

LOOKING IN ON: EDUCATION

Students in NLV to hook up with Bosnia

By **EMILY RICHMOND**
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Reading about civics in a textbook is one thing. Discussing civic responsibility, government authority, privacy and civil justice with classroom educators in an emerging democracy is something special.

Especially if you're a first, second, third or fourth grader.

That's what's on tap this week for students at Mackey Elementary School in North Las Vegas, thanks to a high-speed Internet line that will allow them to videoconference with educators in Bosnia. (Bosnian students are expected to participate in future online discussions.)

The Mackey students are participating in a pilot program called "Foundations of Democracy," authored by Center for Civic Education, a nonpartisan, not-for-profit American organization. The curriculum has also been provided to Bosnian schools.

Studying the cornerstones of a democratic society is an abstract classroom exercise to the Mackey students, but has significant, reality-based repercussions for the eastern European nation. If its newly elected leaders are judged successful at implementing reforms, the international administrator's office could hand over control.

Free elections are a key component to a democratic society, said Mackey teacher Brandon Moehler, who is coordinating the project. The videoconference is set for Thursday morning, two days after Mackey will have fittingly served as its neighborhood's election polling place.