Dear Academic Dean

Distance Learning during the coronavirus pandemic exposed how much we needed to personalize our instruction for all our students so that they could be successful. We discovered how capable we were of adopting new forms of technology and how well we differentiated for our students. Most students thrived while others, such as our kinesthetic learners and special education students, required far more attention. How can we take this experience and evolve with the advancement of technology and use our resources to personalize instruction for all learning abilities while teaching 21st Century skills in science classes? It will be a hybrid of Blended Learning and Problem-Based Learning, which I will call Blended Science.

Blended Learning is an instructional method in which students are offered the choice of how to complete an assignment, when to complete it, and how they want to complete it. Some lessons are done from home and others are done as a class or through small group instruction. Problem-Based Learning is a method that uses real-world challenges or problems to teach students. In both cases, learning is ignited by a goal or question and students are given many options that fit their needs and interests.

I am proposing to practice, refine, and share this cost-free Blended Science framework in which:

- Instruction will be broken down in the following five steps:
    1. **Goal Setting:** As a class, we will set an overall goal for the entire year and for each unit to drive our instruction. This can be a question or task.
    2. **Scaffolding Lessons:** Students will choose the lessons that fit their needs and decide their pace.
    3. **Exploration:** I will facilitate student inquiry-based labs
    4. **Product:** Students collaborate and choose their product and/or network with other schools.
    5. **Collaboration:** Students will take parts in discussions, providing feedback, sharing live documents or slides, and producing a final product. Students will network with other schools and classes.
- Instruction, research, and feedback will be carried out on Google Classrooms and a Google Site.
- Students will have the choice of when, where, and how to do the Scaffolding Lessons and what product to create.

This Blended Science Class will improve student achievement by transforming teacher-centered instruction into engaging, student-centered instruction. It will inspire others to use technology and to earn teachers Distinguished evaluations. I ask that you provide me with a class set of laptops, your input on acceptable class culture that is consistent with school goals, and the chance to share my results with the Site-Based Decision Team.

I look forward to meeting the needs of all my students and preparing them for the future.
Respectfully,
Jessica Casillas