



Renaissance Academy in Lehi, UT

A public charter school serving ~750 students in grades K-8th.

Spanish taught at all grade levels.

Visit Renacademy.org.



"I've had a lot of success with kids really engaging and enjoying their language time again."

CAREY VENTURA
SPANISH TEACHER

How Renaissance Academy increased student engagement in their elementary and middle school Spanish classes with the Sonrisas Spanish Curriculum.

Renaissance Academy prides itself on offering an exemplary foreign language program with students enrolled in daily World Language classes. Spanish teachers had been using a series from McGraw-Hill for grades 1-5 and from Holt-McDougal in grades 6-8, but they weren't seeing acceptable levels of engagement in their students. After implementing the Sonrisas Spanish Curriculum in the fall of 2019, teachers experienced **a much higher level of engagement** in their students and **a more positive attitude** towards Spanish class.

CHALLENGE

Existing curriculum with lots of bells and whistles but a low level of student engagement

Renaissance Spanish teachers were stifled by having to teach meaningless content i.e. vocabulary lists, worksheets, etc. Students required extrinsic rewards for engagement and could not "do" anything with their Spanish. There was a general lack of excitement about Spanish class.

RESULTS

Based on interviews with Spanish teachers, they saw: higher level of engagement in class, more excitement in general about Spanish, students "doing" more with the language.

- Students engaged with lesson content, were excited about Spanish class, and looked forward to singing, playing games, reading and writing, and doing art projects.
- Students demonstrated understanding of vocabulary and phrases in context and used Spanish with each other inside and outside of the classroom.
- Teachers recognized a buzz about Spanish class among students and parents.
- Teachers noted that planning and prepping was more efficient because of the structure of the Sonrisas lessons.

SOLUTION

Implement the Sonrisas Spanish Curriculum for daily Spanish instruction.

The structure of Circle Time, Story Time, and Art Time offers the opportunity for students to connect to content through different modalities. Activities are developmentally appropriate, and there is lots of opportunity for meaningful communication.

An Effective Solution for Elementary and Middle School Spanish

Renaissance Academy Spanish teachers realized the benefits of the Sonrisas Spanish curriculum including:

Students have fun and are engaged.

Lesson planning is done for you.

Pedagogically-sound lesson design is more effective than bells and whistles.

