



Grant Description

School Improvement reserved under section 1003(a) of the ESEA, School Improvement Grants under section 1003(g) of the ESEA are used to improve student achievement in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring so as to enable those schools to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) and exit improvement status.

Grant Purpose:

Improve student achievement in Title I schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring so as to enable those schools to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) and exit improvement status.

It is expected that the desired outcomes of the *School Improvement Fund* grant will be achieved by addressing two overarching grant goals:

Enhancing Education Through Technology Goals	Expected to be Achieved Through
Academic achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics by students who are low performing/failing or at high risk of failure as identified through state and local assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit, written curriculum aligned with academic standards. • Remedial education. • Equal access to curriculum. • Differentiated instruction to meet the needs of individual as well as community of students. • Scientific, research-based, proven strategies of instruction. • Scaffolding and modeling. • Integration of technology into classroom instruction, instruction delivery, and as teacher resource tool for communication, monitoring student progress, and assessment. • Extended learning time – through extended-school programs (e.g., summer and before-and after- school). • Professional development and mentoring for staff and teachers. • Evidence-based, formative assessment, monitoring, evaluation and intervention.
Improved school leadership, culture, curriculum and instruction, and assessment based on standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum and material aligned with academic standards.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development and training. • Monitoring progress and resource use. Use of benchmarks based on standards. • Learning opportunities through inside and outside school activities and programs. • Use of technology for communication, instruction and assessment. • Partnerships with non-profit organizations and foundations for delivering programs and services.
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How Classroom Suite 4 and Kurzweil 3000 Aligns with and Supports the School Improvement Fund Objectives

Classroom Suite 4 and *Kurzweil 3000*, in conjunction with a technology acquisition program, can successfully address School Improvement Fund objectives.

Following the Overview is a list of key components that when implemented would enable schools and their partners to achieve the desired outcomes of the grant. Because the first objective is 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. The last item in the list, the Math element, deviates from the presentation of language literacy elements because both software programs have components that address Math proficiency.

Brief Overview of Classroom Suite 4 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 in grades 5 and up.

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, 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.

School Improvement Fund	<i>Classroom Suite 4 and Kurzweil 3000 Alignment</i>
Extended time for literacy	<p><i>Classroom Suite</i> and <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> 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, <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> 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>
Direct, explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics	<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</p>

	customizable activity templates help target specific needs and objectives.
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Direct, explicit instruction in comprehension	<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. 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 questions, reading with attention, then answering the questions again after reading to demonstrate their understanding of the material.</p> <p><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> 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, 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.
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<p>Modeling of reading and thinking strategies for comprehension</p>	<p>Using a multi-sensory approach, both <i>Classroom Suite</i> and <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> reads words aloud to students in clear, human-like, synthetic speech. In <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> 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 <i>Classroom Suite</i>, 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 <i>Kurzweil 3000</i>, students can hear the speaker 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>Cooperative learning and discussion of text among students</p>	<p><i>Classroom Suite</i> 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.</p> <p>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><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> lets teachers or students easily bring all types of reading material into the 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.</p> <p>Both <i>Classroom Suite</i> and <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> are compatible with electronic whiteboards, allowing schools and teachers to use activities and materials to include all students.</p>

<p>Self-selected reading at students' ability levels to build motivation</p>	<p><i>Classroom Suite</i> offers a wide range of built-in and optional curriculum-based language literacy activities from which teachers can help students select material.</p> <p>Almost any written material can be scanned into <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> and read using the text-to-speech technology. In addition, students can access electronic documents, explore Internet-based materials, or select from hundreds of public domain fiction and non-fiction books and documents contained on the Classic Literature CD included with <i>Kurzweil 3000</i>. Students are able to self-select, view, and listen to reading material that might otherwise be beyond their reading ability.</p>
<p>On-going progress monitoring</p>	<p><i>Classroom Suite</i> provides extensive classroom and student assessment and management tools. Teachers can track progress even at the answer level.</p> <p><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> generates usage logs to track student statistics, including reading rate, dictionary use, length of reading sessions, and more.</p> <p>In addition, the Universal Library can be set up for students and teachers to share documents. In this way, teachers can listen to students' voice note reading to monitor pronunciation, or read students' notes to answer questions or to monitor comprehension.</p>
<p>Intensive writing</p>	<p>For students in Pre-K to grade 5, <i>Classroom Suite</i> Writing Tools and activities provide many opportunities for learning to write sentences and paragraphs. The writing templates give students scaffold writing support across multiple genres, including journal writing, letters and autobiographies. The report template is a good early intro to the use of brainstorming, organizing and outlining, drafting and reviewing. Auditory support as they write enables students to check and correct their own work. Teachers can use the Writing Tools to create writing starters and guides. The Report template is a good early introduction to the use of brainstorming, organizing and outlining, drafting and reviewing.</p> <p>For students in middle school and high school level, writing experts recommend the following writing process: note taking, brainstorming, organizing and outlining, drafting and reviewing.</p> <p><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> offers an integrated set of writing features that correlates to this writing process. Column Notes enables students to collect important facts, and key ideas. Brainstorm lets students use a graphic organizer to map and organize thoughts, while Outline lets them use standard outline formats to jot down and</p>

	<p>organize their ideas. Typical word processing features, as well as the audible Word Prediction and Word Lists such as Homophones and Confusable words, are available in the Draft mode. As a student types, the software speaks each letter, word, or sentence, facilitating self-correction. A customizable review list enables students to ensure that they check their writing before finalizing drafts.</p> <p>Two types of writing templates – one in graphic organizer format and the other in text document format – guide students through the creation of a range of writing assignments, from a one paragraph composition to a full-length compare and contrast essay.</p> <p>A range of language dictionaries not only enable English Language learners to look up English words in their language, but also aid in the English writing composition.</p>
Age appropriate and diverse reading materials	<p>As a tool-based product, <i>Classroom Suite</i> supports whatever is being read in your district.</p> <p>Any reading material can quickly be made available through <i>Kurzweil 3000's</i> built-in ability to scan and recognize text on a page. Students also gain easy access to Internet-based materials, electronic files in popular formats such as CWK, DOC and PDF, texts contained on the <i>Kurzweil 3000 Classic Literature CD</i>, and from Sopris West e-content reading and literacy programs such <i>Language!</i>, <i>Passport To Reading Journeys</i>, <i>Nonfiction Bookbag</i> and Learning A-Z RAZ kids.</p>
Interdisciplinary efforts to focus on literacy	<p><i>Classroom Suite</i> provides an array of material that spans school subjects, from science and social studies to literature.</p> <p><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> is content and curriculum-independent software, therefore it is well-suited to enhancing literacy across disciplines. Using <i>Kurzweil 3000</i>, students can search through and select from thousands of electronic books and online encyclopedias such as Columbia Encyclopedia, Wikipedia, and Encyclopedia Britannica, helping ensure access to content comparable to that of their peers.</p>
Math proficiency	<p>Three sets of mathematics guidelines and standards form the basis of <i>Classroom Suite Mathematics component</i>: the National Research Council (NRC), <i>strands</i> (Understanding, Computing, Applying, Reasoning, and Engaging), the National Science Foundation, and the National Math Panel's recommendations on Core Principles of Math Instruction, which includes proficiency with whole numbers, fractions, certain aspects of geometry and measurements, conceptual understanding, computational and procedural fluency, problem solving, immediate recall of facts,</p>

	and major topics of Algebra. Additionally, the development of Classroom Suite Mathematics was funded in part by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development to develop tools and models that help promote automaticity.
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