

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

IMPLEMENTATION OF TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED LEARNING TO IMPROVE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND SUCCESS IN HIGH-SCHOOL

PURPOSE OF CALL

As part of ongoing research into best practices in classroom technology implementation, Alberta Education is seeking proposals from school jurisdictions interested in exploring the use of technology to improve student engagement and success in high school. The emphasis of the Call is on school-wide initiatives that demonstrate innovative uses of technology-rich environments to improve student engagement at the secondary level (grades 9-12).

Initiatives could include, but are not limited to the following examples:

1. A whole-school approach to increasing student engagement by infusing current and emerging technologies and applications (interactive whiteboards, classroom response systems, online learning environments, etc.) across curricular areas and grade levels.
2. Hybrid use of synchronous and asynchronous technologies to provide interactive learning environments that will assist students in completing high school courses. Such technologies could include combining the best attributes of videoconferencing, webcasting, e-mail, discussion groups, electronic whiteboards, collaborative document sharing, real-time messaging, podcasting, videocasting, text-to-speech applications, online resources, etc.
3. Providing junior and senior high students and their teachers with laptops and associated learning applications that they use in and out of school and keep until the completion of high school.
4. Exploring learning programs and instructional approaches that blend online learning courses and technology-rich classroom learning to help students finish high school programs.

Initiatives that would NOT be considered include the following:

- Proposals focused on upgrading or improving computer/CTS labs.
- Content and/or course development initiatives.

The selected projects will be coupled with research that will explore how technology can be leveraged to improve the school experience for all students, with particular focus on students who are at-risk, struggling or disengaged with current learning environments. The results and lessons learned from the projects and accompanying research will be shared across the system and used in making decisions and guiding change.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must adhere to the following requirements:

- Only publicly-funded K-12 school jurisdictions and charter authorities are eligible to submit proposals in response to this call. Jurisdictions may partner with other organizations such as post-secondary institutions.
- Proposals must be submitted by the jurisdiction or authority central office (rather than individual schools). In the event that a jurisdiction or authority submits more than one proposal, only the first proposal received will be considered.

- Proposals must meet all components described within the PROPOSAL FORMAT.
- Activities and deliverables within proposals must be carried out between April 2008 and August 2010. The final report will be due November 30, 2010.
- Proposals for Alberta Education funding must range from \$100,000 to a **Maximum of \$300,000** (this range does not include the jurisdiction portion of the total cost of the initiative). Proposals seeking Alberta Education funding greater than \$300,000 will not be considered. In addition to the Alberta Education funding requested, applicants must commit to monetary and/or in-kind funding of some portion of the total initiative cost.
- Successful applicants must agree to the following:
 - Host site visit/s for Alberta Education personnel,
 - Participate in possible research activities coordinated by Alberta Education,
 - Participate in knowledge sharing activities coordinated by Alberta Education, and,
 - Provide two interim reports and one final report.
- **Submission Deadline is Monday, October 29, 2007 at 12:00 noon MST.**

BACKGROUND

The **Learning and Technology Policy Framework** encourages the identification, evaluation, and potential adoption of emerging technologies and promising practices that will improve student learning and expand learning opportunities for all Albertans. This Call supports Alberta Education's priority to improve high school completion rates.

Alberta's education system can benefit from the sharing of expertise related to emerging technologies and their impact on learning and teaching. Technology can provide unique opportunities for engaging students and expanding educational programs to learners. *Research indicates that effective use of technology benefits all students, but particularly those at the low and high end of the achievement spectrum. The effective use of technology can address improvements in student engagement and work habits, increases in student achievement, changes in teaching practice towards more student-centered instruction, increases in student and teacher ICT skills, and increases in parental satisfaction and community involvement.

*NOTE: A full Literature Review on the role of technology in high school completion will be available on the Int.ca website in September.

This Call supports the following Strategies in Alberta Education's 2007-2010 Business Plan:

- Strategy 1.1: Work with stakeholders to develop and implement province-wide strategies, actions and community initiatives that will increase Alberta's five-year high school completion rate.
- Strategy 1.11: Enhance the use of current and emerging technologies to increase program choice and access for students, particularly in rural communities.

TIMELINE

CALL CLOSES: OCTOBER 29, 2007 at 12:00 noon MST

SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS FUNDED: ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31, 2008

PROJECT EXECUTION: APRIL 2008 – AUGUST 2010 (Final Report: NOVEMBER 30, 2010)

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Length of proposal: Maximum 6 pages not including Applicant Information (item 1 below) or attachment. Maximum of 1 attachment of no more than 5 MB.

The proposal must be submitted electronically (Word or PDF) and must include the following components, labeled accordingly and in the sequence described below:

1. Applicant Information:
 - a. Name of lead jurisdiction (the applicant),
 - b. Lead contact person for the project (name, title, mailing address, phone number, and email address),
 - c. Capacity of the applicant (with supporting partners, if applicable) to deliver initiative,
 - d. Letter of support from senior official (or designate) for lead applicant,
 - e. List of project team members and partners including a brief description of their roles, time devoted to project, experience, and planned contributions; and,
 - f. Letter(s) of support from senior official (or designate) of partner organizations, if applicable.
2. Description of Proposed Project (must include the following information):
 - Project Title,
 - Description: Provide a brief, concise description of the project,
 - Goals: Clearly articulate the goals and outcomes that the project will achieve,
 - Participants: Identify the target group/school/s and indicate approximately how many educators and students will participate, include grade level and subject area/s,
 - Method: Describe the teaching/learning methods involved, and identify hardware and software that will be employed; and,
 - Rationale: Indicate how the proposed approach is aligned with the needs of the participants, supports improved high school completion rates and is supported by associated research.
3. Technical Support: Describe provisions for technical support and any associated training that is anticipated for technical staff.
4. Professional Development: Describe how participating staff will be supported through professional development opportunities that align with best practice. It is recommended that at least 20% of project budgets be allocated to professional development.
5. Evaluation and Research: Indicate how the goals and outcomes of the project will be tracked, measured and evaluated. The evaluation plan should indicate how the essential conditions for successful technology implementation in schools, will be addressed and tracked (see chart on page 4).

Essential Conditions for Implementing Technology in Schools

Shared Vision – The school board and school administrators provide proactive leadership in developing a shared vision for educational technology among school personnel, parents, and the community.
Equitable Access – Students and teachers have equitable access to current technologies, (hardware/software), and resources. The technology is readily available within the learning environment.
Skilled Personnel – Administrators, teachers and support personnel are skilled in the use of technology appropriate for their job responsibilities. (Technical training)
Professional Development – Administrators, teachers and support personnel have consistent access to technology-related professional development for their job assignments. (Pedagogy)
Technical Assistance – Personnel have technical assistance for maintaining and using technology. Timely technical support is provided at the classroom level as required.
Content Standards and Curriculum Resources – Instructional personnel, administrators and teachers are knowledgeable about content and technology standards, related ICT curricular outcomes and resources and the use of technology to support learning.
Student-Centered Teaching – Teaching in all settings includes the use of technology to facilitate student-centered approaches to learning. Instruction methods incorporate a variety of technologies to meet individual needs of students.
Assessment and Accountability – The school and district has a system for the continual assessment of effective technology use for improving student learning. The vision and goals for technology use are tracked and reported.
Community Support – The district and school collaborates and communicates with parents, and the community to support technology use.
Support Policies – The school and district has policies, financial plans, and structures to support the use of technology in learning and in operations.

*Chart adapted with permission from <http://www.iste.org>

Results will be reported to Alberta Education within interim and final reports.

Reporting:

There are three reports required. These reports include:

- a. Two interim reports due: January 30, 2008 and January 30, 2009
- b. One final written report due November 30, 2010 (report format will be provided).

Note: Applicants must be willing to participate in research and knowledge sharing activities coordinated by Alberta Education.

6. Sustainability: Describe how the initiative will be sustained past August 2010 and what the expected long-term result/plan will be.
7. Deliverables and Timelines: Identify the major activities to be carried out by the lead applicant and by any partner(s). Describe the sequence of events, including milestones and estimated completion dates, and indicate who is responsible for each part of the project.
8. Budget: Define a proposed budget, describing in appropriate detail how the Alberta Education funding will be used. Specify monetary and/or in-kind contributions of lead and supporting partners (if applicable). Include human resource costs, hardware and software, technical support and professional development.

Eligibility of Costs for Alberta Education Funding: **Criteria for eligible and non-eligible Alberta Education funding are described below.**

Costs **eligible** for funding by Alberta Education include:

- hardware and software purchases/leases/insurance and deployment/maintenance;
- network upgrades and maintenance (including wireless);
- technical support and training;
- project coordination;
- professional development; and
- participation in stakeholder events at the request of Alberta Education.

Costs **not eligible** for funding by Alberta Education include:

- communications and/or promotional costs;
- travel to and attendance at conferences.

Eligibility for School Jurisdiction Monetary and/or In-kind Contributions: **Criteria for eligible and non-eligible monetary and/or in-kind contributions are described below.**

Eligible in-kind or monetary contributions include costs associated with:

- staffing;
- network provisions, hardware and software; and
- training and professional development.

In-kind or monetary contributions that are **not eligible** include:

- travel to and attendance at conferences.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Address of proposal requirements:

- Degree to which the proposal addresses the submission requirements and all components of the Proposal Format outlined in this document.

2. Feasibility:

- Capacity of the organization to develop and deliver the initiative within the budget and timelines specified in the proposal.
- Evidence that the proposal is informed by *research, incorporates sound educational practice, and is technically feasible.

*NOTE: A full Literature Review on the role of technology in high school completion will be available on the Int.ca website in September.

3. Management:

- Appropriate planning and resourcing for all aspects of the proposal including an evaluation process to track the attainment of essential conditions and to determine level of success in meeting outcomes.
- Identification of strategies to achieve long-term sustainability.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals must be submitted electronically (by email) using Word or pdf format to:

Joanna Taylor, Project Assistant
Stakeholder Technology Branch, Alberta Education
E-mail: Joanna.Taylor@gov.ab.ca
Phone: (780) 427-9042 [toll free by dialing 310-0000 first]

Alberta Education is not responsible for technical difficulties encountered during transmission of electronic proposals. Applicants will receive an e-mail from Joanna Taylor to confirm that the proposal was successfully received.

For further information regarding this Call for Proposals, please contact the Call administrator:

Karen Andrews, Manager, Research and Planning
Stakeholder Technology Branch, Alberta Education
10th Floor, 44 Capital Boulevard
10044 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T5J 5E6
Email: Karen.Andrews@gov.ab.ca
Phone: (780) 644-5194 [toll free by dialing 310-0000 first]

Please note the following:

Applicants submitting proposals may not request information about other proposals that have been submitted.

Alberta Education has the right to cancel this Call for Proposals at any time and to reissue it for any reason whatsoever, without incurring any liability and no organization will have any claim against Alberta Education as a consequence. Alberta Education is not bound to accept the proposal that provides the lowest budget, nor any proposal of those submitted.

Alberta Education reserves the right to request further information from applicants as required.

Successful applicants will not make public announcements or provide information for public release prior to the announcement of the successful projects by Alberta Education.