

CLASSROOMS FOR THE FUTURE GRANT, 2008-09

Summary

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) has announced the opening of the third round of applications for the Classrooms for the Future (CFF) grant program. Applications will be for the 2008-2009 school year, and are due on April 11, 2008, by 2:00 P.M.

CFF is a program initiated by Governor Rendell to help reform teaching and learning in Pennsylvania high schools through the introduction and integration of technology into the “core” subject areas in grades 9-12. According to data from PDE, the first two years of the program involved 358 schools serving over 350,000 students, and provided over 100,000 laptops for use in English, math, science and social studies classrooms (what PDE considers to be “core” subjects).

The Warren County School District applied for funding in the first year of the grant, but the application was denied.

From the PDE grant description:

“Classrooms for the Future is about recognizing and embracing the need for high school reform, enabling teachers to use technology as an effective tool for educating students, and preparing students to enter and successfully compete in the ever-expanding high-tech global marketplace. The initiative is transforming the way high school teachers teach and how students learn by equipping English, math, science and social studies classrooms with enhanced technology, laptop computers and other state-of-the art resources. Just as importantly, extensive training on how to best harness the power of technology to increase student achievement and ensure students are ready for college and the high-tech global job market is a part of the Classrooms For the Future project.”

In brief, the CFF grant will provide funding to purchase the following equipment per eligible classroom (as determined through PDE-supplied formula): one teacher laptop, one laptop cart with up to twenty-five student laptops and two wireless access points, one printer/ scanner, one web cam, one electronic whiteboard, one projector, and productivity software. Each eligible school will receive up to three digital cameras, up to five video cameras, \$6,000 per building for infrastructure costs, and up to \$250 per classroom for technical assistance and support.

Specifications for the equipment may be found at

<http://www.cdwg.com/shop/custompages/Default.aspx?CustomPageKey=6769890A67D5416F9483D36606439DC4>

The following is a partial list of responsibilities that districts agree to when they apply for CFF funding:

- Administrators and teachers will take part in vendor-sponsored professional development. Grant-funded.
- Administrators and teachers will take part in a 30-hour, PDE-mandated course entitled “21st Century Teaching and Learning”. This is an online course that included classroom work. Not grant funded.
- Hire at least a .5 FTE Classrooms for the Future Coach for each building in the grant, to assist teachers in implementation. Partial funding.
- Nominate Keystone Technology Integrators for each building.

A more complete description of the program commitment may be found on the PDF attachment titled “CFF-Background”.

At this time, WCSD administration is investigating an application to the CFF Program that includes each high school building in the district. Discussion is ongoing regarding what “core” subjects the grant would be written for.