

## Technology Innovation Challenge Grants <sup>1</sup> (CFDA No. 84.303A)

### I. Legislation

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by Section 3136, Title III, P.L. 103-382 (20 U.S.C. 6846) (expires September 30, 1999).

### II. Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1995	\$7,500,000
1996	38,000,000

### III. Analysis of Program Performance

#### A. Goals and Objectives

The purpose of this program is to support the development of innovative applications of technology in schools. This includes support of consortia that use new technologies to strengthen school reform efforts that improve access to computers, improve the networking of computers, improve student achievement, and provide sustained professional development of teachers, school administrators, and school library personnel. Each consortium must include at least one local education agency (LEA) that has a high percentage or number of children living below the poverty line. An LEA must serve as the applicant and fiscal agent on behalf of the consortium.

#### B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals

##### Services Supported

Most Challenge Grants are integrated into local school reform initiatives pushing for higher standards and improved student achievement in mathematics and sciences, language arts, the humanities, and the arts. At least one-third of the grants include new applications of technology to improve school-to-work transition for students who will be working in a high-tech economy.

Five of the first-year grants support networks of teachers for sustained professional development, and two create “virtual museum” or research environments. One of the grants was awarded to a Bureau of Indian Affairs school (Laguna Pueblo, NM) to support a network of reservation schools that are developing new curricula for American Indian students.

Partners in the consortium are expected to make substantial commitments for the costs of equipment, technical support and any other costs associated with acquiring network linkages or telecommunication services. Challenge Grant funds may also be applied to these costs, but their primary purpose is to augment the consortium investments by supporting the development of new content, professional

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<sup>1</sup> This program was called “Challenge Grants for Technology in Education” in FYs 1995 and 1996.

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development, and the evaluation of educational effectiveness. In FY 1995 (the first round of the competition) the total value of all commitments made by Challenge Grant partners exceeded the total value of the grants by three-to-one. Some \$72 million was committed to 19 projects for which the Challenge Grant funding totaled approximately \$15 million for the year. The FY 1996 grants leveraged \$154 million in additional funding from all sources for Technology Innovation Challenge Grant activities.

### **C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness**

Program performance indicators that are integrated with program performance indicators for other education technology programs are being developed.

The 19 funded projects are just finishing the second year of their five-year grants. In their first full year of operation, these Challenge Grants reached the classrooms of 1.2 million students; almost 5,000 teachers participated in training and professional development activities. Although it is too early to speak of outcomes, the grantees have had a successful start-up (despite disruptions of their FY 1996 funding), and were prepared to move from pilot sites into full implementation during the 1996-97 school year. Many grantees report that the Challenge Grant has attracted additional matching commitments from new consortium partners and non-government funding sources. Some 586 applications were received in the FY 1996 competition, and 24 of these applicants received new Challenge Grants.

## **IV. Planned Studies**

A comprehensive program evaluation for Challenge Grants began in FY 1997. This includes groundwork for the evaluation designs of each individual grant.

## **V. Sources of Information**

Program files.

## **VI. Contacts for Further Information**

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