



Helpful Hints to bring AIS Education into the Classroom



Note: These are the opinions and insights of Stefania Strzalkowska, Bayfield County AIS Project Coordinator, after her experience working with teachers and schools. There is no 'one size fits all' as each school district is unique. It is her hope, however, that her experience may help others facilitate this activity because there is a need, and because children are our future.

- 1) Call a school and talk to the principal about what you would like to do (present AIS information to classrooms, talk to teachers and give them curriculum materials, etc.).
- 2) Ask the principal which teacher is the most active with their students. Target one teacher per school—he/she will be your best advocate for others to get on board. Get contact information for that teacher.
- 3) Contact that teacher with a short, informative email, and then after a few days, call him/her (she might not have looked at her email yet).
- 4) “Is now a good time to talk?” give a short & concise summary of what you would like to do and if necessary visit the teacher sometime during the day to talk one on one.
- 5) Set a date to do a presentation and bring specimens and handouts (WildCards and stickers are good!)
- 6) At the same time as arranging a classroom presentation date, or in lieu of, ask the teacher when the school’s in-service dates are and if you can be on the agenda for one of them. You will probably have to go through the Science Curriculum Director to get the okay—get this contact from the teacher. Present what you can during the time you are allotted during the in-service. You can give the teachers an educational slide presentation (the CBCW AIS one is a good choice), or simply say you can speak to their classes and/or present a specific activity for the class to do (some AIS-specific activities are found in the Great Lakes in My World Curriculum Kit (\$50 from the Alliance for the Great Lakes), and Go Wild with Wisconsin WildCards Activity Guide (\$12 from WDNR).

* **Best** age group to target: grades 4-7th

* **Best** classroom activity for you to do—25 minute slide presentation and bring packets of AIS WildCards and stickers to hand out to each student.

* **Best** way to solicit a teacher for you to give a presentation—tell them your subjects deals with ecological principles like habitat disturbance, predator-prey interactions, food chains, over-population, etc. Ask when this topic may fit into their school year, set a date to present if in the near future, or a tentative date if longer than one month and then YOU call the teacher to confirm date. The teachers do not have the time to make multiple contacts to try and arrange something. The onus is on you to make it as easy as possible for them!