

ABSTRACT: Buffalo Write Clicks – #39, 53, 66, 156, Nativity Miguel Middle School

The Buffalo City School District proposes to initiate Buffalo Write Clicks which will marshal staff development expertise and technology resources to address the significant gaps in academic performance in 4th – 6th grade ELA among students in the District’s lowest performing, technology ready schools. The four public schools in this cohort are #39, 53, 66, 156; #39 has PLA/SURR status and #53 and #66 have the statuses of School in Improvement Year-2 and Year-1, respectively. The non-public partner is Nativity Miguel Middle School. These schools will supply a total of 15 grades 4-6 teachers to take part in coaching sessions designed to facilitate the integration of tablet computers into the social studies content area. Project resources will fund the Instructional Technology Coach (0.25 FTE) who will provide the professional development on the use of learning technology and provide training and support in the classroom. This coaching will directly support Standards based teaching and learning, including the Common Core, and will progress from assisting the teachers in gaining basic technology competencies, to integrating technology in collaborative project based environments, and to disseminating learning technology resources for sustainability. Funds from the project and the District’s general fund will provide enough tablet computers to ensure a 1:1 student: computer ratio in affected classrooms. Each of the five (5) participating schools will receive a total of six (6) or seven (7) tablet computers for teacher and student use. Schools are selected based in part on their IT readiness, i.e. the extent to which they are “wired,” have wireless networking capabilities, and possess certain computer hardware already, so infrastructure will not be a concern. This proposal is founded on the research based understanding that appropriately directed use of instructional technology will increase student engagement and thus academic achievement.

The project’s goal is the improvement of student achievement through greater student engagement and more focused, efficient, collaborative use of technology in the content area of social studies in 4th – 6th grade classrooms. Through the grant, teachers will be provided with the necessary tools to help students become better readers and writers and gain proficiency with technology. The specific objectives are to: increase teachers’ technology competency; increase the frequency of students’ computer use; increase the level and quality of technology integration into the curriculum; and increase student achievement as measured by NYS grades 4-6 ELA assessments. These objectives are aligned with New York State Board of Regents’ Reform Agenda goals 1, 3, and 4. Ciurczak and Company will conduct an external evaluation of project impact.