



Our students will lead and shape the future

News release

Jan. 29, 2016

Elementary students join “pioneer expedition”

Mill Creek Elementary School students explore new worlds through Google eyes



Students pick the plain brown, cardboard viewer, the smartphone already tucked inside, and lift the viewer up to their face. As they look inside, they see a panorama of the red, silty soil of Mars. As they move the viewer around, the landscape shifts with them as if they are really there, moving within the landscape – all real images collected by NASA's exploration rover, *Spirit*.

Mill Creek Elementary School was selected to join the [Google Expeditions Pioneer Program](#). On Feb. 2, a team from Google Expeditions will guide second- through fifth-grade students through virtual field trips of places around the world. “Expeditions” helps immerse students in virtual reality experiences that bring abstract concepts to life and give students a deeper understanding of the world beyond their classrooms.

These panoramic virtual explorations aren’t just for children. Professionals are using them in their jobs as well. Watch [this video](#) from CNN to see how a team of heart surgeons used this tool to save a baby’s life.

Kathy Johns, Instructional Technology Specialist at Mill Creek Elementary shared, “This technology has the potential to totally change the way students experience learning. The possible applications for the classroom make my head spin! Expeditions allow students to take virtual field trips of places they read about in literature, history or geography. The experience adds depth and context to their learning.”

Teacher Librarian Carol Kummerle added, “Expeditions provide an unparalleled opportunity for supplemental learning in the classroom. It is a brilliant way for teachers to integrate virtual reality in their classrooms.”



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When students see one of these cars in the parking lot, they'll know the adventure is about to begin. The folks at Subaru, who invest in education as part of their [Love Promise](#) initiative, created a fleet of Expedition Pioneer Program cars that Google will use to bring kits to schools.