



# RISE SAN LUIS

Newsletter No. 1  
March - June 2021

**Dear San Luis Community,**

Thank you for your interest and investment in the **RISE San Luis initiative!**

This is the first monthly newsletter we are sending out to summarize community meetings and resources to-date. Follow along here as we address questions and share updates in the curriculum development. We will also be featuring student work and stories once the course kicks off to celebrate their progress. Please feel free to email [contact@risesanluis.org](mailto:contact@risesanluis.org) with any questions, concerns, or if you'd like to be added to the mailing list.

We're excited to have you aboard.

Sincerely,  
the RISE Team

**Project Lead**  
**4th Grade Curriculum**  
**High School Digital Arts Curriculum**

Kimba Rael, Principal of Centennial High School  
History Colorado, Eric Carpio & April Legg  
Sarah McCormick & Kevin Sweet



# MEETING #1

March 29, 2021

In Attendance: Shirley Romero Otero, Cathay Serna Egaña, Charlie Jaquez, Judi Gurule, Jose Molina Jr., Jose Molina Sr., Clara (María) Martínez, Junita Martínez, Jose Martínez, Judy Lopez, Sarah McCormick, Kevin Sweet, Eric Carpio, Kimba Rael, April Legg (some in attendance may not be listed)

History Colorado presented guiding principles in the development of the 4th grade curriculum for feedback from community stakeholders. These principles include ideas such as: co-creation and shared authority, humility and reflection, and shared destiny. **Stakeholders in attendance identified priorities and questions in relation to these guiding principles, including:**

- The need for the curriculum to focus first on the history and culture of San Luis: on language → the background of culture, values transmitted through traditional sayings (dichos), and engage with the truths of the history of the Valley which may otherwise be romanticized or forgotten.
- To both provide students an opportunity to carry forward culture and history, but also to help build a sense of pride in their identity and a sense of place.
- For this knowledge to be built through active engagement and student choice rather than acquired.

Stakeholders and RISE team entered into group discussions on three key questions for the 4th grade curriculum:

**Question 1** — Please identify/discuss key assets of San Luis.

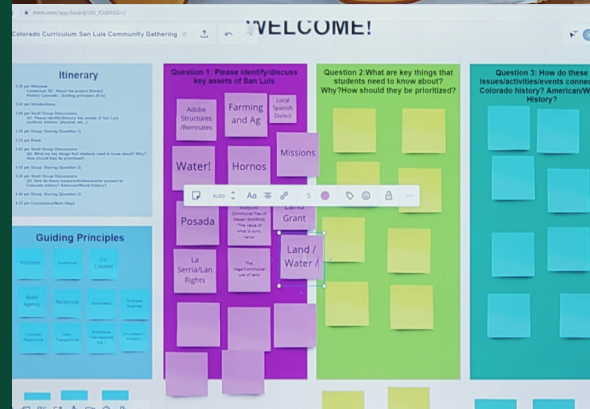
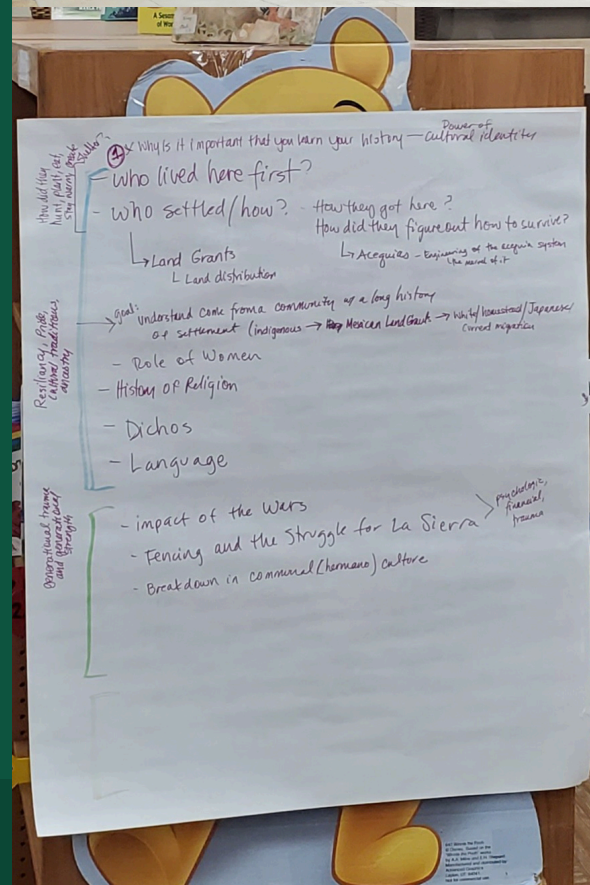
Answers ranged from adobe structures, farming and agriculture, local Spanish dialect, water access, land rights, and religion.

**Question 2** — What are key things that students need to know about? Why? How should they be prioritized?

Answers ranged from Manito culture, the Spanish language, the impact of the Vietnam War, generational trauma, and the resiliency/resistance of ancestors.

**Question 3** — How do these issues/activities/events connect to Colorado History?

Answers ranged from a changing Colorado, land grants, immigration, pride in local communities, and expanding who we are as a state.



**Want to read History Colorado's Guiding Principles for yourself?**

📄 **check it out on [risesanluis.org](https://www.risesanluis.org)**



## MEETING #2

May 01, 2021

*In Attendance: Shirley Romero Otero, Cathay Serna Egaña, Charlie Jaquez, Judi Gurule, Jose Molina Jr., Jose Molina Sr., Clara (Maria) Martinez, Junita Martinez, Jose Martinez, Judy Lopez, Sarah McCormick, Kevin Sweet, Eric Carpio, Kimba Rael, April Legg (some in attendance may not be listed)*

The RISE team provided an overview of the grant and curriculum project and its aim to create a 4th grade history curriculum focused on the local history, culture, and values of San Luis, and to remedy a lack of student access to digital technology.

### **Stakeholders in attendance identified priorities and questions involved in the development of the curriculum including:**

- How to integrate intuition, generational knowledge, and cultural identity as a resource in student learning?
- How to incorporate local organizations and resources (i.e. La Vega, Sangre de Cristo Heritage Center) into student learning, and existing creative projects from the area (i.e. Adobe Magazine) as models for student engagement?
- How to best get parents, teachers, organizers, and students on board?

### **Stakeholders and the RISE team discussed key educational themes and concerns building on the first community meeting including:**

- The importance of teaching community values such as water, land, language, communal stories, and the connection to places like La Sierra and La Vega.
- Stories need to be told about ancestry of the Northern Ute Nation, colonization, slavery, generational trauma & resilience, the impact of the Catholic Church, and movement of the border.
- Teachers should be using experiential learning and taking students into the field. How will the technology implemented in these courses support that priority?
- Students should not be passive recipients but discover who they are through community engaged assignments.

**The RISE team presented the first steps to making the project more accessible and open to the community which include:**

- Monthly email newsletter highlighting progress updates, details on future community meetings, summaries of recent community meetings, questions from the community, and examples of student work.
- Website (risesanluis.org) that provides similar information to the newsletter above, documentation of community meetings, examples of student works and stories throughout the academic year, and a means to contact the RISE team.
- High School Digital Arts Curriculum group (Sarah McCormick & Kevin Sweet) will be creating regular office hours for community members to ask questions or voice concerns via video chat, phone, or email. These sessions will be recorded and made available to community members to access at their convenience.



rendering of 3D environment for Move Mountains & Land Rights Council collaboration with Sarah McCormick and Kevin Sweet

## **MEETING #3**

**June 12, 2021**

*In Attendance: Shirley Romero Otero, Dennis Lopez, Dakota Rael, Audrey Rael, Damicio Rael, Junita Martinez, Chris Rodríguez, Curtis Garcia, Charlie Jaquez, Cathay Serna Egaña, Kimba Rael, Alejandra Cortes, Becca Chickadel, Jenny Pettit, Kevin Sweet, Sarah McCormick*

The Digital Art Curriculum team provided an overview of the year-long curriculum being developed for Centennial High School spanning sound, image, video, and interactive digital practices, and the infrastructure being built at the school to support it. Presentation slides are available [here](#)

**Stakeholders in attendance identified primary concerns and possible steps to address them including:**

- How do we create a curriculum that is sustainable both in terms of having teachers that can teach the course content and keeping the technology current/maintained?
- How can we use this course to help students identify relevant career opportunities and connect them with experiences from across a range of professional fields?
- Preliminary ideas of how to address these concerns include: [1] proactively guiding students who excel in this field to continue their training and earn teaching certification so they can return as educators, [2] making the Innovation Lab and digital art curriculum cross-curricular (i.e. embedded in other courses).

**History Colorado and Stakeholders participated in an exercise evaluating CDE standards for 4th grade Social Studies curricula for their potential for hyper-local applications. Major takeaways include:**

- The general nature of many of the standards allow for us to localize the issues (i.e. “Explain, through multiple perspectives, the cause-and-effect relationships in the human interactions among people and cultures that have migrated to Colorado” can be approached in a valley-centric social, linguistic, cultural, and economic manner which decentralizes the narrative of Euro-centric westward expansion). This is an opportunity to begin with perspectives of the stories that are not being told.
- Approaching broad questions through the hyper-local framework allows students to develop the skills for push-back against historical simplification, identify where broad narratives don't match their experience, and criticality towards bias.
- Approaching the standards is less about applicability than perspective and cause/effect: is the content being taught from the top-down (i.e. starting from state-level decisions and seeing the effect of those decisions play out in the local community) or ground-up (i.e. starting from local events & issues, then tracing the causes of those issues back to actions by the state). It's a question of where the story begins.
- A persistent question when addressing CDE standards is how to do so while focusing on local values, customs, and knowledge of and family.



## **Upcoming Scheduled Events**

**Next Monthly Meeting:** Saturday, July 10th 9:00am-11:30am, Centennial High School, 14644 CO-159, San Luis, CO 81152 (We meet on the second Saturday each month)

**Digital Art Curriculum Team Office Hours:** 6-7pm 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month

Join us on Zoom: <https://cuboulder.zoom.us/j/92382349655>

Join us via Phone: +1 (346) 248-7799 (meeting id: 92382349655)

Contact Kevin & Sarah via email: [contact@risesanluis.org](mailto:contact@risesanluis.org)



Questions, Comments, Suggestions?

**[contact@risesanluis.org](mailto:contact@risesanluis.org)**