

ABSTRACT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Educating students for the world they will graduate into requires a very different kind of classroom. The vision of the USD 489 Washington Elementary TRC project is to redefine the boundaries of the classroom so that a spirit of collaboration and curiosity among students, teachers and parents results in a true learning community. The vision will be accomplished by integrating technology with inquiry-based learning and training teachers, students and parents to view the learning process in new and different ways. As teachers and students adapt to a technology-rich learning environment, Washington classrooms will make important changes in teaching and learning and meet the challenges of NCLB. This is a small diverse school with only one classroom at each grade level. Therefore, facilitated by technology coaches, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th grade teachers as well as Kindergarten 1st and special education teachers will be trained in a professional development model based on the research from the Missouri eMints project and Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow as well as other successful EETT grant classrooms from the past two years. The professional development model includes a minimum of 250 hours of training presented in a variety of contexts. Accountability is built in through a variety of evaluation formats, and numerous dissemination activities are planned to share the successes and challenges of the project. This grant will allow this deprived school to become a technology rich school with training for all teachers and not just a select few.

Project Goals are: 1. Students & teachers will demonstrate & practice research-based strategies for teaching & learning in a technology-rich classroom, 2. Teachers will demonstrate a change in the style of teaching from traditional to inquiry-based, 3. Students will develop their ability to become independent learners, 4. Students will develop the ability to work in teams, 5. Student achievement on the Kansas State assessment will increase and 6. The percentage of families that use technology to assist with their child's education will increase. **NEED:**

Washington enrollment is 141 with 86% FR lunch, and a minority population of 47%. It also has a high percentage of students receiving Title I services. School is the only place most children have any access to technology.

Washington meets the requirements of an Eligible Local Partnership through the percentage of students on FR lunch, and the need for technology in the classrooms. Additionally, state assessment scores show a need to move students out of the Unsatisfactory and Basic categories into the Proficient category. Classroom hardware is limited to one computer on the teacher's desk. Students have access to a computer lab on a very limited basis. Data from staff technology surveys indicate that students are using technology almost exclusively for drill and practice.

Technology plans and surveys show that teachers are prevented from using technology in their daily routine because the technology is just not available. The teachers are outstanding educators who practice research-based teaching strategies with their students. However, the barriers of limited technology access, funding and lack of professional development prevent them from developing a rich inquiry-based learning environment in their classrooms.

SUPPORT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: The targeted student learning goal in this project is reading. Strategies for student improvement and professional development include implementation of reading strategies across the curriculum, cooperative learning, aligning curriculum to state standards, inquiry-based methods, and graphic organizers to support content vocabulary. Grant goals are designed to further enhance the improvement plan and technology plan goals and activities and increase student achievement in all content areas. As teachers and students are allowed the opportunity to tap the educational potential of technology, we expect to see not only reading scores increase, but the motivation and excitement for learning increase for both teachers and students.

DESCRIPTION OF WHAT THE PROJECT WILL ACCOMPLISH: This project offers many new and exciting possibilities in curriculum, professional development and the use of technology. The training and support provided will help Washington teachers make the goals and activities in the school improvement plans come alive for their students. The vision is to expand the learning community beyond the walls of the classroom, into the homes of students, with future years seeing more parents actively engaged in their children's education. We are intentional in changing the culture to technology being integrated fully into teaching and learning, rather than merely an enhancement to the curriculum. Statements of support from teachers and administrators show a strong commitment to changing existing classrooms into the technology-rich classrooms of a digital world. The digital age is redefining the boundaries of the classroom. It brings the world to the student whether they are in class, at home, or wherever they may be: anytime, anywhere learning. Funds from this grant will move Washington toward the vision of building a learning community where the use of technology becomes second nature for teachers and students.

EVALUATION PLAN: Progress toward project goals will be evaluated by **1.** Student/teacher evaluation and feedback of video clips of classroom performance, **2.** Assessment of student attitudes toward school through a pre-post local climate survey, **3.** A rubric developed through an Electronic Portfolio to score student projects, **4.** Reflective journals authored by teachers to monitor effects of technology integration on practice, **5.** Web-based data reporting system provided through ALTeC to organize findings, **6.** State and local assessment data collected and analyzed by the trainer and teachers using Palm-based software, **7.** Pre-post assessment of teacher action research projects, and **8.** Use of Profiler to assess technology skills gained by teachers and students.