



A Compilation Of

2010/11

Innovation Grant

Evaluations

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About Innovation Grants

District 300 educators propose Innovation Grants in February of each year and they are awarded in March of each year for the next school year. Proposal templates along with instructions are available at the Foundation's Web site. Upon receipt of a proposal by the February due date, the District 300 Foundation Assistant removes the submitter's name and school from the document. It is then sent to the Projects Committee for consideration. The Projects Committee presents its recommendations for Innovation Grant Awards to the Board of Trustees at the March meeting. Criteria used by the Projects Committee include the following:

The project must be unique and never done before in District 300 as it is proposed.

The project must be innovative with clear goals aligned with State Education Standards and District 300 curricula.

The project must produce measureable results.

Innovation Grants are awarded for up to \$500. Proposals exceeding that amount will not be considered.

As a matter of policy, the Foundation does not expend funds on such items as stipends, travel, food, rewards, and incentives. The Foundation also does not expend funds on items that are considered to be necessary for the basic support of the District 300 Curricula.

Innovation Grant application forms are available at the Foundation's web site. Applications are due the first week of February each school year.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: “Word Gaming Through Differentiated Technology”

Submitted by: Michael O’Connor

School: Golfview

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 4th Grade

Brief Description of the project: Students are engaged with a hand held device that assists ELLs with antonyms, synonyms, spelling, homophones, contractions, and plural nouns.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

The effectiveness of the innovation was measured via through increased motivation on the part of the students as a result of the engaging technological devices. As a result of this motivation, students have also begun to use academic language with more veracity than ever before when speaking and sharing during our Guided Reading block. In terms of application, students have also have improved word choice in their writing and are better able to share more examples of what words mean and affixes that are interchangeable amongst words they knew and now know as a result of this technology tool. More specifically, this growth was measured via assessment of grade level priority words and synonyms and antonyms.

What were the results of that measurement?

The results of the measurement are such that students are building upon their vocabulary and are more apt at chunking out difficult words they do not know. Because one of the features of the device calls for students to identify the correct spelling of words, several students have increased their frequency of correctly spelled words. They have shared that they can practice so many words in such a brief interval of time, which has enabled them to read more fluently when approaching more difficult words. While some students have yet to show growth in this 30 day period, many students are markedly better in spelling activities and formative assessments that call for the recognition of the correct synonym or antonym of a given word.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

There is no part of the innovation that I would modify because it allows for so much flexibility. Students can do this in a small group yet independently if needed. They can also turn off the sound if desired or turn the sound on with headphones. The ideas for implementation go on and on and it is easy to assure that students are accountable because they can be asked to write the words that they encounter while playing the device that trouble them and/or understand.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

This innovation holds possibilities beyond that of the realm of words by translating into better vocabulary usage in writing. Whether writing better when reflecting on reading, using higher level words in their word choice when writing a persuasive essay, or simply iterating a word they previously did not know when in small group or whole class discussions, students have been able to apply words they have learned in various context and content areas.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Water Bottle Rocketry

Submitted by: Susan LaGrippe

School: DMS

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 6th

Brief Description of the project:

The students have learned about the scientific process, process skills and STEM careers via labs designed for an encounter with a “strange new planet.” The students discover and observe the planet and then plan a trip to the new planet. The students need to plan for a rocket launch and Entry, Decent and Landing (EDL). This year we did a “straw rocket” lab for the initial rocket testing lab and will wrap up the school year with the bottle rocket launchers. Additional labs include a Thermal Design Challenge where the students create a heat shield for entry and an Egg Drop Lander for their decent and landing. On June 24th, the students designed water bottle rockets and launched them to the “strange new planet.”

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

The effectiveness of the water bottle rockets will be measured by the success of the launch. The water bottle rockets with the proper nose cone, balance and fins will launch straight and fly high. If anything is out of sync, the rocket will spin and whirl around. Students learned via other labs and the design process of the water bottle rocket what aspects of rocketry they needed to follow.

What were the results of that measurement?

This assignment wasn't for a grade, students who built a rocket were considered successful. All the rockets launched successfully.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

The project does not need to be modified as much as I want to find a way to merge all the content in 6th grade science into a yearlong project with the exploration of “The Strange New Planet. The concept is going to take awhile for me to figure out.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

In the future I would like to merge this project with the astronomy unit and research project in language arts. Additionally, there are always math connections that I would like to investigate with my team's math teacher. One day we would like to have a “Space Exploration Day.”

Additional comments: Thanks so much for the opportunity to move forward with this project!

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Calculus In Motion

Submitted by: Aaron Holmer

School: Hampshire High School

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 12th grade AP Calculus

Brief Description of the project:

Calculus In Motion is an interactive computer program that allows students to visualize calculus concepts.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

- 1.) I compared unit test results with classes I have taught in the past that didn't get to use this computer program.
- 2.) I hope to see an increase in AP exam scores

What were the results of that measurement?

- 1.) The class average was higher in the class where the computer software was used.
- 2.) We will not get AP exam results until July but I am very optimistic about our test scores this year.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

This year I was only able to use the program with a couple calculus topics. In the future, I would like to incorporate it into more of my lessons.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

It could be used for any level of calculus.

Additional comments?

Thank you for the opportunity to bring this technology into my classroom!

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Getting in Touch with Learning

Submitted by: Michelle Grossmayer **School:** Lincoln Prairie Elementary School

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 4th

Brief Description of the project: This project was to use Ipod Touches to help students master their basic facts.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured? I used the district basic facts evaluations to measure the effectiveness of this project. I took data three different times this year. The students used the Ipods every day in math class to drill themselves on their multiplication and division facts. I used the program "Math Drills" which I purchased from the iTunes store. This program kept track of how the students did on their drills and what facts they were struggling with.

What were the results of that measurement? After the first trimester only 30% of my math students were meeting the goal of 70 or more multiplication problems completed in 2 minutes. After the 2nd trimester 74% of my math students were meeting the goal. The last test that was given on May 17 resulted in 86% of the students meeting the goal in multiplication. Overall as of May 17, 79% of the students were meeting that goal in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future? I am incorporating the iPods into more parts of the day. We use the Dictionary/Thesaurus daily as a class and individual students use it for their writing or word work practice. I am beginning to incorporate it with my students that need more practice with reading fluency as well.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels? The iPod holds great possibilities for all subject areas. There are so many wonderful educational based programs that are easily downloaded as well as podcasts. I am using my summer to further explore how to use these in my classrooms.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Leaping Into Reading

Submitted by: Kari Brandstedt

School: Algonquin Lakes Elementary

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: Kindergarten & First Grade

Brief Description of the project: Students enjoyed a home-school connection by watching a sequence of Leap Frog DVD's to strengthen and reinforce phonics skills. Additional activities were provided for families to supplement the DVDs.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

A parent survey was sent home. Student's literacy skills were measured using pre and post ISEL scores and AimsWeb LNF and LSF fall and spring benchmarks. Eighty three percent of Kindergarten literacy students (5 out of 6 who checked out the videos) reached the targeted score for alphabet recognition on the ISEL and 100% of these students reached the targeted score for letter sounds. Sixty percent of Kindergarten students (who checked out the videos) met the spring benchmark for LNF and 40 % of them met the spring benchmark for LSF.

What were the results of that measurement?

Of the seven parents who returned surveys, 89% of parents felt the use of the videos increased their understanding of how to help their child at home. 86% of parents felt the Leap Frog videos supported their child's literacy development. Additional comments from parents:

The video entertained him and made learning fun!

It strengthened her word development.

Literacy skills require a lot of repetition.

It was a good video for my daughter.

I will encourage my child to read more on her own.

Let my child try on her own before I help.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

Leap Frog also has a variety of math DVD's for primary students.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Using Technology to Model Science Phenomena

Submitted by: Ryan Blinstrup

School: Dundee-Crown HS

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 9th - 12th

Brief Description of the project:

This project purchased the equipment needed to investigate various scientific topics in the high school science curriculum. The equipment was used with the school's existing computers and displayed real time data and graphs. The data and graphs were used to graphically and mathematically model scientific relationships and the students collaborated on ideas through presentations and Socratic seminars that would have been normally lectured to them by the instructor. This is the process used by professionals when solving problems. The equipment included a force plate, magnetic field sensor, microphone sensor, light sensor, ultra pulley with bracket, laser with stand, and video physics book. The various equipment was used to cover a broad range of topics in the science curriculum. The equipment provided more opportunities for discussion relating science topics to other content areas and real world examples.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

The evaluation process was a comparison of the scores from the District's College Readiness Skills (CRS) exams developed by SAC taken in the beginning of the term before the use of the equipment and the SAC's 2nd term CRS exam. There were surveys completed by the science teachers after the completion of the use of the equipment. The survey reviewed the teachers' comments on advantages and disadvantages of the equipment.

At the end of the term, each student completed a self-reflection form to reflect if the use of the computer and video based equipment was helpful to improve their understanding and problem solving skills.

What were the results of that measurement?

The comparison between exam scores showed an increase of 30%. Teacher surveys revealed that content was easier to teach and student learning increased. Student reflection showed that students enjoyed class more and they felt more of a part of the learning process and were more engaged.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

In the future, I would like to develop a new assessment to measure the results of using the equipment and have more assessments throughout the term. Also, I would like to secure more funds to purchase more equipment to broaden learning possibilities for the students.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

This innovation could easily work with any math courses.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Sophomore Documentaries
Submitted by: Michelle Marconi and Nikki Woodbury **School:** Dundee-Crown HS
Grade level(s) served by this innovation: Sophomores

Brief Description of the project:

Students used FLIP cameras purchased through the grant to film theme documentaries as a capstone project to Honors Sophomore English.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

The effectiveness was measured via the quality of documentaries and the ease with which this project was completed. For the first time ever, students had enough technology to properly record interviews and were easily able to add these files into their overall projects.

What were the results of that measurement?

Please see for yourself: <http://dchsenhlishmarconi.wikispaces.com/Documentaries>

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

We need find better movie editing software. Windows Movie Maker does not work with FLIP files. Windows Live Movie Maker does, but that is a Vista and above product. An investment in Sony Vegas would be well advised for D300 to help students have software that would enable them to truly see their visions come to life.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

YES! In fact, other teachers from other subject areas frequently asked to borrow our FLIPS for their own projects. It is a cost effective way to allow kids to show you their learning.

Additional comments?

Thank you for empowering us to make a difference in our students' lives with this grant.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Math Interactive Video

Submitted by: Luc Miron and Jeff Kissamis **School:** Neubert

Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 3RD and 4th

Brief Description of the project:

Students review math concepts via 2 interactive quizzes that pertain to a short story. Maths Mattics is a detective who guides the students in their journey to defeat Dr. Strangeglove by applying grade-level math content with the benefit of great visuals and instant feedback.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

Jeff and I used student responses as away to gage their engagement with the video. The fast-paced quiz had to be slowed down a bit. This was accomplished by simply pausing eh video, periodically, to provide students with extra time to answer the questions or clarify concepts. The use of our SMARTboards made a significant difference to bring the video series to like; last year I showed some of these videos on a 29-inch T.V. monitor. I looked over student journals to se if the students were actively participating. Upon review most students did very well with review activities. Mr. Kissamis noted that the sharp picture was superior to what is provided in the Learning 360 downloading software we have in the district.

What were the results of that measurement?

The Math Challenge videos were more appropriate for 4th grade than 3rdgrade. However, with proper introduction of the math concept within the video, about half of the video applied to 3rd grade content. All the videos applied to 4th grade content. We will be making use of the series again next year and perhaps be sharing this resource with other teachers at our grade level. Fifth grade students could also benefit from watching these videos. One last positive result of this series was that I was able to provide some my more proficient math students with some challenge activities by watching the videos that went beyond 3ed grade content. I set up Bryan, for example, with a portable DVD player and had him watch 10-minute videos occasionally to give him a little extra push.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

I don't see a need to modify, but it would be helpful to create a video "Table of Content" to help teachers know what skills are specifically found in each video. Otherwise, teachers may not use the videos, as they would need to preview each video to judge its appropriateness.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

Yes, I think that all 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students would enjoy this video series. If the district had a "Red Box" set up for use across the district, perhaps more schools would be interested in loaning some the titles for their classrooms. Currently, some of the videos are available at the Algonquin Library – that's how I was introduced to the series 2 years ago.

Additional comments?

The students were enthusiastic and engaged with these videos. This was a great way to either introduce or review math content. The SMARTboards made a big difference in applying the videos to instructional practice. Thank you for the opportunity to get the entire collection for Neubert teachers.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: High Interest/Low Vocabulary Books for High Risk Students
Submitted by: Pamela Shepherd **School:** Neubert
Grade level(s) served by this innovation: 4th and 5th grade Special Needs Students
Brief Description of the project:

Students read high-interest/low vocabulary books during their independent classroom reading time (Daily 5 Read to Self) and at home nightly for 30 minutes.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured?

Their reading fluency was measured on the Aims-Web RCP-M weekly benchmarks. The amount of minutes they read was logged daily. I recorded their feelings about these books and their motivation to continue reading.

What were the results of that measurement?

My students improved significantly on the Aims-Web RCB-M benchmarks by the end of the school year. My students read an average of 60 minutes a day- 30 minutes in school and 30 minutes at home. They loved the books and were eager to continue reading them.

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

I would increase the number of high-interest/low vocabulary books in the classroom library. Halfway through the school year, the students had completed reading all of the books from the grant so I continued to find additional high interest/low vocabulary books at the local libraries and bookstore.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

These books could be used in all self-contained special education classrooms (grades 4 or 5) in which the students are reading 2 levels or more behind grade level.

**Foundation for Educational Excellence District 300
Innovation Grant Project Evaluation**

Title of Innovation: Read Naturally Implementation

School: Liberty Elem.

Submitted by: Kate Nangle

Grade level served by this innovation: Third Grade

Brief Description of the project:

The project was to order the kits and materials to implement the Read Naturally reading program. This is a research based program to increase the fluency and comprehension of the students. The kits include CDs and manuals with stories to copy for students. The program allows students to work with highly motivational non-fiction text and work at their own pace. They read with the taped stories which make them more accountable for practicing fluency and chart their progress in their own binders. While recording their own progress, they will receive instant feedback. Once they have worked through one story, they move on to the next story of their choosing.

How was the effectiveness of the innovation measured:

The effectiveness of the Read Naturally implementation was measured using the results of the AIMSweb testing of the students who participated in the program. The students participated in the program daily and the spring testing results were used for the measurement of the effectiveness of the program.

What were the results of the measurement?

The results are listed by student and state their fall AIMSweb test scores and their spring AIMSweb scores. This is one class result set which shows the students as a whole increased their Words Read Correctly and decreased their Number of Errors. I can conclude that the Read Naturally had to have a part in the students increasing the number of words read correctly in the one minute timed test and decreased their errors. Based on these results, I feel the implementation of the Read Naturally program was a success and plan on continuing its use in the future.

| Student | Words Read Correctly-Fall | Number of Errors-Fall | Words Read Correctly-Spring | Number of Errors-Spring |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Student A | 144 | 8 | 150 | 2 |
| Student B | 138 | 11 | 130 | 1 |
| Student C | 115 | 13 | 141 | 0 |
| Student D | 98 | 8 | 123 | 3 |
| Student E | 93 | 11 | 148 | 0 |
| Student F | 74 | 4 | 133 | 1 |
| Student G | 72 | 1 | 126 | 0 |
| Student H | 81 | 4 | 114 | 1 |

Please identify any part of the innovation that you would modify in the future?

A part of the program that I would modify would be to use fewer students in the initial implementation of the program. It was difficult to share the materials with the number of students participating in the program. I will choose six to eight students who need to move from the “questionable” to “proficient” range in the AIMSweb results. This will allow the students who need a little more help to reach the goal to get what they need. This way I can work with the students who have lower fluency while the Read Naturally group will be able to work more independently through the program. The group was too large during this implementation and the independence part was lost. There were many conflicts while trying to share materials. I did assess students during the use of the program and then moved some students out of the program. This allowed students still in the program to utilize the materials in a more effective manner.

I would also create a schedule with the other third grade teachers to share the material more effectively. We tried to have all students do the program everyday which also made it difficult to share and keep track of the materials. I would make rotations for materials and assign students to be in charge of passing the materials between classrooms.

Does this innovation hold possibilities for other subject areas and/or grade levels?

The Read Naturally program holds possibilities for other grade levels. As students move from grade level to grade level while using this program, there will be less time spent on teaching the students how to use the program. Students who will be involved in the program will be able to start at the beginning of the year and have more time to use the program effectively if the next grade level has access to the program. This will give the students more fluency practice and increase their scores at a higher rate.

Additional Comments:

I thank you for the opportunity to gain the materials to implement this program in my classroom and in the classrooms of my teammates. I will be able to use the materials year after year which will impact many students who will benefit from its use. I appreciate the Foundation of Educational Excellence District 300's dedication to getting innovative programs and projects into the classrooms within the district. I will support the foundation in any way I can in the future.