mansfield teachers to trainings. We will hopefully have a grant written for the fall to fund more teachers' attendance of the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive teacher trainings.

I am always encouraging students to visit the nature trails and parks in our city.



The Rainfall Simulator helps take complex concepts, such as how differing ground surface types effect ground water, and makes them exciting and easy to understand.

For a summary, would you encourage other teachers to become a L.A.N.D.S. Intensive trained teacher? Why or why not?

I would absolutely encourage other teachers to be trained. This is an amazing opportunity for their students. We have only been doing the program for two years and have already given these awesome experiences to almost 800 students.

The stream trailer and rainfall simulator are real life examples that help reinforce vocabulary by giving them a direct link to a visual. Students learn science by doing science. The L.A.N.D.S. program allows students to “do” science. ☺



Mansfield's Ron Whitson Agriculture Science Center provided an amazing venue for L.A.N.D.S. Intensive events, while also offering an incredible school program for the students.

