

21st Century Community Learning Center

Grant Overview

The Vermont Department of Education (VTDOE) invites schools, non-traditional educators, and community-based organizations to apply for 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) partnership grants for the purpose of providing high-quality afterschool learning opportunities for students who attend schools where 30% or more of the students are from low-income families (free/reduced lunch assistance) and where the need for improved student performance is well documented. Competitive grants will be awarded to school and community partnerships that show the greatest promise of supporting the attainment of three performance goals adopted by the Vermont State Board of Education:

- **Performance goal 1:** *By 2013-2014, all students will reach high standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.*
- **Performance goal 2:** *All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.*
- **Performance Goal 3:** *All students will graduate from high school.*

Grant Purpose:

Each eligible entity that receives an award from the state may use the funds to carry out a broad array of before- and after-school activities (including those held during summer recess periods) to advance student achievement. These activities include:

- Remedial-education activities and academic-enrichment learning programs, including those which provide additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement;
- Mathematics and science-education activities;
- Arts and music-education activities;
- Entrepreneurial-education programs;
- Tutoring services, including those provided by senior-citizen volunteers, and mentoring programs;
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English-proficient students and that emphasize language skills and academic achievement;
- Recreational activities;
- Telecommunications and technology education programs;
- Expanded library service hours;
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy;
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled to allow them to improve their academic achievement;

- Drug- and violence-prevention programs;
- Counseling programs; and
- Character-education programs.

Focus Areas:

Professional Development, Reading, Science, Special Education, Social Studies, English / Language Arts, Mathematics, Technology, Assessment, ESL / ELL

How *Classroom Suite 4* and *Kurzweil 3000* Align with and Support the 21st Century Community Learning Center Objectives

The 21st Century Community Learning Center has an extensive list of goals that can be categorized into two primary objectives: improvements in the academic performance of struggling, at-risk and failing students, as well as improvements in access to information and programs that will enhance individuals' and families' lives.

Classroom Suite 4 and *Kurzweil 3000*, in conjunction with a technology acquisition program and along with school leadership and partnerships, can successfully address these objectives.

Following the Overview is a list of key components that when implemented would enable schools and their community partners to achieve the desired outcomes of the grant. Because the main objectives relate to academic improvement, the key components cited are literacy-centric, and are derived from recent publications by literacy experts and practitioners regarding recommended elements that should be included in efforts to help student's master reading, comprehension and study skills.

Brief Overview of *Classroom Suite* and *Kurzweil 3000*

Literacy goes hand-in-hand with academic achievement. *Classroom Suite* and *Kurzweil 3000* are complementary technologies that go beyond addressing language challenges to provide improvements in literacy across the academic spectrum from social studies to mathematics, while enabling schools and teachers to monitor and assess progress. *Kurzweil 3000* and especially *Classroom Suite* with its optional programmable keyboard are designed for universal access, helping to accommodate the range of physical and learning abilities in the community.

Classroom Suite, an award-winning, early intervention tool, combines direct, standards-based instruction with flexible, customizable tools to help students in grades Pre K through 5 achieve mastery in language, reading comprehension, writing and math skills. Its research-based lessons can be sequenced into "intelligent" units to align with district or core curriculum, and its assessment tools ensure supportive data for intervention.

Kurzweil 3000 is the premier curriculum-independent reading, writing, and learning software, that has been proven to be an effective solution for improving reading, comprehension and study skills.

Together, *Classroom Suite* and *Kurzweil 3000* offer assistive technology for achieving overall academic success particularly for students with disabilities, at-risk students and English Language Learners. Having the combined *Classroom Suite* and *Kurzweil 3000* solution in classrooms, resource centers and outside-of-school programs, enables educators to reach and engage all students and extend their time for learning.

For English Language Learners, and for parents and family members who speak other languages, *Classroom Suite* provides the foundation needed to decode language – from phonemes to phonics – while *Kurzweil 3000* encourages participation, communication and access to information. Material in English can be brought into the software and using built-in language dictionaries, and with Google Translate™ users can look up the meanings of English words in their native language. These same language dictionaries also aid in writing in English.

Lastly, independent research studies have proven that *Classroom Suite* and *Kurzweil 3000* technologies have a lasting impact on the motivation of struggling students to learn both inside and outside of the classroom – a major factor not only in improving academic performance, but also in promoting engagement in learning.

21 st CCLC Select Goals	Classroom Suite and Kurzweil 3000 Alignment
<p>Remedial-education activities and academic-enrichment learning programs, including those which provide additional assistance to students to allow the students to improve their academic achievement</p>	<p>By using a modeling approach of “I do,” “we do,” and “you do,” <i>Classroom Suite</i> and its standards-aligned activities directly and explicitly instruct students in each foundational step toward language literacy.</p> <p>Sound sorting and sound combinations develop and heighten phonemic awareness and provide practice in phonics and decoding.</p> <p>Auditory and instruction-based feedback enforces proper usage. Constructive and repeated practice at the students’ individual pace promotes and accelerates fluency.</p> <p>In addition, embedded assessments allow teachers to gauge progress and individualize instruction for students, while customizable activity templates help target specific needs and objectives.</p> <p><i>Classroom Suite</i> provides guided practice through templates and activities. The Comprehension template is specifically designed to provide students with structured instruction on comprehension strategies. Teachers add a paragraph or passage, and pose questions for students.</p> <p>For expository text, teachers might design questions that lead students to distinguishing main ideas and supporting details. For narrative text, questions can focus on vocabulary used for descriptions and imagery. Students develop comprehension strategies by previewing the</p>

	<p>questions, reading with attention, then answering the questions again after reading to demonstrate their understanding of the material.</p> <p>Kurzweil 3000 aids teachers and schools in direct and explicit instruction in comprehension as well as the systematic and direct instruction of proven study skills strategies. Because of <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> features' ease of use, instruction can be tailored for individuals' specific requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic notes in a variety of accessible forms (footnotes, text notes, sticky notes, bubble notes, voice notes, Bubble and column notes) offer teachers the ability to strategically place embedded explanations of concepts and instructions for students to access as they read and write. Students can use these notes to express learned information or formulate questions for teachers. • Electronic highlighters enable teachers and students to prepare an array of pre-reading material, vocabulary lists and study guides. The Word List feature enables teachers to bring difficult words, as well as topic- or unit-based vocabulary, for students to use while reading and writing in <i>Kurzweil 3000</i>. Outline and Brainstorm features allow for quick creation of study guides or graphic organizers to spur critical thinking.
<p>Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English-proficient students and that emphasize language skills and academic achievement</p>	<p>Using a multi-sensory approach, both Classroom Suite and Kurzweil 3000 reads words aloud to students in clear, human-like, synthetic speech.</p> <p>In Kurzweil 3000 a patented dual highlighting feature adds visual reinforcement. Accessible and customizable features that promote repetition and practice put the pace of progress into students' hands.</p> <p>In Classroom Suite, fluency, comprehension and competency are achieved through a <i>Show Me, Practice and Challenge</i> model of instruction. Embedded assessments allow teachers to gauge progress and provide appropriate intervention.</p> <p>In Kurzweil 3000, students can hear the speaker</p>

	<p>read and reread any word, or unit – phrases, sentences, paragraphs – modeling pronunciation, grammar and syntax. Reading settings such as speed can be used to guide students through the levels of reading fluency, increasing the speed as fluency and comprehension improves. Electronic highlighters and a variety of electronic notes enable teachers to model and students to apply study skills such as extracting key concepts as a way of learning and demonstrating comprehension. Brainstorm and Outline tools enable teachers to model and students to emulate the process of synthesizing and organizing thoughts.</p>
<p>Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy</p>	<p>Classroom Suite and Kurzweil 3000 take advantage of current and portable technologies to broaden access and increase time for literacy beyond classroom-based and one-on-one instruction. Both are available in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand Alone version providing struggling students with access to content, assignments, as well as tools and supports while in class, in resource rooms or information centers. • Web licensing versions for access to content, assignments, tools and supports in outside-of-school or after-school partner programs or other community learning settings. <p>Additionally, Kurzweil 3000 offers the ability to save material to audio files (MP3 and WAV) so students can listen to chapters or books on portable devices wherever they go.</p>
<p>Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended, or expelled to allow them to improve their academic achievement</p>	<p>Classroom Suite Creativity Tools, with its Multimedia Presentation, StoryMaker, Make a Book and Writing Tools templates provide fun platforms from which groups of students can work cooperatively to learn, share opinions and demonstrate what they have learned. Teachers can also use these tools to create story starters and sketch summaries from which to spur discussion and participation from a group of students or a whole classroom. Math Tools extend cooperative learning to math-related activities.</p> <p>Kurzweil 3000 lets teachers or students easily bring all types of reading material into the</p>

	software, facilitating the participation of students who read below grade level in cooperative learning activities and discussions with their grade level peers, ultimately building the students' motivation and sense of achievement.
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