

Martha Holden Jennings Foundation Proposal

Summary

Project Title: Tech Success Pilot Project

Dollar Amount Requested: \$1780.50

Purpose of the Grant, Project Description and Objectives:

For students to engage in deeper learning, technology integration is an important element. “Technology can be a powerful tool for transforming learning. It can help affirm and advance relationships between educators and students, reinvent our approaches to learning and collaboration, shrink long-standing equity and accessibility gaps, and adapt learning experiences to meet the needs of all learners” (U.S. Department of Education, 2017, p. 3). Along with technology integration at school, research has shown that parental involvement in their child’s education has significantly improved student learning and test scores (Family School and Partnerships Bureau: Emerson, 2012), (Child Trends Data Bank, 2013), and (Osterhaus, 2013). In an effort to increase student learning by integrating technology, the Akron Public School District has provided each first grader at Case Elementary School in Akron with a Chromebook. The first-grade teacher would like to use Google classroom more as well. However, most of the students in this elementary school are unfamiliar with computers and how to operate them, and they also are unfamiliar with Google classroom and using the internet for learning. There is a great need to orientate the learners and their parents/guardians (from here forward, “parents” will be used to mean either) on how the Chromebook, Google classroom, and the internet will be used in the classroom for education. With this project, parents will be able to assist with obstacles the learner may encounter at home while working on assignments, and they will be more engaged in their child’s learning.

As a student in the Masters of Education Instructional Technology program, I would like to use what I have learned about technology integration to help students become 21st century learners, digital citizens, and examples of the NETS-S standards for students. The way I propose to do this is to use the grant funding to coordinate a pilot project called “Tech Success,” where an interdisciplinary lesson for both learners and parents will provide tools for deeper learning to complete the lesson and teach the learners and their parents how to use their Chromebook and the Google classroom as they complete this lesson. From the 2017 National Education Technology Plan Update: “Although vision is critical to transforming teaching and learning, a strategic implementation plan is key to success” (U.S. Department of Education, 2017, p. 46).

The purpose of this project is to provide information on the effectiveness of a technology integration project with parents and their elementary school aged children for use in the classrooms of the Akron Public Schools. Tech Success can be modified for different grade levels, subjects, and learning outcomes. We envision that this will be an effective way to introduce learners and their parents to technology in the classroom and to engage parents more deeply in their child’s education.

Because one parent must attend with their child, this may also help identify early those children whose parents are not engaged in their learning if the parent does not respond or is unable to schedule a time for the Tech Success lesson. This may indicate the need for additional assistance to those learners.

I also will follow up with parents and be available for additional individual training of parents or learners as the teacher sees is needed, or as more training is requested by parents. I will schedule additional training sessions to meet these requests and needs throughout the semester.

Category:

Preparing elementary students for deeper learning throughout their educational career and engaging parents in their child's education for improved learning.

Project Coordinator Contact Information:

Mrs. Mary Cooke
The University of Akron
150 University Avenue
Akron, OH 44325-2901
mec@uakron.edu
330-972-6346

Mrs. Kimberly Thomas
Case Elementary School
1393 Westvale Avenue
Akron, OH 44313
330-873-3350

Implementation Timeline:

Upon confirmation of project funding, I will begin working with the first-grade teacher on the first lesson plan for her learners as they start the 2018-2019 academic year. Research has shown that connected discussion about technology acquisition and curricular goals makes alignment much more likely to take place (Staples, Pugach, & Himes, 2005). The first-grade teacher at Case Elementary School will assure that the lesson teaches the content for social studies and science that is grade appropriate and meets her curriculum requirements. I will assist with the technology training. The proposed lesson for the first graders in this pilot project is "Weather around the World." Learners and their parents will research weather in a world region and look at the scientific reasons for the weather in that region. The lesson will be able to be completed within 90 minutes, including any individual assistance needed.

January – March 2018: Develop the lesson plan with learning outcomes and rubric.

April – May 2018:

- (1) Design the lesson plan in the Google classroom to be used in the class.
- (2) Get approval for proposed dates for parents to come to Case Elementary to participate from school principal and the district
- (3) Contact the parents of incoming first graders about the project
- (4) Schedule the classroom, security guards, and certified caregivers for sessions in August (specific dates are given below)

- June – July 2018:
- (1) Begin scheduling parents and their child for dates they can attend.
 - (2) Confirm security and caregivers (provide childcare while parents attend)
 - (3) Continue to contact parents by mail, email, and phone to build excitement about and commitment to the project
- August 2018:
- (1) Hold sessions for incoming first grade learners and their parents
 - (2) By August 15th, follow up with any parents not scheduled for a session
 - (3) Chromebooks will be issued to each student at these sessions
 - (4) Technology agreements will be explained and signed at the sessions
 - (5) Finish all sessions by the end of the first week of school, preferably earlier

Purpose of the Grant, Project Description, and Objectives

Current Educational Environment

Audience: Case Elementary School is composed of 70.1% African American students, 20.4% Caucasian, and 9.5% Hispanic, Asian or Two or More Ethnicities. (USA School Info, 2017) The audience for this project is approximately 25 first graders and their parents/guardians. Since this is a pilot project, the audience has the potential to become much greater if this pilot is effective. Some reasons are that it can be used in more first-grade classrooms throughout the district, and it can also can be expanded to different grade levels, learning content, and to specific NETS-S standards to be taught through lessons.

Technological Experience: The first-grade teacher has twenty years of elementary school teaching experience; knowledge of curriculum, state and district standards; and experience using a Chromebook, Google classroom, and using the internet for learning. I have experience with different types of computers, operating systems, and learning management systems. I have knowledge of the NETS-S standards, planning for technology integration, and using the internet for learning. Based on observation and a survey from the teacher, these first graders and their parents do not use technology at home for education; it is used for entertainment. The technological experience of these parents and learners is very low in using technology for education.

Infrastructure: The first graders each have access to a Chromebook which may be taken home for school work at home. The teacher has a Google classroom set up for her class. The school has a technician for troubleshooting technical problems with the computers or internet connection.

Limitations

Instructional limitations: The teacher does not have the time in her classroom for extensive individualized instruction to teach her students how they can use the Chromebook and Google classroom for learning at home. She would welcome parents' knowledge and assistance to their child at home, so the child can use the Chromebook and Google classroom at home. The solution to this limitation, as well as an International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) article

about helping parents learn technology (Krueger, 2017) was the inspiration for the Tech Success pilot project. This is valuable experience for me as a student in the Instructional Technology Masters' program to coordinate this project, and it will greatly assist the teacher, her students, and the parents in technology integration.

Technological limitations: There are no hardware technological limitations. Each student has a Chromebook which can be used for the completion of the lesson. The Tech Success project will be held at Case Elementary School, and project sessions will be scheduled so that the classroom will hold all the parents and children for each session.

Training limitations: The training limitations are on the part of most of the parents and the learners. Most have not been trained on the educational use of a computer, Google classroom, or the use of the internet for education. After the initial lesson which all parents will be scheduled to complete, I will be available for additional training as the teacher sees is needed or as parents' request. Additional training sessions will be scheduled as needed throughout the semester.

Need

Tools and Training for Deeper Learning: For students to become 21st century learners, they need to learn how to use the technology tools that will help them reach this goal. Currently, the use of the Chromebook and Google classroom are new to the first graders. Once they receive training on the use of these tools, the tools will move to the background and deeper learning can occur.

Parental Involvement in Education: A study found that parental support was key in driving up standards among children, with mothers and fathers having an immense impact themselves (Child Trends Data Bank, 2013). Parents may get involved as room parents or on the PTA, but most are not involved with what their child is learning (Osterhaus, 2013). A study of over 2,000 mothers and fathers found that greater than half lacked the confidence to help their children with simple math at home (Paton, 2013). This project hopes to engage parents in their child's education by training them on the tools their child will use and involving parents in a lesson their child's teacher has prepared.

Effective Technology Integration: Since districts and schools are working hard on professional development for teachers to integrate technology, this project can assist with training the other stakeholders in education: the young learners and their parents. The learners will be trained on the technology tools they will use at school and the parents will be trained to be able to assist their child and be more involved in their child's education. The Tech Success project will provide balanced technology integration by training learners and parents as the district and schools focus on training teachers and administrators.

Goals of Proposal

Instructional Goals: The instructional goals of this project are part of the lesson "Weather Around the World." The subjects incorporated are social studies and science. Learners, with the assistance of their parents, will research weather in a region of the world. Their teacher will

prepare a description of what the learners should research and a set of general questions the learners should answer as they describe what they have learned. Social studies will be incorporated by the learners choosing a weather region of the world and describing and answering questions about that region. Science will be incorporated by learners describing temperatures and some causes for the type of weather in that region, and answering questions provided by the teacher. Parents will assist their learners in understanding the directions and questions, and parents will be directed not to do the work for their child. They are to guide their child in operating the computer and accessing the Google classroom and the internet, and they should encourage their child frequently.

Technological Goals: The technological goals of the project are for the learners to learn how to operate their Chromebook for classroom and assignment use, use their Google classroom, and do basic research on the internet from links provided by the teacher in Google classroom. These are the same goals for the parents, though they may come to a greater understanding of how to use each of these technology tools.

Training Goals: The training goals are to hold training sessions where each first grader and at least one parent can learn the technological goals outlined above. As each child and parent complete the lesson, the teacher and I will be available for individual help as needed during each training session. The teacher and I will co-present the sessions. I will organize and schedule the Tech Success sessions and be the technology trainer. The teacher will present the lesson and assist learners and parents with questions on the Google classroom and the lesson completion.

Technology Proposal

Hardware: A Chromebook provided by the school district is issued to each first grader. These will be issued, and all technology agreements and paperwork signed by the parents at these sessions. The classroom Whiteboard will be used to present steps of operating the Chromebook as learners and parents walk through the steps of operating the Chromebook. We expect that the impact on instruction and student achievement will be significant as both learners and parents feel comfortable using the Chromebooks and Google classroom for assignments and learning.

Software: There is no special software needed for this project. The Google classroom can be accessed online. The school can accommodate all students going online at the same time. The ease of access will allow full instruction and deeper learning and achievement by learners.

Supplies and Training Materials: Handouts on the steps to logging onto and operating the Chromebook and using the Google classroom will be given for parents to take home for future reference. The handouts will also be emailed to each parent and posted on the school website in case the hard copy gets lost. Certificates will be given to students and parents as they complete the lesson, so they may display these at home as a reminder to parents to be involved in their child's education.

Personal Qualifications

Mary E. Cooke: Bachelors of Arts in Organizational Communication – Public Relations, 2012, from The University of Akron. Current student in the Masters of Arts in Education, Educational Foundations - Instructional Technology program at The University of Akron. I have completed courses on the introduction to instructional technology focusing on the NETS standards for technology in education; multimedia/hypermedia; and technology planning. I also have 10 years' experience in education administration at The University of Akron and in planning events in an educational setting. These qualifications enable me to plan this project to be engaging, purposeful, and beneficial to district and school stakeholders, learners, and parents.

Kimberly K. Thomas: Bachelor of Science in Education – Elementary Education, 1997, from The University of Akron. Masters of Arts in Education – Elementary Education, 2001, from The University of Akron. Teacher in the Akron Public Schools since 1997, now at Case Elementary School. Mrs. Thomas' 20 years of experience teaching elementary students in the Akron Public Schools provides the age-appropriate lesson for the Tech Success project, meeting school, district, and state standards for the lesson.

Specific Project Organization Description

There are 25 first graders in this class. We will limit each Tech Success session to 5 learners and their parents to allow for individualized instruction. We will offer 8 session dates to accommodate parents' schedules, and we will have 2 back up sessions (not advertised) planned only if needed. The available sessions will be from 6:45 – 8:15 pm on August 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 23, 2018; with Saturday sessions from 10:00 – 11:30 am on August 18 and 25. Since school starts on Wednesday, August 28, the backup sessions will be from 6:45 – 8:15 pm on August 26 and 27. Parents will register in advance for the session they want to attend for our planning.

District security guard. We are required to hire a school district security guard from 6:30 – 8:30 pm each of the evenings and from 9:45 – 11:45 am on the Saturdays when the Tech Success sessions will be held.

Certified caregivers. To accommodate parent's schedules and family needs, we will offer childcare for the learner's siblings while the parents and their learner are in the Tech Success lesson. We will provide 1 caregiver per 4 children to allow for the care of infants and toddlers during the session. We will know the number of caregivers needed per session from the parent registration.

I will donate my time to this pilot project and use the project for field experience for my Masters of Education program.

Evaluation and Assessment

Gathering Feedback: An online Google forms survey will be completed by parents at the end of the Tech Success session for immediate feedback on the effectiveness of the session. There will

also be a survey for the learner to complete at the end of the session, with the parent reading the questions to the learner if the learner is unable to do so. A second Google forms survey request will be emailed to parents after the first month of school to learn how often the learner uses the Chromebook at home, how the learner is using the Chromebook, if the learner has had any difficulties operating the Chromebook at home, if the parent was able to assist their child, how engaged the parent feels with their child's learning, any observations parents have made on their child's learning and engagement with learning, any suggestions for future Tech Success sessions, and any questions or comments. The teacher or I will contact parents with follow up to questions and comments as needed.

The teacher will give her observations on the learners' use of the Chromebook compared to previous years' classes of first graders. The teacher will also compare assessment scores of learners after the Tech Success session with scores of past years' classes, using the same assessments. The teacher will send monthly emails to parents with class news and invite parents to ask questions or give comments on their child's learning.

Analyzing Data: The surveys of parents will be reviewed by the teacher and me, and we will prepare a report for the principal and the district at the end of the semester. Any feedback from parents in response to the teacher's monthly emails will be reported as well. The teacher's observations and comparative assessment scores will be reported to the principal and the district.

Adjustment Allowance: Based on survey results, teacher observation, and comparative assessment scores, the Tech Success project may need to be adjusted in some way. Any adjustments can easily be made as issues are identified and discussed.

Communication with Stakeholders: As outlined above, surveys and monthly emails will invite communication with parents (one group of stakeholders). The teacher will interact with students each day for communication with those stakeholders. A report will be prepared from the surveys, teacher observation and comparative data that will be presented to the principal and then to the school district for consideration of future Tech Success projects. The report, budget accounting, and any unused funds will also be submitted to the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation as the provider of this grant.

Budget

Budget Item	Description	Unit Cost for Item	Total Item Cost	MHJF Requested Amount
Cost of one district security guard per session.	A district security guard is required in the building outside of school hours.	\$20.00 per hour	\$40 per session; up to \$400 for all potential sessions.	\$400.00
Stipend for teacher's participation outside of contract requirements	The teacher will co-present the sessions before the start of the school year.	\$28 per hour	\$56 per session; up to \$560 for all potential sessions.	\$560.00

Certified caregivers	Provide childcare for siblings of learners during sessions for parents	\$20 per hour for each caregiver; up to 2 caregivers per session.	\$40 or \$80 per session; up to \$800 for all potential sessions.	\$800.00
Paper and copying costs for instruction handouts and certificates.	1 pack of printable Certificate paper (50 sheets); 1 pack of 20-lb. paper for handouts (100 sheets); Copying costs	Certificate paper cost: \$7.50 per pack. Handout paper cost: \$6.75 per pack. Copy cost: 5¢ per copy; 125 copies = \$6.25	\$20.50	\$20.50
TOTAL:			\$1780.50	\$1780.50

Continuation and Extension

Growth and Longevity: Based on the success of this Tech Success pilot program, the potential for growth and longevity is unlimited. If successful, the Tech Success model can be adapted for use in different grades (the lesson used in the sessions tailored to a different grade level by that teacher); adapted for different technology tools to be used in the classroom; lessons to teach NETS-S standards can be developed; and more frequent Tech Success sessions can be held throughout the school year and in the summer. We can identify parents who could participate in the ISTE Digital Citizenship Academy to become those who can assist other parents with technology as well (Krueger, 2017).

Assessment That Objectives Were Met as Stated: The assessment that the objectives of the pilot program were met will be (1) parental involvement in their child's learning, assessed by the parents' responses to the project surveys and responses to the teacher's monthly email invitation for questions or comments; (2) learner comfort and skill at using the Chromebook and Google classroom; (3) parent comfort and skill at using the Chromebook and Google classroom, assessed by the survey at the end of the Tech Success session and the follow up survey; (4) improved use of technology and the internet for learning and not just entertainment, assessed by the teacher asking students how they are using their Chromebook at home and surveys included in some of the monthly emails; and (5) improved assessment scores by the learners.

Additional Funding Needs: Based on the success of this program, additional funding will be needed for the costs of future programs: teacher stipend; instructional technology coach stipend (since a student in this Master's program may not always be available to participate as field experience); district security guard cost; and certified childcare cost for the program for elementary grade parents (higher grade levels and adult learners will most likely not have the need for childcare to participate in the sessions.)

Conclusion

Thank you for making funding available to provide deeper learning opportunities for students. We appreciate your consideration of our grant proposal and look forward to hearing from you. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

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