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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Developing | Proficient | Distinguished |
| Number | Includes one specific grant opportunity that is appropriate for your school (maximum grade = C) | Includes two specific grant opportunities that are appropriate for your school (maximum grade = B-) | checkIncludes three or more specific grant opportunities that are appropriate for your school (required for A) |
| Details | Includes a limited set of details | checkIncludes a good description of standard details, such as deadlines, eligibility requirements, restrictions on spending, award amounts, etc. | Includes details about the grant opportunities that go well beyond a simple summary of the grants' Web sites in addition to the standard things listed under "Proficient." |
| Extra material  (either attach to electronic file or include links to direct locations on grants' sites; only hand in paper as a last resort) | Includes no supplementary material for most of the grants | Attaches some supplementary material, such as a link to the main Web sites of the grants. | checkAttaches supplementary material that goes beyond a link to the grant Web site. This could include links to such things as a description of the grants and the grant application forms |
| Pros and cons | Does not include pros and cons | Briefly discusses pros and cons of applying for the grants | checkGives a good analysis of the pros and cons of applying for the grants that could help your administration and/or tech committee decide whether or not to apply |
| Large Grant |  | Includes only small grants (maximum grade = B) | checkIncludes at least one grant that is for amounts of at least six thousand dollars (required for an A grade) |
| Mechanics | Contains many grammar, spelling, and/or usage errors or is clearly stretching to fill space and/or does not have numbered pages or appropriate font size | checkminusContains a few grammar, spelling, and/or usage errors or is too long or too short, and/or does not have numbered pages or appropriate font size | Contains correct grammar, spelling, and usage throughout and is approximately 2 pages per grant pages with 12-point font, double-spaced, and numbered pages |

~~You only have supplementary material (in the form of a link to the grant) for one of the grants.~~ I found them. Sorry for the confusion. Thanks for pointing out my mistake (that’s a serious thanks, not a sarcastic thanks; I really do appreciate this so we can get it right).

You have found some interesting grants that can benefit your school. Grade: A-

Mr. Larner,

In an effort to help our school acquire new technologies and resources, I have found several grants that our school may benefit from. The first grant that I found is through Dollar General. The Dollar General Back to School Literacy Grant is aimed to help school media centers to gain materials that would help with the growth of literacy goals throughout the school. Dollar General will only consider public, private, or charter schools that serve any students from grades K-12. To keep the funding for the grant within the communities that Dollar General serves, the grant only applies to schools within a 20-mile radius of any Dollar General store. A quick questionnaire prior to the application process helps to determine if a school is eligible based on the 4 basic criteria. After the questionnaire, the applicant would need to create a user account before actually seeing the application. The applications for this grant need to be submitted by May 18, 2011, with a maximum amount of $5,000 to be awarded per school.

An emphasis is placed on using the grant for a school’s media center in order to implement literacy programs by purchasing new technology equipment, materials, or software for literacy programs. With this purpose in mind, I have two possible uses for this grant. My first thought to help with expanding literacy and reading instruction would be through the use of an instructional resource center. The website Reading A to Z (<http://www.readingatoz.com>) is a great, subscription-required resource for teachers. The site includes printable leveled readers, poems, phonics, vocabulary, and tools for assessments. Each reading teacher could have a subscription to the website in order to help supplement our guided reading books and other resources. With each subscription costing $69.95, and with about 30 reading teachers in the school, we would need to request $2,098.50 from this grant. Reading A to Z would be able to benefit all students in the building through reading instruction. Teachers would also be able to access the website from home, which can be helpful for planning.

Since the grant can also be used to purchase technology equipment to help support literacy, another possibility for this grant would be to seek funding for a SMARTboard. A SMARTboard would be a great addition to our school’s plethora of technology resources. The SMARTboard would be used to create exciting, interactive lessons both in Media classes and during reading instruction. The interactive nature of the board will make lessons very motivating for students and can help to accommodate for different learning styles. The average cost of a SMARTboard is approximately $3,200, but it can vary depending on the model and the vendor. The average cost of a SMARTboard is well within the means of the grant limitations.

One downside to acquiring a SMARTboard would be the need for teacher training. Although it is a highly motivating tool for students, it would take time to train teachers to use the SMARTboard effectively. School-wide and grade level training sessions could be considered as a way to help train teachers with using the SMARTboard and the required software.

I believe that the Dollar General Back to School Literacy grant would be a good grant for our school to consider. With the goal of the grant being to help support literacy in the school in a variety of ways, the possibilities for use of this grant are flexible. I believe that using it either for subscriptions to Reading A to Z or for acquiring a SMARTboard could help enhance our schools reading instruction and help accelerate reading scores. Both possibilities for this grant benefit the majority of teachers in our school, which would give us the most use of the materials.

The second grant that I have researched is the Vernier 30 X $10,000 Grant. In celebration of 30 years a business, Vernier, an educational science software and equipment company, is giving away $10,000 in Vernier science materials and equipment to 30 different schools. This grant is open to Elementary schools, Middle schools, High Schools, and colleges. Only 10 of the 30 grants are being set aside for Elementary and Middle schools, so this is a highly selective and competitive grant. This grant would require a lot of time and planning in order to have a good chance at receiving the grant.

To apply, schools must submit a written description of how the materials will be used to help create hands-on learning experiences for science. Applicants also need to tell a little about the school and the benefits that the school would gain from acquiring the new science equipment. If selected, schools may be required to send videos or photos for Vernier to use for future promotional purposes. All applications are due by June 1, 2011.

I had to do a little digging to learn more about the products offered by Vernier that would be appropriate in the Elementary setting. The products offered for Elementary education purposes are mainly used for data collection and analysis. Vernier offers science lab books complete with a CD that has a site license, so according to the website, the CD can be shared throughout the school. The lab books include lesson plans and sample data points to use with the data collection and analysis equipment. Each book costs $48.

The main piece of equipment offered by Vernier is pretty sophisticated. The LabQuest is a data collection and analysis device that can be used with or without a computer. The device features a color touch screen, calculator, note taking page, stopwatch, and a periodic table. There are a variety of plug-in that attach to the LabQuest, each one with it’s own unique purposes. Some plug-ins that can be used with the device include a light probe, a motion detector, a temperature probe, and a gas pressure sensor, just to name a few. Once a plug-in is inserted, the LabQuest device automatically begins to record data. Students can use the touch screen to toggle between different graphs as well as the calculator and note-taking page. Vernier offers a starter package that would include the LabQuest device, light probe, and motion sensor for $450. The necessary software is included with the LabQuest device, so there is no additional cost for that.

I believe that this equipment would be most useful for 4th, 5th, and GT science teachers and students. Since each book includes a site license we could purchase one book, but I think it would be more helpful to purchase one book for each of the previously mentioned teams. Although it is a large grant, the equipment can be pricey, so I recommend requesting 20 of the starter packages for a total of $9,000. This would allow an additional $1,000 to put towards purchasing the lab books and any additional plug-ins that may be useful. A set of 20 LabQuest devices would allow one class to use the system at a time.

This is a very large grant, but it has its limitations as far as equipment selection. Although our school could gain very valuable science and data equipment, the uses would be mostly for older students. I think that the equipment and resources gained from this grant could help to supplement the science materials from Howard County in a meaningful way. Using the LabQuest devices, students would be able to see their data recorded in real time and would be able to gain a better understanding of some science and math concepts. Although a grant that benefits the entire school might be more effective, this grant would certainly be valuable for the older students in the school.

The final grant that I found for our school is the Digital Wish Elementary Zone Grant. This grant gives selected schools a license to the website Elementary Zone (<http://www.elementaryzone.com/login.jsp?action=change&sw=notwarned>). Elementary Zone is a web based game center, designed to strengthen skills in math, literacy, and science. Games are based on the age of the students who are working on the program, so it is appropriate for all students in our school. Teachers have the ability to “unlock” the games that they would like the students to work on. In this way, teachers have control over the skills that are being practiced while also allowing students to make some choices about the games they want to play, within the teacher selected games.

Many of the games that I played during my trial seemed to be self-correcting. The games also use rewarding sounds or pictures when the student is correct. The directions for each game are simple enough that even young students can play them independently. Many of the games even have spoken directions. This website would be ideal to use as weekly practice, a learning center, during indoor recess, or as part of a reward for students who need motivation.

The application is very simple. A teacher needs to create a technology lesson plan that is fun and creative. Winners are chosen based on the creativity of the Elementary lesson. The next application deadline is April 15, 2011, however there are opportunities for this grant on the 15th of each month. With so many opportunities to apply for this grant, it is really easy to apply for it at almost any time. Our school has plenty of knowledgeable and creative teachers, especially when it comes to technology. A small group of teachers could come up with several creative technology lessons plans that could be submitted for the grant application.

A benefit of applying for this grant is that all students in the school could benefit from using the website. The license that is being given for this grant is for an entire school, so there would be no problem with allowing access to all students in the building at any one time. Teachers could use the computer lab or the mobile lab for whole group practice. The games on the website are divided into sections based on the age of the students, allowing for differentiation of skill levels. The animations, sounds, and pictures make it very motivating for students to play. It is also very easy for teachers to change the selection of games available to the students. Teachers also have access to teacher’s notes for each game that gives a brief description and tells the learning outcome of the game. The notes make it easy for teachers to understand the purpose of a game and also to determine if it is the correct fit for the objectives currently being worked on. Teacher may also choose to use this site as a way to review previously practiced skills.

I think that this grant would be a helpful resource to our school. It would give students meaningful games for skills review and motivation. Additionally it is very teacher friendly and easy to use with a variety of students.

I hope that you found the information about these grants to be helpful. Perhaps our school could consider applying for one or more of these grants to help increase the technology and resources in our building.

Thank you,

Monica Chuppetta

Dollar General Back to School Literacy Grant Links

<http://www.dollargeneral.com/dgliteracy/Pages/b2s_grants.aspx>

<http://www.cybergrants.com/pls/cybergrants/ao_reg.register?x_gm_id=3107&x_source_flag=&x_style_id=&x_proposal_type_id=14194&x_sv_id=&x_org_id=&x_invitation_id=&x_tax_source_country_id=US>

Vernier 30 X 10,000 Grant Links

<http://www.vernier.com/30years/>

<http://30years.vernier.com/>

<http://www.vernier.com/pkgs/labquest/elementary.html>

Digital Wish Elementary Zone Grant

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/dw_grant_calendar>

<http://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/view_grant_winners?id=86>

<http://www.elementaryzone.com/login.jsp?action=change&sw=notwarned>