

21st Century Community Learning Center

Grant Overview: Vermont

The 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) program was established by Congress and is part of the *No Child Left Behind Act under Title IV, Part B*. It is an opportunity for students and their families to continue to learn new skills and discover new abilities through extended learning opportunities that take place during out-of-school time (after school, summer, etc.).

The funding provided by the Vermont Department of Education 21st CCLC Program is primarily intended to enhance academic achievement for K-12 students so that they meet state and local academic standards, while fostering lifelong interest in learning in all areas of life through high-quality, research- and assessment-based, out-of-school learning opportunities, such as before and after-school as well as summer programs. Another component is the promotion of family and community involvement.

The full grant application can be obtained at http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/pgm_federal/21st_CCLC/grant_application_09.pdf.

It is expected that the desired outcomes of the Vermont 21st CCLC grant will be achieved by addressing three overarching grant goals:

	Vermont 21st Century Community Learning Center Desired Outcome	Expected to Be Achieved Through
Goal 1	Academic achievement for students who face challenges to academic success, such as English Language Learners and at-risk students through remedial-education, particularly in language skills and literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development • Use of technology • Partnership with schools for assessment, and for expertise in Special Education, Reading, ESL / ELL
Goal 2	Academic achievement through enrichment activities that focus on Math, Science, and Technology literacy and Arts and Music appreciation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development • Use of technology • Partnership with schools to link activities to curricular and individual student goals in Mathematics, English / Language Arts, Social Studies, Science • Access to information on health, wellness, arts, cultural diversity, career awareness and youth entrepreneurship, as well as access to educational resources, programs, activities for youth.
Goal 3	Parental involvement and family literacy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to information on health, wellness, arts, cultural diversity, job opportunities and parenting, as well as access to educational resources, programs, activities for youth and adult learning.

How *Kurzweil 3000* Aligns with and Supports the Vermont 21st Century Community Learning Center Objectives

The Vermont 21st CCLC 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.

Kurzweil 3000, in conjunction with a technology acquisition program and along with school leadership and partnerships, can successfully address the Vermont 21st CCLC 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 students master reading, comprehension and study skills.

Brief Overview of *Kurzweil 3000*

Literacy goes hand-in-hand with academic achievement and is a critical cornerstone of effective citizenship and participation in a community.

Kurzweil 3000 is the premier reading, writing, and learning software for struggling readers. The software is widely recognized as the most comprehensive, integrated solution for addressing literacy difficulties in struggling and at-risk students, including those who are English Language Learners. Because of its universal design, standards-based technologies and support for languages, *Kurzweil 3000* can also be an effective tool for a wide range of people in the community – including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency -- to access information.

For students, *Kurzweil 3000* software provides the tools they need to improve reading fluency and comprehension. Easy-to-use features make it possible for them to both learn and study independently. Added assistance from *Kurzweil 3000* helps students complete reading, class and homework assignments, as well as standardized tests. A comprehensive set of tools allows students to learn and practice critical study skills. Integrated writing features provide students with a wide range of supports to show their mastery of material through their writing.

For schools and districts, having *Kurzweil 3000* in the classrooms, resource centers and outside-of-school or after-school partner programs enables educators to reach and engage not only students with disabilities, but also all students in disadvantaged communities, extending their time for learning.

For English Language Learners, or other language speakers, having *Kurzweil 3000* in schools and outside-of-school or after-school partner programs ensures 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 – whether the composition is for school work or for business and community purposes.

Lastly, independent research studies have proven that *Kurzweil 3000*, as a technology, has a lasting impact on the motivation of struggling students, particularly in middle and high school levels, 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 and, eventually in the community.

The Vermont 21st Century Community Learning Center *Kurzweil 3000* Alignment

The Vermont 21 st CCLC Element	Kurzweil 3000 Alignment
Extended time for literacy	<p><i>Kurzweil 3000</i> takes advantage of current and portable technologies to broaden access and increase time for literacy beyond classroom-based and one-on-one instruction.</p> <p>Networked stations throughout a classroom or school enable teachers and administrators to distribute curricular material, while providing struggling students with access to content, assignments, as well as tools and supports while in class, in resource rooms or information centers.</p> <p>In outside-of-school or after-school partner programs or other community learning settings, the License-to-Go feature enables the use of the software on specific computers, while the <i>Kurzweil 3000 USB Edition</i> and <i>Kurzweil 3000 Web Licensing</i> offers access via the Internet.</p> <p>Additionally, the ability to save material to audio files (MP3 and WAV) means students can listen to chapters or books on portable devices wherever they go.</p>
Direct, explicit instruction in comprehension	<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> <p>Electronic notes in a variety of accessible forms (footnotes, text notes, sticky notes, bubble notes, voice notes, 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.</p> <p>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> <p>In addition <i>Kurzweil 3000</i> includes built-in tools that enhance the teachers' ability to provide instruction, while promoting independent learning. These include the Syllables tool for decoding words; a recursive dictionary and picture dictionary support for learning word meanings; comprehensive reading settings, including Reading by Highlights for skimming and isolating key information; Read the Web for external sources of contextual meaning; and writing tools such as Word Prediction to aid in expressing knowledge in written form.</p>
Modeling of reading and thinking strategies for comprehension	<p>Using a multi-sensory approach, the software reads words aloud to students in clear, human-like, synthetic speech, while 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>Voice notes, in which teachers or aides can record reading, can serve to model pronunciation and expression. Students in turn can use voice notes to practice and show teachers their progress. Reading settings such as speed can be used to guide students through the levels of reading fluency,</p>

	<p>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 pre-reading, highlighting unfamiliar words as a way to learn vocabulary, and compiling important passages as a way of demonstrating comprehension. Brainstorm and Outline tools enable teachers to model and students to emulate the process of synthesizing and organizing thoughts.</p>
Cooperative learning and discussion of text among students	<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>
Self-selected reading at students' ability levels to build motivation	<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>
On-going progress monitoring	<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>
Intensive writing	<p>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 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>