

An International Professional Development School Partnership: Belize 2015-2017

Participating Partners

- University of North Florida (UNF)/ College of Education and Human Services
- KuxLin Ha Gov,'t Primary School
- University of Belize (UB)
- Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Culture



2015

After initial orientation meetings, the program began in the Fall of 2015. Training of teachers at KuxLin Ha and Faculty at UB, along with Ministry personnel, took place in the country of Belize at various locations.

The first cohort of UNF students were introduced and placed at KuxLin Ha, where they were assigned to directing teachers. Students worked within the established curriculum and developed lesson plans appropriate for the grade and academic level of the students.

In addition to the classroom teaching, UNF students participated in after school and weekend activities with their directing teacher and their students and student families.



2016

Year two of our International Professional Development School project included a continuation of our year one efforts. Training continued with the teachers at KuxLin Ha and the administration. In addition to the ongoing training, a new cohort of UNF students traveled to Belize for a 3 week, mini internship. They worked with their directing teachers and designed appropriate lesson plans for all children, including those with special needs.

Purposeful efforts were made to include exposure to and participation in Belizean cultural events such as Garifuna Settlement day, Mayan Ruins, and Caye Caulker.



2017

- Year three reflected much of the same from the past two years with adjustments and modifications made as needed.
- Research conducted by Cubillos & Iivento (2013) found that students participating in short term programs also benefitted significantly from study abroad experiences.
- Below are some of the student reflections of their international experience.
- *"I was impressed by the caliber of teachers at Kuxlin Ha Government Primary School. Their ability to successfully teach children without the technology and resources I'm used to was inspiring."*
- *"Having the opportunity to be selflessly welcomed into another culture was a life changing experience."*

