

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY NEWSLINE

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INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY SECTION UPDATE

DESE Budgets/Grant Programs

Education Technology Programs

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/>

Federal Title II.D Competitive Grants

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/federalfunded/TitleIID/>

FY08 Update. Grant recipients are reminded that Program Evaluation Narratives are due by June 30.

FY09 Update. A total of 49 applications (8 Continuation and 41 Year 1 grant applications) were submitted, requesting over \$14 million. Competitive Year 1 applications were evaluated via peer reviews April 14-17. Based on the estimated \$4 million appropriation and \$3.6 in flow-through funding, the Department has tentatively approved 8 Year 1 and 8 Year 2 grants. To receive final approval, applicants must complete grant negotiations – during which time the approved amount will be determined. Names of the tentatively approved applicants are listed below. Additional details about the competitive grants submitted and the scoring and approval process are posted on the program website, or click on: <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/documents/FY09IIDGrantAwards.doc>

Year 2 Continuation Title II.D Grants Tentatively Approved

District	Grant Request
El Dorado Springs	\$ 150,000
Eldon	150,000
Hartville	150,000
Monett	150,000
North Harrison	150,000
Poplar Bluff	150,000
Ste. Genevieve	96,191
Wellsville Middletown	150,000

Year 1 Competitive Title II.D Grants Tentatively Approved

District	Quadrant	Grant Request
LEVEL 1 PRIORITY: TOP-SCORING GRANTS		
Sullivan	SE	\$ 336,492
School of the Osage	SW	398,200
Fulton	NE	396,327
Putnam County	NW	399,390

- NACOL paper on promising practices in online learning
- Key ed-tech trends research report
- Free SIFA online courses
- CCSSO dual enrollment report

eMINTS Update

- Congratulations Title II.D and METS grant awardees
- Register for FY09 eMINTS professional development services & programs
- Submit information online
- eMINTS fee increases for FY09
- Register for summer workshops
- eMINTS in Australia featured on UM System website
- Moodle resources for teachers and classrooms
- SqoolTools – for any teacher in U.S.
- Subscribe to eMINTS news and updates via RSS feed
- eMINTS events on the website

CSD Update

- Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis and The Princeton Review
- CSD also offers PSAT Prep with The Princeton Review
- The Wired Classroom, the Virtual Learning

Year 1 Competitive Title II.D Grants Tentatively Approved

LEVEL 2 PRIORITY: QUADRANT ALLOCATIONS		
East Newton	SE	\$ 295,132
Hancock Place	SW	400,000
Westran	NE	258,691
Richmond	NW	389,860

State eMINTS/METS Classrooms Grants

<http://emints.org/communities/mets.shtml>

FY08 Updates. Grant recipients are reminded of the following:

- Program Evaluation Narratives are due by June 30
- Year 2 professional development fees will be assessed as described in the May 20 email to grant contacts. [Refer questions to the eMINTS National Center and/or Instructional Technology]

METS School Grants

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/METS%20School%20Grant%20Pgrm/index.html>

In total, 31 eMINTS, 9 Science, and 5 Mathematics competitive applications, requesting just under \$5.9 million, were submitted by the March 31 deadline and were reviewed and evaluated by readers April 15-17. However, the Department learned in May that, while the Governor had proposed funding the FY09 METS School Grants Program at \$5 million, the General Assembly approved \$1 million and earmarked the funds for Schoolwide eMINTS projects.

With this directive and level of funding, the Department will only be able to fund five eMINTS grants – and regrets not being able to support any of the Mathematics or Science curriculum grant applications that were submitted and reviewed. To receive final approval, applicants must complete grant negotiations – during which time the approved amount will be determined. Names of the tentatively approved applicants are listed below. Additional details about the competitive grants submitted and the scoring and approval process are posted on the program website, or click on:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/METS%20School%20Grant%20Pgrm/>.

Year 1 Competitive METS School Grants Tentatively Approved

District	Quadrant	Grant Request
LEVEL 1 PRIORITY: TOP-SCORING GRANTS		
El Dorado Springs	SW	\$ 219,371
Community	NE	114,723
Special School District	SE	164,185
Raytown	NW	183,594
LEVEL 2 PRIORITY: QUADRANT ALLOCATION		
Sikeston	SE	\$ 267,047

State Safe Schools Program

<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/safeschools/index.html>

FY08 Update. Grant recipients are reminded that Program Evaluation Narratives are due by June 30.

FY09 Update. A total of 58 (31 Continuation and 27 Year 1) applications, requesting over \$4.6 million, were submitted for funding under the FY09 Safe

Center's blog

- Subject: Call for Presentations in the Tenth Anniversary Megaconference

Regular Featured Items

- Upcoming Conferences
- Grant Funding Opportunities
- Mark Your Calendar
- From the Mailbag
- Newest eTHEMES
- Updated eTHEMES

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State Safe Schools Program cont'd.

Schools Grant Program. Competitive Year 1 grant applications were evaluated via peer reviews May 19-20. Based on the expected \$3 million appropriation, the Department has tentatively approved the 31 Continuation and 8 Year 1 grants. To receive final approval, applicants must complete grant negotiations – during which time the approved amount will be determined. Names of the tentatively approved applicants are listed below. Additional details about the competitive grants submitted and the scoring and approval process are posted on the program website.

Year 1 Competitive Safe Schools Grants Tentatively Approved

<i>Applicant District</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Quadrant</i>	<i>Grant Request</i>
<i>LEVEL 1 PRIORITY: TOP-SCORING GRANTS</i>			
Bismarck	D	SE	\$ 100,000
Clinton Co. R-III	P	NW	169,473
Hollister	D	SW	99,973
Wright City	D	NE	99,969
<i>LEVEL 2 PRIORITY: QUADRANT ALLOCATIONS</i>			
Sedalia	SW	SW	\$ 100,000
Sullivan	SE	SE	100,000
Genesis School	NW	NW	60,000
S. Callaway	NE	NE	21,689
<i>LEVEL 2 PRIORITY: PENDING (if funding allows)</i>			
Perry Co. 32	D	SE	\$ 99,997
Raymore-Peculiar R-II	D	SW	100,000

Year 2 Continuation Safe Schools Grants Tentatively Approved

<i>Applicant District</i>	<i>Grant Year</i>	<i>Grant Type</i>	<i>Grant Request</i>	<i>Applicant District</i>	<i>Grant Year</i>	<i>Grant Type</i>	<i>Grant Request</i>
Allen Village	3	D	\$ 29,412	Maryville	4	M	400,000
Arcadia Valley	3	D	50,000	Mexico	3	D	50,000
Blue Springs	3	D	50,000	Mountain Grove	3	D	50,000
Carrollton	3	D	50,000	Otterville	3	D	23,464
Chillicothe	3	C	150,000	Portageville	3	D	50,000
Crawford Co. R-I	2	D	75,000	Richland	3	C	149,931
Dallas Co. R-I	3	D	50,000	Rockwood	3	D	50,000
De Soto	3	D	29,064	School of the Osage	2	D	70,140
Eldon	3	D	50,000	So. Reynolds	3	D	50,000
Ferguson-Florissant	3	D	50,000	Spec. School District	2	D	62,272
Hazelwood	3	D	50,000	St. Clair	3	D	50,000
Humansville	3	P	63,475	St. Joseph	3	D	50,000
Independence	2	D	74,812	St. Louis City	3	D	31,784
Jefferson City	3	D	50,000	Troy	3	D	50,000
Laclede Co. R-I	3	D	39,615	Waynesville	2	D	75,000
Maplewood-Richmond	3	D	50,000				

* D – District, P – Partnership (2 districts), C – Consortium (3 to 19 districts),
M – Mega-consortium (20 or more districts)

MOREnet K-12 Technology Networking Program (TNP) <no news to report>

<http://www.more.net/programs/k12tnp/index.html>

Technology Plans and Data Collection <no news to report>

STATE AND NATIONAL NEWS

Missouri Alert Network System engages all collegiate campuses

Gov. Blunt announced May 19 that all public and independent higher education institutions have an official contact on file with the Missouri Alert Network, fulfilling another recommendation from his Campus Security Task Force to improve communication to make colleges and universities safer. Supported by GroupCast LLC St. Louis, the alert network allows for instantaneous notification to designated officials at each campus. The system allows officials to receive real time public safety alerts and other relevant information from the Missouri Department of Public Safety. The state partnered with the Missouri School Boards' Association to bring this information distribution system to K-12 schools and Missouri's colleges and universities at no charge. The Higher Education Subcommittee of the Homeland Security Advisory Council continues to work on the other important recommendations that were part of the Governor's Campus Security Task Force report. See: <http://www.govtech.com/gt/117680>

Governor Blunt discusses 2008 legislative actions on YouTube

Gov. Matt Blunt addressed Missourians through YouTube on Friday, May 16, to outline 2008 legislative session successes. "We had a tremendously productive legislative session and I want to share firsthand the goals we set and achieved to bring greater opportunities and prosperity for Missouri families," Blunt said. "YouTube is a great way for me to communicate directly to Missourians so they can see and hear for themselves the accomplishments we made in the 2008 legislative session." Gov. Blunt unveiled his YouTube channel in January. Missourians also may view the State of the State address and other messages from the governor on the Internet site. See: <http://www.govtech.com/gt/117673>

E-RATE PROGRAM

Funding Year 2008 FCDLs

USAC released FY2008 (School Year 2008-09) **Wave 5** Funding Commitment Letters (FCDLs) **May 28, 2008**. This wave included almost \$29 million in funding commitments for approved Priority 1 requests (Telecommunications Services and Internet Access) for schools and libraries at all discount levels. To-date, FY2008 commitments total \$538 million. See: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/funding/y2008/national.asp>.

On the day after the FCDLs are mailed, applicants can check to see if they have commitments by using USAC's Automated Search of Commitments tool at: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/funding/>.

Funding Year 2007 FCDLs

USAC released FY2007 (School Year 2007-08) **Wave 52** FCDLs **May 28, 2008**. This wave included commitments for approved \$1.9 million for Internal Connections and Basic Maintenance requests at/above 81% and denials at/below 80%. To-date, FY2007 commitments total over \$2.3 billion. See: <http://www.sl.universalservice.org/funding/y2007/national.asp>.

RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, RESOURCES

5th annual Speak Up survey findings

In its fifth annual Speak Up survey of educators and students, Project Tomorrow found a growing "digital disconnect" between what role technology should play in the classroom and how well schools are preparing students for the workplace. Nearly 370,000 K-12 students, teachers, administrators, and parents from all 50 states shared their ideas on science, math, technology and 21st century skills through Speak Up 2007. Other findings include:

- 66% of administrators feel their schools are preparing students for future jobs and careers
- 40% of middle and high school students say teachers actually limit their use of technology
- 54% of students are interested in STEM careers
- One-third of teachers say they would like to teach an online class
- 84% of administrators say educational technology enhances student achievement
- 63% of parents say they know more about child's schoolwork and grades because of school technology

Additional findings and special reports will be released throughout the year and available online at: <http://www.tomorrow.org>. To download the April 2008 preliminary national findings report, see:

RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS, RESOURCES cont'd.

<http://www.tomorrow.org/docs/National%20Findings%20Speak%20Up%202007.pdf>

E-rate survey report

According to recent survey, three out of four applicants say the E-rate program is meeting its goal of connecting schools and libraries to the internet, and many applicants say they couldn't do without it. Conducted by eSchool News and E-rate consulting firm Funds For Learning LLC, the survey polled more than 700 E-rate applicants on a wide range of questions about the program. The responses, which come a full decade into the E-rate's existence, provide a comprehensive picture yet of who the typical E-rate manager is, how much time applicants invest in the program, their attitudes and opinions about various aspects of the E-rate process, the key challenges that participants face in applying, and their ideas for how to improve the E-rate program. To view the special report, see:

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/top-news/?&i=53964>.

NACOL paper on promising practices in online learning

The North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) recently released the paper "Blended Learning: The Convergence of Online and Face-to-Face Education" detailing how blended learning combines the best elements of online and face-to-face learning and is likely to emerge as a predominant method of teaching and learning. It is being implemented by schools throughout the country and the world, and in some cases it has been underway for several years. According to author John Watson, of Evergreen Consulting Associates, "Online learning offers the advantage of personalization, allowing individualized attention and support when students need it most. It provides the very best educational opportunities to all students, regardless of their zip code, with highly qualified teachers delivering instruction using the Internet and a vast array of digital resources and content." The NACOL Promising Practices in Online Learning Series is supported by K12 Inc., Apex Learning, Florida Virtual School, and Connections Academy.

See: http://www.nacol.org/resources/NACOL_PP-BlendedLearning-Ir.pdf

Key ed-tech trends research report

Widespread adoption of one-to-one computing programs and the growing use of online assessments and interactive whiteboards are among the key ed-tech trends occurring in schools across the country, according to this May 15 eSchool News article on the 2008 America's Digital Schools report. Implementation of these and other technologies, however, leaves little funding for new initiatives and bandwidth issues are limiting the scope of interaction students can have with technology. The report suggests that another key trend – the growing use of LMS software in schools – hasn't fully realized its potential. While the number of school districts using LMS software (such as school portals, teacher authoring, electronic assignments, electronic supplements, electronic core curriculum, and content management) climbed to nearly 50 percent of respondents, with another 19 percent indicating plans for future use, schools "frequently take less than full advantage of the available applications." The report also notes a serious shortage of tech support, which makes support of new initiatives very difficult. To read the eSN article, see:

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/news/top-news/?i=53795>.

Free SIFA online courses

The Schools Interoperability Framework Association (SIFA) announced the launch of the *Improving Education Data Part 1 - Creating a Foundation* course, which presents four lessons related to creating a culture of quality data. A second course, *Improving Education Data Part 2 - Coordinating Data Quality*, will be released in summer 2008. These courses are designed for LEAs, are free of charge, and can be accessed at:

<http://www.sifinfo.org/sifau.asp>

CCSSO dual enrollment report

Released by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in March, the report "Conducting Research to Answer Your Questions about Dual Enrollment" is intended to help states and districts measure the effectiveness of dual enrollment efforts by providing a framework for data systems and sample research activities. The report is available at:

<http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/Conducting%20Research%20to%20Answer%20Your%20Questions%20about%20Dual%20Enrollment.pdf>

eMINTS UPDATE

submitted by Monica Beglau

Congratulations Title II.D and METS grant awardees DESE has announced the FY09 awardees for both the Title II.D and METS School Grant programs. Competition for both programs was strong. Find details for each grant on the DESE website:

- Title II.D awardees <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/documents/FY09IIDGrantAwards.doc>
- METS School Grant awardees <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/instrtech/documents/FY09METSGrantAwards.doc>

Register for FY09 eMINTS professional development services & programs Registration for eMINTS professional development services should be **submitted not later than June 15, 2008**. Requests from schools/districts using grant funds will be accepted after the deadline date if grant awards are not made until after that date. Organizations using grant funds to cover eMINTS participation fees must submit registration within 10 calendar days following notice of grant award.

Professional development **registration for replacement teachers in existing eMINTS and eMINTS4All classrooms** should be made as soon as the replacement teacher is assigned. If replacement(s) have not been identified when the online registration form is submitted, please submit required contact information (items 1-6 below) for each replacement as soon as he/she is assigned by sending e-mail to emints-info@emints.org.

Each organization/district is required to provide the following information:

- Organization/district contact information.
- Contact information for the organization/district's official eMINTS project contact person.
- Contact information for each person who is registering for contracted eMINTS programs and services in FY09:
 - Legal first name (no nicknames, please)
 - Last name
 - Primary e-mail address
 - Alternate e-mail address
 - Work phone number
 - Home phone number

Submit information online For FY09; use a new electronic form to submit all information for contracted FY09 eMINTS professional development services and participants registering for eMINTS PD programs. The eMINTS National Center will prepare a contract for professional development services for each organization/district and create accounts for participants' access to eMINTS online learning environments based on the information submitted. Find details and register online at <http://www.emints.org/application/>.

eMINTS fee increases for FY09 As a result of recent funding reductions to DESE's professional development program; the eMINTS National Center has found it necessary to increase fees for FY09 programs and services. The loss of these funds was totally unanticipated. eMINTS wishes there was another way to maintain high levels of service but the fee increases are inescapable at this time. FY09 fees are listed at <http://www.emints.org/programs/costsummary.shtml>. Feel free to contact the eMINTS office at (573) 884-7202 or emints-info@emints.org if you have questions.

Register for summer workshops now Opportunities for eMINTS veteran teachers are available as are new workshops on Web 2.0 Tools and Using Inquiry to Extend Field Trips. Online registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and will close two weeks prior to the first day of the workshop. Find details and register online from <http://www.emints.org/events/summer2008/>. Questions? Contact the eMINTS National Center Office at (573) 884-7202.

eMINTS in Australia featured on UM System website Under a banner photo composite of eMINTS staff and Australia's PD trainers against the familiar Sydney opera house, read more about eMINTS taking inquiry-based teaching and learning strategies "down-under." Read the full article at <http://www.umsystem.edu/ums/news/features/080410emints.shtml>.

eMINTS UPDATE cont'd.

Moodle resources for teachers and classrooms Several teachers have inquired about the availability of Moodle space for use with their classrooms. Moodle is an open source, course management system or application that must be hosted on a server and administered by someone with background knowledge in Moodle. Several resources are available for teachers who are interested in obtaining a free Moodle space to experiment with the program for possible use with students or to set up actual Moodle spaces to use with their students.

Missouri teachers only Contact the Missouri Virtual School sponsored by Missouri State University. For more information, send e-mail to Jim Tice, K-12 Liaison at JimTice@MissouriState.edu.

SqoolTools - for any teacher in U.S. SqoolTools is a virtual learning environment, built on Moodle open source software, that allows K-12 teachers to create interactive websites to either support classroom instruction or to deliver instruction completely online. Teachers are invited to create a free account and request a free classroom. Once your classroom has been approved, you will gain access to support materials including user manuals, videos and discussion forums. Visit the website at <http://sqooltools.com>. To learn more, visit the FAQ at <http://www.sqooltools.com/faqs.html>. Questions can be directed to admin@sqooltechs.com.

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eMINTS events on the website Find detailed information about upcoming eMINTS events, links to register or RSVP, and maps and driving directions to event locations, all available from the eMINTS National Center website – <http://www.emints.org/events/>

CSD UPDATE

Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis and The Princeton Review offers classes for the October ACT course. Participating students are at far sites connecting to the instructor over interactive videoconference. There are three practice tests (not over v/c) given by participating schools on Saturday mornings, as the real ACT is given. (The October ACT this year will be October 25, 2008).

During the ten two hour classes, The Princeton Review instructor connects live from CSD to participating sites. The instructor will use a SMART Board to illustrate how to solve equations, offers tips & tricks for mastering the ACT, and answers questions. Students receive a manual with practice problems for work at home.

- **Practice Tests:** Sept. 20, Oct. 4, Oct. 18.
- **Class sessions:** Monday & Wednesday afternoons: Sept. 22, Sept. 24, Sept. 29, Oct. 1, Oct. 6, Oct. 8, Oct. 13, Oct. 15, Oct. 20, Oct. 22

Cost is \$140 per student. Registration deadline is Monday, September 8, 2008. For those who register after September 8th, the fee increases to \$190 per student. For questions and/or registration, contact Rebecca Morrison - rmorrison@csd.org

CSD also offers PSAT Prep with The Princeton Review In this six hour videoconference course, The Princeton Review instructor shows students how to ace the PSAT & great tips for SAT. The PSAT videoconference course package for the 2008-2009 school year includes:

- 2 PSAT full-length practice tests (to be taken onsite at participating schools)
- 6 hours of classroom time over videoconference, after school
- 2 Tests: September 30 & October 9, 2008
- 3 Classes: October 2, 7, 14, 2008

All sessions- tests & classes- run 3:15-5:15 p.m. CDT. Cost is \$99 / student. Registration deadline is Monday, September 8, 2008. For questions and/or registration, contact Rebecca Morrison - rmorrison@csd.org.

CSD UPDATE cont'd.

The Wired Classroom, the Virtual Learning Center's blog, is updated nearly everyday with information on videoconferences, tele classes, professional development opportunities, conferences, and VLC news! Recent topics covered include:

- New PSAT Videoconference Prep Course from CSD & The Princeton Review
- Microsoft Office 2003 tele classes
- Missouri Distance Learning Association July Breakout Sessions posted
- What are students searching for on the web while at school?
- METC 2009 Speakers
- What do you like about Interactive Whiteboards?

To read up on these topics, plus much, much more, visit: <http://csdtechpd.wordpress.com/>.

Subject: Call for Presentations in the Tenth Anniversary Megaconference

The Tenth Anniversary Megaconference will be held on Nov 6, 2008, all day, everywhere. The Megaconference is the largest video conference in the world, with many hundreds of participants from all over the world. Because this is the 10th Megaconference, some very special things will happen then that have not occurred in previous Megaconferences.

You are cordially invited to submit a proposed interactive presentation for this event. Presentations may be on any topic of general interest, but those which demonstrate new or novel applications of video conferencing technology, or promote world togetherness and understanding are especially encouraged. Presentations are normally about 15 minutes long, but exceptions can be made.

Presentations should be interactive, involving more than one location. But musical and other performances involving only one site are also desired. To get an idea of the kinds of presentations done in the past by seeing last years abstracts at <http://www.digitalunion.osu.edu/megaconference/megaconference9/abstract.html#iportal>. Presentations should include interesting video materials, preferably live, and not just talking heads.

Presenters need access to H.323 or compatible video conferencing equipment, and sufficient bandwidth to provide good quality video, but need not be connected to Internet2. There is no cost to participate. Rehearsals will be scheduled for all presentations.

To submit a proposal, send a paragraph describing your presentation to the email address below. All proposals must be received by August 1, but please don't wait until the last minute. Early proposals will be looked upon fondly.

The Megaconference is supported by the Internet2 Commons, by many volunteers around the world, many organizations and manufacturers and vendors and dealers. Please forward this Call to any persons or lists you feel might be interested.

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES**2008**

June 29 – July 2

Event**NECC 2008 The 29th Annual National Educational Computing Conference**

Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, San Antonio, TX

<http://center.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2008>

July 9 – 10

2008 MoDLA Conference "Keeping Pace with Distance Learning"Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach, MO, <http://modla.org/>

UPCOMING CONFERENCES cont'd.

July 12 – 14	SuccessLink Summer Science Institute http://www.successlink.org/curriculum/articles.asp?ID=192
July 17 – 18	6th Annual SuccessLink Technology Innovations Conference Tan-Tar-A, Osage Beach, MO http://www.successlink.org/technology/articles.asp?ID=19 or call toll-free at 888-636-4395 or (573) 636-4395
July 31 – August 1	Educators' Technology Conference 2008 Rogers, AR http://users.aristotle.net/~asta/ETChome.htm
August 7 – 10	8th International Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT) Conference Minneapolis, MN http://mic08.merlot.org

GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Due Date	Grant Program
Ongoing	UPS Foundation Education Grants http://www.community.ups.com/philanthropy/grant.html
Ongoing	Build an Outdoor Classroom at Your School http://www.lowes.com/lowes/lkn?action=pg&p=AboutLowes/outdoor/index.html
Ongoing	Adopt a Classroom Grants http://www.adoptaclassroom.com/
Ongoing	The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation's Education Grants Program http://www.hewlett.org/
Ongoing	Educational Foundation of America Grants http://www.efaw.org/
Ongoing	Robert H. Michel Special Project Grants http://www.dirksencenter.org/print_grants_specialprojects.htm
Ongoing	Toshiba America Foundation 7-12 Math and Science Grants http://www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/about/HowApply.jsp
Ongoing	Motorola Foundation http://www.motorola.com/giving
Ongoing	RGK Foundation Grants Program http://www.rgkfoundation.org/ for information on submitting an electronic Letters of Inquiry For a listing of recent grants awarded by the Foundation, http://www.rgkfoundation.org/grants.php
Ongoing	Charles Lafitte Foundation Grants Program http://www.charleslafitte.org/

GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES cont'd.

Ongoing	Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grant http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/
Ongoing	Tommy Hilfiger Corporate Foundation Education Grants http://www.tommy.com/opencms/opencms/corporate/foundation/aboutthefoundation.html/
Ongoing	Allstate Foundation of Grants Program http://www.allstate.com/foundation/funding-guidelines.aspx
2008	
June 15	Motorola Foundation's Innovation Generation Grants http://www.motorola.com/content.jsp?globalObjectId=8153
July 30	Motorola Lincoln Grants http://www.motorola.com/content.jsp?globalObjectId=8772 in partnership with the Chicago History Museum http://www.chicagohistory.org/ to commemorate the 200 th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth.
August 1	Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation Grants Programs http://www.mhopus.org/index.asp
August 1	NWA Grants to Improve Education in Meteorology http://www.nwas.org/grants/solhirsch.php
September 10	2008-2009 National Rural Education Association Mini-Grant Program Sponsored by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association http://www.nrea.net/files/mini-grant-program.doc
September 15	Ezra Jack Keats Foundation Mini Grants for Public Schools http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/programs/minigrant.html
November 1	Verizon Grants for Literacy http://foundation.verizon.com/grant/guidelines.shtml
December 31	Captain Planet Foundation Grants http://www.captainplanetfoundation.org/
2009	
January 16, 2009	The Astronauts Memorial Foundation, Alan Shepard Technology In Education Award http://www.amfcse.org/Alan%20Shepard%20Award/alan_shepard_award.htm
March 15, 2009	Ecology/Environmental Science Teaching Award Sponsored by the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) http://www.nabt.org/sites/S1/index.php?p=290
May 1, 2009	Outstanding Biology Teacher Award Sponsored by the National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT) http://www.nabt.org/sites/S1/index.php?p=290

- For an extensive list of grants, check the Grants Directory from *Technology and Learning*
<http://techlearning.com/resources/grants.jhtml>.

GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES cont'd.

- *Edutopia* has a listing of corporate, nonprofit, and government grant-making institutions, periodicals with grant information, and more. For more information, visit <http://www.edutopia.org/foundation/grant.php>.
- *Public Education Network* posts a listing of Existing Grant Opportunities (updated each week) at http://www.publiceducation.org/newsblast_grants.asp.
- Grant writing and funding resources are available at <http://www.libraryspot.com/features/grantsfeature.htm>.
- The School Funding Center is a subscription based database for federal, state and foundation grants for schools. Included in the subscription is Dr. Deborah Porter's SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL GRANTS, a step-by-step grant-writing manual by one of the foremost grant writers in the country. [http://www.schoolfundingcenter.info/\(xzvsqo2g4qqxuc55s0mcdmyy\)/index.aspx](http://www.schoolfundingcenter.info/(xzvsqo2g4qqxuc55s0mcdmyy)/index.aspx)
- Sign up for the free GrantsAlert.com Weekly Recap for current K-12 Funding and Grants Alerts. For more complete information go to: <http://www.grantsalert.com>.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2008	EVENT
June 1	<i>Newsline</i> published online
June 25	Articles for <i>Newsline</i> due

FROM THE MAILBAG

Free curriculum supplements from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) aimed at promoting science education achievement is now aligned to individual state education standards in science, math, health and English language arts for kindergarten through 12th grade. This series is FREE to educators upon request. The NIH supplements are also aligned with the National Science Education Standards. For additional information go to: <http://science.education.nih.gov/supplements>

The NIH Curriculum Supplement Series are interactive teaching units that combine cutting-edge science research discoveries from the National Institutes of Health, one of the world's foremost medical research centers, with state-of-the-art instructional materials. Each supplement is a teacher's guide to two weeks' of lessons on science and human health. This series (is):

- FREE to Science Teachers and School Administrators
- Consistent with National Science Education Standards
- Targets grades K-12
- Incorporates real scientific data

View supplement features at <http://science.education.nih.gov/customers.nsf/supp-features.htm>

Creating School Newsletters This short course provides instructions and information for planning, writing, designing layouts, using graphics, and newsletter production for schools. <http://www.online.tusc.k12.al.us/shortc/newsltrs/home.htm>

From the YouthLearn Newsletter, a compilation of the latest entries to the YouthLearn News Blog. This service to the YouthLearn community highlights youth, education, and technology news, tools, and resources. <http://news.youthlearn.org>

New Technology Curriculum Database Created by YouthLearn YouthLearn has announced the launch of a

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website for educators seeking technology curriculum for their programs. *Afterschool Curriculum Choice: Technology Resources* is a project of the YouthLearn Initiative and the U.S. Department of Education-funded National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning at SEDL.

This collection of resources is designed to help practitioners locate and make informed choices about high-quality technology resources to enrich their programs. These curricular materials represent the wide variety of resources, from activity guides to online games to software packages that support compelling learning experiences in informal settings. Users may browse through all the resources by title, grade level or subject area, and will find curricula to match specific needs by selecting key words, design features, technology type or subject area on the search page

Note that several resources contained in two other curriculum databases, *Afterschool Curriculum Choice Literacy Resources* and *Consumers' Guide to Afterschool Science Resources*, also integrate technology in meaningful ways. Browsing by Title, will bring up a list of additional resources selected from these databases to provide even more choices. <http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/guide/technology/>

Learning in Hand - Collection of Lesson Plans for Handhelds This collection of nearly 50 lesson plans for different age groups offers a variety of ways to use electronic handheld devices in learning across the curriculum. Educator Tony Vincent has created the *Learning in Hand* website to share resources with teachers who are interested in using handheld devices, such as Pocket PCs, Palm Handhelds and iPods, in innovative ways to enhance learning by putting technology directly in the hands of young people. The lesson plans are straightforward, easy to follow, and standards-based. Educators will find links to free downloadable software on the site that can open doors to a range of possibilities. The site also provides links to additional support for educators, from basic tech support to assistance with implementation. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=11>

My Pop Studio - Curriculum and Online Activities/Media My Pop Studio is a creative experience and online interactive space for girls, designed to build media literacy and critical thinking skills. A robust curriculum guides educators in facilitating activities that promote candid discussion and reflection. The site enables users to learn about the inner workings of the media industry including music production, television, magazine publishing, and multimedia – to deconstruct the process and discover the techniques media makers use to subtly influence their audiences. In each area, youth experiment with different media-making roles while analyzing the impact media has on their self-image and daily lives. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=13>

News-2-You - Online Learning/Interactives News-2-You, a subscription-based service, provides a weekly online newspaper composed of text and pictures, as well as interactive Web-based games, software-supported activities, and other curricular materials. Designed especially for beginning readers and learners with special needs, this suite of resources gives individuals who are typically overlooked by news organizations access to information about current events. The currency and relevance of the newspaper topics, which are further supported by online games and hands-on activities, draw young people in and accelerate their learning. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=16>

OWIKIT - Robotics Kit and Curriculum Created by RobotiKits Direct Company, OWIKITs provide accessible materials and instruction for those interested in robotic technology, giving users the tools to put together and operate a wide array of robots. The projects are both whimsical and engaging. Young people can work collaboratively to construct hopping frogs, probing moonwalkers, and remote-control beetles. Written by teachers, the curriculum features modules tailored for learners ages 9 and up that introduce concepts such as electricity, gear mechanics, and propulsion. The kits, which often employ microcomputers, are designed for a range of skill and experience levels, from an easy-to-assemble solar-powered race car in the junior science series to touch-sensitive robots in the advanced series. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=17>

Young Digital Creators Educator's Kit - Packaged Curriculum The Young Digital Creators (YDC) Educator's Kit and CD-ROM presents a user-friendly curriculum that creates opportunities for young people to reflect on global development issues, and to share ideas and artwork with peers around the world, at the same time as they develop technical skills. This detailed lesson plan and supporting material, written for educators working in

FROM THE MAILBAG cont'd.

schools, youth clubs, community centers, and training institutes, promotes multicultural understanding, creative thinking, and problem solving. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=4>

The FunWorks - Digital Library for STEM Career Exploration The FunWorks is a dynamic digital library designed by and for youth that supports career exploration in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields. It is one of the resources highlighted in the newly launched Technology Curriculum Database, developed by YouthLearn for the U.S. Department of Education-funded National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning at SEDL. Created in an engaging multimedia format, The FunWorks website consolidates information, activities, interactive games, and other resources tied to an array of career choices including Music, Technology, Art/Design, Medicine/Law, Sports, and Exploration. This resource gives young people the opportunity to pursue their interests and make meaningful connections to careers. A project of EDC, the FunWorks was funded by the National Science Foundation. <http://www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/technology.cgi?resource=8>

How Can Kindergartners Learn Web 2.0? Ask Maria Knee, Kindergarten teacher in Deerfield, NH, is this year's winner of the Kay L. Bitter Vision Award for Excellence in Education. Check out Knee's collection of online teaching tools and community outreach. Then read what she says about fusing kindergarten and 21st-century skills. As Knee puts it, blogging is the "bulletin board of the 21st century."

http://classblogmeister.com/blog.php?blogger_id=51141%5d

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center A Federal resource for professionals, parents and youth working to prevent violence committed by and against young people. <http://www.safeyouth.org>

Stop Bullying Now! Practical research-based strategies to reduce bullying in schools.

<http://www.stopbullyingnow.com>

Kidscape: Dealing with Bullies Helping to prevent bullying and child abuse. <http://www.kidscape.org.uk>

NEA: National Bullying Awareness Campaign (NBAC) works to reduce, and eventually eradicate, bullying in America's public schools. <http://www.nea.org/schoolsafety/bullying.html>

Maine Project Against Bullying A survey of bullying behavior among Maine third graders.

<http://lincoln.midcoast.com/~wps/against/bullying.html>

STOP cyberbullying Information about cyberbullying, how it works, and how to deal with cyberbullies.

<http://www.stopcyberbullying.org>

Cyberbullying is bullying or harassment by means of electronic devices including chatrooms, email, and instant messaging. Many times young people do not know what to do if they are being bullied online. Visit <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/imet/intersafe/educators/EDcyberbully.html> to learn more about how to talk to students about being bullied online.

Computer simulation helps young children learn conflict-resolution skills A computer game designed to teach non-violence and conflict resolution skills to young children has found a home with Curriki, the nonprofit collection of open online curricular materials available for downloading free of charge. The computer game, called "Cool School: Where Peace Rules," features animated school characters in situations that ask children ages 5-7 to select an action for resolving a potential conflict, such as others crowding in line, refusing to share, or treating playmates disrespectfully. Developed by the U.S. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service in cooperation with child development programs at the University of Maryland, the University of Southern California, and the University of North Texas, Cool School was tested at school locations in Illinois. The game is designed to teach children about conflict resolution in a lively, fun, entertaining, and developmentally appropriate context.

http://www.curriki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Coll_FJLennon/CoolSchoolWherePeaceRules

The **MYVisit Virtual Author Series** is an opportunity for a class to interact with some of today's best children's book creators LIVE! Each visit brings the creator into the classroom via interactive video, discussion forums, and downloadable learning activities to create a unique learning experience that truly expand some of today's most popular children's titles.

FROM THE MAILBAG cont'd.

About one month prior to the MYVisit broadcast date, registered teachers will receive access to web-based curriculum materials developed for teachers to prepare their students. To register your classroom to participate, visit <http://www.bsu.edu/myvisit/>.

DIRECTV Goes to School offers a dynamic, curriculum-rich resource free to schools. DIRECTV is the nation's #1 satellite television provider offering the best television experience in the world. To help foster education at all levels and stages of learning, DIRECTV also offers the best educational television experience in the nation.

Through the DIRECTV GOES TO SCHOOL® program, qualifying state-accredited schools, grades K through 12 can receive a FREE DIRECTV® System and educational programming package to enhance their students' classroom experience.

The package, SCHOOL CHOICE®, <http://www.directv.com/DTVAPP/packProg/channelChart2.jsp?assetId=P3950004> is a special combination of news, educational and informational programming that can enhance and complement classroom lessons. To help educators maximize their SCHOOL CHOICE programming, we provide monthly online programming highlights <http://www.directv.com/DTVAPP/global/contentPageNR.jsp?assetId=P4350052> specially designed with curriculum-related content and tips on how to integrate these programs into K-12 curriculum.

The Apple Media Series can make learning to use Apple products for teaching and learning easier. K-12 educators and students can access how-to videos and follow step-by-step guides to learn to use Apple products. The guides include media for practice to help build skills quickly and enable success when integrating into curriculum and learning projects.

Guides include

- *iLife'08 for the Classroom* provides just-in-time learning on the suite of tools that comes with every Mac: iPhoto, iMovie, GarageBand for podcasting, iDVD, and iWeb. With these digital authoring tools, educators can design learning activities that empower students to create and share media-rich digital projects.
- *iWork'08 for the Classroom* offers comprehensive training for the compelling publishing and presentation tools in iWork'08: Pages for producing professional looking documents, Numbers for creating spreadsheets, tables, and charts, and Keynote for developing high-quality presentations. Educators and students will be able to use these powerful productivity tools to better share and communicate information, ideas, and projects.

<http://www.apple.com/education/k12/applemediaseries/>

Special pricing for iLife '08 and iWork '08 A K-12 school site license is priced at just \$50 for either iLife'08 for the Classroom or iWork'08 for the Classroom. A school site license permits use of Apple Media Series for up to 500 students and 50 educators, and can be hosted on a school network or installed on individual computers in the school. Individual educators can learn with Apple Media Series, too. Purchase a 2-client license for \$20 of either iLife'08 for the Classroom or iWork'08 for the Classroom. Install Apple Media Series on both school and home computers.

Moviemaking Curriculum for High Schools Visit the new Apple high school site to download a free moviemaking curriculum. Explore free lessons created by digital media production experts Ross Kallen and Marco Antonio Torres. <http://www.apple.com/education/highschoolabs/index.php>

Learn moviemaking from a master Great movies are full of adventure, and *Australia*, the next film from Oscar-nominated director Baz Luhrmann (*Moulin Rouge*, *William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet*), is no exception. But making a movie is an even bigger adventure—an adventure in creativity—and with the Apple Set to Screen Series, students can be a part of it.

Every few weeks through October, a new podcast episode from Baz and his production team will introduce students to another aspect of moviemaking, starting with on-set still photography, then moving on to costume design, cinematography, scoring, and more. Students get insights from the artists at work on *Australia*, watch them in action, view footage the rest of the world hasn't seen yet, and follow along as the movie comes together.

FROM THE MAILBAG cont'd.**Interactive Opportunities**

Five of the episodes arrive with something extra: a creative challenge for students. Each time one of these episodes is released, students have three weeks to complete the challenge and post it to the Apple Student Gallery. 20 projects (10 from high schoolers and 10 from college students), will be chosen to receive an iPod shuffle, iPod nano, iPod touch, or a MacBook Pro. The project chosen most creative of all will receive a trip for two to Australia on Qantas Airways.

Submit the top project for the final challenge, and win a place on the U.S promotional tour for the film, a trip to Oz planned by Baz himself, and have the project included on the DVD release of *Australia*.

<http://www.apple.com/education/settoscreen/>

Slideshare is a social networking site to share presentation slides. It's a great place to get ideas, learn, find like-minded colleagues or reach a broader audience. <http://www.slideshare.net/>

The **Google for Educators** is a growing collection of Google tools of specific interest to teachers, with information about how to use them in a K-12 context. Find information about using Google Earth, Maps, Sky, and SketchUp in the K-12 classroom. Along with some of the classroom activities Google has collected over the years, starter kits which feature "cool and easy things you can do" with each product in the classroom are available. Check it out here:

<http://www.google.com/educators/geo.html>

Teacher stories about using Google Docs with students, and a newly developed "getting started" guide - with step-by-step instructions for creating accounts, sharing and collaborating, editing and organizing work, are available at http://www.google.com/educators/p_docs.html

A related Google K-12 education site, **Infinite Thinking Machine** has an active blog, internet TV show and other resources to help teachers integrate new tools in their classrooms or professional development trainings (including online professional development). <http://www.infinitethinking.org/>

MIT Highlights for High School is a free repository of learning objects (such as problem sets and interactives) from MIT online college courses, aligned to AP curriculum. <http://ocw.mit.edu/OcwWeb/hs/home/home/index.htm>

Open Education Resources (OER) are teaching and learning materials freely available online for instructors, students, or self-learners to use. Examples of OER include: full courses, course modules, syllabi, lectures, homework assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, simulations, and many more resources contained in digital media collections from around the world.

http://wiki.oercommons.org/mediawiki/index.php/Main_Page

The California Open Source Textbook Project The California Open Source Textbook Project (COSTP) is a collaborative, public/private undertaking created to address the high cost, content range, and consistent shortages of K-12 textbooks in California.

California currently spends more than \$400M annually — and rising — for K-12 textbooks. With K-12 enrollments projected to rise in the coming years, revenue demands for textbooks and other curriculum materials in California will increase proportionately.

COSTP will employ the advantages of open sourced content and innovative licensing tools to significantly reduce California's K-12 textbook costs — eventually turning K-12 curriculum and textbook construction from a cost into a revenue generator for the State of California.

Three - amongst many — COSTP benefits will be 1) the complete elimination of the current \$400M+ line item for California's K-12 textbooks; 2) a significant increase in the range of content afforded to California's K-12 textbooks; 3) a permanent end to California's textbook shortages; and 4) creation of fully portable content holdings database that scales with classroom technologies as they are introduced. To find out more, visit <http://www.opensourcetext.org/>.

FROM THE MAILBAG cont'd.

Free-Reading is an open source instructional program that helps educators teach early literacy. Because it is open source, it represents the collective wisdom of a wide community of teachers and researchers. Free-Reading contains a 40-week scope and sequence of primarily phonological awareness and phonics activities that can support and supplement a typical kindergarten or first grade “core” or “basal” program. <http://www.free-reading.net/index.php?title=FreeReading>About>

New York Times science reporter Steve Lohr has written a story on two fascinating "virtual universe" projects—Microsoft’s WorldWide Telescope, and Google’s Google Sky—through which, he writes, "... galactic destinations ... can now be toured and explored at the controls of a computer mouse, with the constellations, stars and space dust displayed in vivid detail and animated imagery across the screen." Read about "Two New Ways to Explore the Virtual Universe, in Vivid 3-D" at the New York Times online, http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/13/science/13astr.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=virtual+universe&st=nyt&oref=slogin.

Record Programs Before The Annenberg Channel Ends

With the Channel ending October 1, now is the time for school districts or individuals to store the programs--without cost. Although satellite distribution will cease October 1, 2008, free program access will continue online at <http://www.learner.org/>. However, programs accessed online will not be downloadable.

Use of programs previously recorded (or record in the future) for non-broadcast purposes may be used for the life of the tape. To use programs recorded from a PBS station or a cable channel operated by a school district, Department of Education or other nonprofit organization, contact the organization to ask if their schedule includes those programs or if they have recorded them for presentation in the future. Annenberg Channel licensees have free access to all Annenberg Channel programs, but they are not required to air specific titles. Therefore, it is up to the local agency to plan to broadcast specific programs. Information about when programs are being fed by satellite and thus available to your local rebroadcaster for recording is available.

To access the satellite schedule for programming:

- Visit the Annenberg website at <http://www.learner.org/>.
- Select the program by discipline from the home page, or type in the title/subject in the search box.
- Click on the series title to visit the series overview page.
- Click on "Broadcast Dates" in the box on the right side of the screen.

This will show the dates and times each program in the series will be fed by satellite. There are two opportunities for rebroadcasters to record each program, as all programs are repeated 12 hours after the time shown, e.g., programs fed at 6 PM will repeat at 6 AM.

For more information about program rights and the end of the satellite feed, see the Annenberg Channel Licensee FAQ at http://www.learner.org/faq/faq_licensee.html.

ABC-CLIO Promotes “History Connections” and Free “History and the Headlines” Collection

History educators and students can learn more about the impact of holding the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, one of the world’s most polluted cities, with "History and the Headlines: China’s Environment: Cloud Over the Olympics," an online resource collection from ABC-CLIO and leading history organizations.

For educators who want to teach complete classroom units on the Olympics, ABC-CLIO also recently launched "History Connections: The Olympics," a new resource book. Developed by leading historians and educators, this book includes complete classroom-ready thematic units for engaging students in thinking critically about the context and content of the historical events that are unfolding in their own lives.

Free sample activities from "History Connections: The Olympics" are available at http://www.abc-clio.com/page/workbooks_campaign_landing_page.html?camp=081WPA1. Through a special introductory offer

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available until June 30, 2008, teachers can save 35 percent by ordering both "History Connections: The Olympics" and "History Connections: The Presidential Election" for \$49.99. Individual copies of each are \$39.

From eSchool News Tools for Schools Newsletter - News and Information for Today's K-20 Educator
<http://www.eschoolnews.com/>

Arcademic Skill Builders is a nonprofit website that features online educational games offering a new approach to learning basic math, language arts, vocabulary, and thinking skills. Inspired by arcade games and the intense engagement they foster between the game and player, the site's programs stem from experience, systematic observations, and research in understanding student learning in school and social situations. "These engaging educational games provide focused repetition practice that enables fluency to be achieved more quickly," according to the site. Students can choose to play "private" games, in which others cannot join the game unless they know the password, or "public" games, in which any player from outside can join the game, but there is no contact between outside players and the student. "We do not store the player IDs that the student creates," the site's creators assure. "It is impossible for anyone outside your class to contact a student while playing the games." The site features game titles such as Word Invasion, Grand Prix Multiplication, and Verb Viper.
<http://www.arcademicskillbuilders.com>

The Visual Dictionary, by Merriam-Webster, is designed to help the user find the right word at a glance. Filled with illustrations labeled with accurate terminology in up to six languages, it is the ideal language-learning and vocabulary dictionary for use at school, at home or at work.

Know what something looks like but not what it's called, or know the word but can't picture the object? The Visual Dictionary has the answer. A quick look will match the word to the image. There are 15 topics with 6,000 images that explain words like never before. They are: Astronomy, Earth, Plants and Gardening, Animal Kingdom, Human Being, Food and Kitchen, House, Clothing and Articles, Arts and Architecture, Communications, Transport and Machinery, Energy, Science, Society and Sports and Games. <http://visual.merriam-webster.com/>

In January, **The Chemistry of Fire program** was sent free of charge to high schools nationwide. The program, which was developed by The Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) and Discovery Education and funded by a U.S. Department of Homeland Security grant, is designed to teach students the science behind fire and how to prevent them.

Touted as a program that "fills a void" in the high school chemistry curriculum, it will help students fully understand the dangers of fire. Teachers and students alike will appreciate the interactive nature of the program, which includes a teacher's guide with five lesson plans, a DVD that demonstrates exciting experiments included in the lessons, three classroom posters and a website where classroom and career resources can be found. The program is aligned to the National Science Teachers Association Standards for 9th - 12th grades. For more information, visit: <http://www.sfpe.org/> or email Chris Jelenewicz at: chris@sfpe.org.

A new PBS and Kids for Kids (BKFK) competition, called "Trash to Treasure," encourages kids at home to recycle, reuse and re-engineer everyday materials into out-of-the-box inventions. The winner will receive a \$10,000 cash prize provided by the Intel Foundation and a trip to a development lab to build a prototype of his or her innovative design. The contest will launch on April 1, 2008, at: <http://www.bkfk.com/> to coincide with the season two premiere of PBS' Design Squad, a popular engineering and design competition show.

NBC News iCue NBC News has launched a free, collaborative learning community for students ages 13 and up that incorporates gaming, discussion, and video resources in a safe, online environment. Created by NBC Learn, the educational arm of NBC News, the site's name—iCue—stands for Immerse, Connect, Understand, and Excel. Its learning platform uses a patented technology, based on research from the MIT Education Arcade, called the CueCard; it's a combination media player, flash card, note-taking tool, and trading card. This "flip-card" technology allows users to watch streaming videos from NBC News and then "flip" the CueCard over for additional information. Users can "snag" CueCards and store them in personal resource libraries (or CueCard "Stacks"), customize them using the "jot" feature to write thoughts and opinions, and exchange comments about content with their iCue friends. MIT is

FROM THE MAILBAG cont'd.

conducting a study to find out how iCue can help students learn and build critical thinking and 21st-century communication skills. The website's launch has a politically themed collection of games and activities highlighting the 2008 presidential race. Over the summer, NBC Learn will add content and course curriculum for U.S. history, U.S. government and politics, and English language and composition. All content is aligned with the education standards for Advanced Placement courses. <http://www.icue.com>

National High School Environmental Education Challenge To support teachers around the country and their innovative work to bring environmental education into the classroom, The National Environmental Education Foundation, in partnership with The Weather Channel, <http://www.weather.com/> is launching the National High School Challenge. The Challenge is the first phase of a new program, Classroom Earth http://www.neefusa.org/programs/classroom_earth.htm – a program designed to enhance environmental education in high schools. Through this program, teachers will be able to continue to inspire students about environmental issues.

National High School Challenge provides teachers with an opportunity to secure as much as \$5,000 to \$10,000 in funding to bring innovative environmental themes into students' coursework and incorporate more environmental education into teaching overall. The program has two different categories:

- Course Integration Grants – for teachers who want support inclusion of environmental themes into a single course or across three or more courses. http://www.neefusa.org/programs/course_grants.htm
- Professional Development Grants – for teachers who want to learn more about environmental education and how to teach about the environment in multiple subject areas and with engaging lessons. http://www.neefusa.org/programs/dev_grant.htm

Get started now. Submit your proposal by June 20, 2008.

InfoSource Learning InfoSource Learning's SimpleAssessment for Student Technology Proficiency is designed to meet the requirements in the NCLB Act. This 60 question assessment can be completed in about one class period and is mapped to the International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) NETS-S. The assessment comes in both a Mac and Windows version. In addition, it includes a pre- and post-assessment so you can track your students' improvement throughout the year. All results are recorded and stored online for 24 hour anytime, anywhere access. For more information, call InfoSource Learning at 1-800-393-4636.

NEWEST eTHEMES

Country Life These sites provide information about life in the country. Learn about country life in the past and present and compare living in the country and city. Includes clothing, music, scenic pictures, houses, and more. There are also links to eThemes resources on Comparing Communities: Urban, Suburb, and Rural, Farm Animals, Amish People, Life, and Culture, and Transportation: Covered Wagons. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002325.shtml>

Digital Yearbooks These websites are about digital yearbooks. Learn about different software available and how to create a digital yearbook. Included are several types of photography tips and communication skills. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002324.shtml>

Health: Prevention and Control of Diseases These sites provide information about infectious and noninfectious diseases. Learn their causes, prevention, and treatment. Includes personal health practices that minimize disease. There are also links to eThemes Resources on Anatomy: Immune System, Health: Germs: Infection, Detection and Protection, Vaccinations, Viral Diseases, and many more links on diseases. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002331.shtml>

Literature: "Choosing up Sides" by John H. Ritter These sites are about the book "Choosing up Sides" by John H. Ritter. There is information about the author's biography and books. Includes lesson plans and classroom activities to go along with the book. There is also information and activities on being left-handed and a link to eThemes Resources on baseball. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002328.shtml>

NEWEST eTHEMES cont'd.

Literature: "Pirates Past Noon" by Mary Pope Osborne These sites are about the book "Pirates Past Noon" by Mary Pope Osborne. There is information about the author's biography, works, and interview transcripts. Includes book reviews, study guides, lesson plans, activities, vocabularies, and questions to go along with the book. There are also links to eThemes resources on pirates and counting money.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002330.shtml>

Literature: "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allen Poe Here are web resources about the short story "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allen Poe. There are study questions, background information, an audio recording of the story, and a quiz. Included is an eThemes resource about the author.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002315.shtml>

Movie: "The Incredibles" These sites are about the movie "The Incredibles." Find out how the movie was made, character development, and the inspiration behind the movie. Includes lesson plans that use "The Incredibles" as a theme to teach about poverty, injustice, superheroes, and character analysis. There are also links to eThemes Resources on Superheroes, Heroes and Celebrities, and Team Building Activities for Elementary Students.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002327.shtml>

Science: Properties of Rocks and Soil These sites have information about rocks and soil. Learn about their different properties, how rocks are made, and how soil is formed. There are interactive pages, quizzes, and many ideas for in-class activities. Included are three related eThemes resources on soil, rocks, and erosion.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00002326.shtml>

UPDATED eTHEMES

Agriculture: Soil These sites have information about various types of soil. Learn about the components of soil such as sand, clay, silt, and humus, and read how soil is formed and why it is useful to us. There are hands-on activities and science experiments. Includes links to eThemes Resources on erosion, recycling, earthworms, and rocks and minerals. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000112.shtml>

Drugs: Prevention Tips These sites explain the effects of different types of drugs, including alcohol, tobacco, heroin, and cocaine. Learn tips for saying "no" to drugs and the dangers of using these addictive substances. Includes online quizzes, games, and movies. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000509.shtml>

Habitat: An Overview This resource covers the different ecosystems on our planet. Find out how these biomes differ, what characteristics make them unique, and where they are located. Includes a map of the different habitats found in Missouri and information about habitats in Utah. There are links to eThemes Resources on specific habitats and animal food chains. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000050.shtml>

Health: Germs: Infection, Detection and Protection Sites are about germs (bacteria and viruses) and diseases. Covers tips for disease prevention, such as hand-washing, food safety, vaccines, etc. Includes lesson plans, hands-on activities and interactive games. There is also a link to eThemes Resource on Microbes: Bacteria.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000436.shtml>

Life in the Past and Life Now Compare life in the past with life now. Learn how key inventions of the past have changed the world. Find out what kind of clothing people wore in ancient times, what they ate, and how they traveled. Includes online games, quizzes, printouts, and coloring pages. There are links to eThemes resources about life of prehistoric people, ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, western civilizations, Middle Ages, and first American colonies.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001456.shtml>

Microbes: Bacteria These sites are about bacteria, where they live, what they look like, and why they can be harmful to humans. Find out who is credited with discovering bacteria. Includes online quizzes, movies, and hands-on experiments. There are links to eThemes Resources on germs and fungi.

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001186.shtml>

UPDATED eTHEMES cont'd.

Microbes: Fungi Find out how fungi spread and how they can be both beneficial and harmful to humans. Includes online quizzes, games, an animated movie, and hands-on experiment ideas. There is also a link to eThemes Resource on Bacteria. <http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00001132.shtml>

Superheroes These sites are about famous comic book superheroes and their special powers. Includes Wonder Woman, Batman, Superman, Spiderman, and more. There are videos, games, and student descriptions of their own imaginary superheroes. There is also a link to eThemes Resources on "The Incredibles."
<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000915.shtml>