

## Proposal Abstract

This grant application seeks to capitalize on the success of the 2012-2015 Buffalo “Write Clicks” Learning Technology Grant program. During the previous 3 years, the grant allowed the Buffalo City School District Instructional Technology Department to successfully implement a multi-unit, Common Core aligned, cross curricular project using iPads in elementary classrooms (grades 4, 5, and 6). This previous grant focused heavily on addressing the six shifts of the Common Core Learning Standards for ELA using Social Studies curriculum. Students were challenged to work with informational text in a digital format, learning to gather, evaluate, organize and present information through both writing and collaborative multimedia presentations. Teacher professional development was provided through embedded coaching with a focus on effective technology integration and methods for challenging students to construct and show evidence of learning through the use of technology.

This current Learning Technology Grant (LTG) application will take that work to the next level. The *MyDigitalClassroom* program will provide teachers in grades 5-8 with the opportunity to immerse their students in a one to one scenario for an extended period of time, up to a full semester. The teacher will work with an Instructional Technology Coach (ITC) to focus on the creation and implementation of high quality, Common Core aligned, units of learning that leverage the technology to provide additional supports for English Language Learners (ELLs). Teachers will be empowered to create cross-curricular units that provide a differentiated experience to challenge their students. The units will include:

- 21st Century Skills
- Collaboration
- ELA Common Core Learning Standards
- Elements of constructivist principles
- Principles of Universal Design for Learning and techniques to target needs of ELLs
- Mobile device integration

Although most project resources will fund the ITC (0.25 FTE) who will provide the professional development on the use of learning technology, a portion will directly provide instructional technology to support Standards based teaching and learning. Through the grant, teachers will be provided with the necessary tools to help students become better readers and writers and gain proficiency with technology. Each of the three (3) participating schools will receive tablet or laptop computers for teacher and student use. These computers will supplement those available through other funding sources. Schools were 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. The selected Buffalo City School District (BCSD) schools are Priority schools with an ELL student population greater than the district average. This proposal is founded on the research based understanding that appropriately directed use of instructional technology will increase student engagement and thus academic achievement.

It is expected that at the conclusion of each project engagement, students will have created and presented both written and multimedia projects incorporating advanced research skills and 21st Century Skills. Students will have demonstrated proficiency in the technology competencies outlined in the Common Core Learning Skills. Teachers will have been mentored through this process by an ITC, and the skills acquired by the teacher will be replicable for them in the future.