

Brookfield Education Foundation Grant Application:

Project Titles: Building an Online Community of Readers & Writers

Name of Applicant: Susan Crean, 21st Century Skills Teacher, Whisconier Middle School

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Total Amount Requested: \$3711.62 Date Funds Need to be Available: Anytime before August 22, 2012 (new school year) would be wonderful

1. Project Overview: Briefly describe your project. What are your goals?

My goal is to have an online community of readers and writers at Whisconier. I would like to have my students create a school wide website that gives students the opportunity to share their love of books and reading. I will create the basic shell, and then work with the students to create a living, viable Internet presence to share their thinking and ideas about reading and books. Students would be able to review their books and share titles with their classmates. We would use Google Sites to easily create and continually improve our site. With Chromes available, students will be able to comment upon their reading and add good books to a school reading database, and interact with students from all my classes (and eventually the whole school) to share reading experiences. I would also like to have students add their writing, first about current events that they have researched, then eventually their creative pieces.

2. Community Impact: How will your project enhance learning within the Brookfield community?

I will be forming a community of readers and writers within the school. The site will be able to be accessed by all students and parents. The enthusiasm that my students feel for reading and writing should permeate my classroom and hopefully the other classes and their families. As the students go through their academic careers, they will carry this comfort level with technology with them.

3. Evaluation: How will you know you reached your desired objectives? What measurement will you use?

I will determine success by the amount of participation by my students and the rest of the student body. Their participation should include writing entries about their reading, read, commenting on other students blogs, and contributing their writing for other students to read. For this to be a success, student participation has to be over 80% for my students, at least 30% of the school. I would like to see that even after they finish my course, they continue to participate in the site.

4. Duration: What is your project's timeline? This is a year long project.

I will be teaching different groups of students throughout the year. I will see all of the fifth graders, and approximately half the sixth, seventh and eighth graders over the course of the year. As the year goes on, we will add different categories and topics about our reading - characters, authors, series. It would be great to see kids review Nutmeg nominees and Newbury Honors books. We also will write about current events. The upcoming election will be an interesting topic to read and write about. Since the website is for the students, I am very receptive to their ideas and what they would like to see. This year we weren't able to have a complete online community, but the parts that we did were well accepted.

5. Future Implications: How can your project lead to future community educational opportunities?

I am researching possible service learning projects that I can work on with my students. The other possibility I am exploring is reaching out to the global community through a program called Epals, that sponsors research projects that are shared between schools in different parts of the world or country. Having ready access to the Chromes opens up multiple research opportunities for my students. It will enhance their learning opportunities.

6. Project Budget: If awarded, how do you propose to utilize the funds

I would purchase 10 Chromes at a price of \$349 each. (This would allow a relationship of between 2 and 3 students per computer. They would be able to split the core, or rotate days on the computers. It would allow them access). Total : \$3490 plus tax.

Note: Samsung Chrome \$349 apiece at both Best Buy.com and Amazon.com (both free shipping). There have been some rumors that Amazon may be lowering its price, but it has not happened yet. There is an Acer product that is similar, but was not as well reviewed as the Samsung.

7. What prompted the idea for this proposal?

I have been given this brand new opportunity to create a course in 21st Century Skills. some of those skills include communication and creativity. This year my literacy students and I started a website that shared thoughts about the books they were reading and some of their writing. I liked that I was able to have students across three cores read each others' ideas. I would be fantastic to be able to expand that to the whole school. It would create such synergy and excitement about reading. This past year, access was an impediment to more student use of the website. Ideally students should be able to use independent work time in class to work on the website. I was also lucky enough to get a couple of Chromes in my classroom and I saw how easy they were for students accessing the Internet. My students asked me to use the Chromes everyday.

Item	Cost
1. 10 Samsung Chromes(Wi-Fi) @ \$349 apiece	\$3490.00

221.62

(6.35)tax

3,711.62

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Mrs. Sue Crean  
5th Grade Teacher

Whisconier Middle School

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