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Enhancing Education Through Technology

- **No Child Left Behind Act of 2001**
  - **Title II**— Preparing, Training and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals
    - **Part D** — Enhancing Education Through Technology
      - **Subpart I**— State and Local Technology Grants

Funding Program Overview

Detailed information: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg34.html

Purpose and Background

The purposes of the state and local technology grants include the following:

1. To provide assistance to states and localities for the implementation and support of a comprehensive system that effectively uses technology in elementary and secondary schools to improve student academic achievement;
2. To promote initiatives that provide school teachers, principals and administrators with the capacity to integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction that are aligned with challenging state academic content and student academic achievement standards, through such means as high-quality professional development programs;
3. To enhance the ongoing professional development of teachers, principals and administrators by providing constant access to training and updated research in teaching and learning through electronic means;
4. To support the rigorous evaluation of programs funded under this part, particularly regarding the impact of such programs on student academic achievement...;
5. To support local efforts using technology to promote parent and family involvement in education and communication among students, parents, teachers, principals and administrators.

Funding and Eligibility

(Federal Appropriation Fiscal Year 2004: $691.841 million)

Funds are awarded to state educational agencies according to a formula related to the amount received under Part A of Title I. State educational agencies award subgrants to an eligible local educational agency that has submitted an application by formula based on its allocation from the State under Part A of Title I.

Funds can be spent for designated purposes such as professional development; adapting or expanding the use of technology in academic integration; support of school reform efforts to improve student academic achievement including technological literacy; using technology to collect, manage and analyze data to inform and enhance teaching and school improvement efforts; and using technology to promote meaningful parental involvement.

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Alignment of Choices CD Edition to Requirements of Title II-D

Overview: Dynamic and Highly Interactive Software Enhances Computer Literacy

Choices is an interactive program that supports a range of student computer literacy skills, such as: searching large databases, accessing and printing information, using a word processor, creating a personal file and saving data to it, following links to selected websites and exploring those websites.

Choices also helps high school students focus on their academic career today and make plans for a smooth transition to a variety of post-secondary education and career

options in the future. *Choices* helps students see clear linkages between their school work and career skills by providing information that is comprehensive, accurate and up to date. The program motivates and engages students through interactive activities for:

- Self-assessment of interests (English and Spanish), work values and basic skills;
- Career exploration with information that highlights necessary academic and career skills for hundreds of occupations;
- Post-secondary education exploration;
- Four-year high school course planning;
- Career and education portfolio building; and
- Financial aid and scholarship research and application.

Choices provides a seamless connection to thousands of college websites, America's Job Bank, state job banks, scholarship databases and other high-quality career sites. Students can apply to colleges online. Parents can complete college financial need forms and use tools to better understand the process of financing college costs.

Choices connects to more than 200 online career videos. They bring job information to life through real-world interviews with workers in the field. The videos show workers in action, giving a first-hand sense of what a career is really like. Students learn about required education/training and career skills, work activities, job outlook and earnings.

Academic Integration

Choices includes creative, outcome-based solutions for teaching established curricula and supporting remediation efforts with technology. Lessons are designed to integrate career development concepts into the core academics through the use of technology. They support teacher efforts to use technology to enhance academic instruction. The lessons are an excellent way to enrich academic learning and motivate students.

Accountability

The *OnTrack* accountability system provides teachers, counselors and administrators with data about each student's *Choices* assessment results and progress with education and career planning. Student information can be sent to parents and guardians quickly and easily, thus promoting parental involvement.

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Authorized Activities

Each eligible entity that receives an award under this part may use the funds to carry out an array of activities that advance student academic achievement and support the student's completion of secondary school and transition to vocational technical training, further education or employment. *Choices* content and processes align most closely with the activities described below.

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(a) Professional Development

Choices CD Edition Alignment:

Bridges Transitions, developer of *Choices CD Edition*, provides extensive services to assist educators in implementing and integrating *Choices* into the academic and technology curricula.

Customized training focuses on enhancing teacher technology skills and building an action plan for maximizing the use of *Choices* to support student academic achievement and technological literacy.

Participants explore how the standards-aligned lessons enhance existing curricula by incorporating engaging, technology-based activities that motivate students by connecting academics with career planning. *Choices* and a variety of excellent websites are used in the hands-on training.

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(b)(2) Other Activities: Adapting or expanding existing and new applications of technology to enable teachers to increase student academic achievement, including technology literacy.

(b)(6) Other Activities: Acquiring, adapting, expanding, implementing, repairing and maintaining existing and new applications of technology to support the school reform effort and improve student academic achievement, including technology literacy.

Choices CD Edition Alignment:

Choices content offers a wealth of opportunities for academic enrichment and remediation support. For example, students might begin by taking an interest inventory that identifies career clusters and specific occupations of interest to the student. Follow-up reading about key occupations gives students practice in reading comprehension and exposes them to new vocabulary. Graphics and charts give students assistance in comprehension.

The occupation reports further validate the importance of academic achievement with highlights of required education/training and career skills. Related school subjects and a suggested four-year course of study are also provided. The *Choices* Planner and portfolio invite students to write descriptions of their skills through a guided process, create written education and career plans and practice resume writing.

The very nature of using *Choices* leads students to use many critical thinking skills, such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Students must make decisions and set priorities when they search for occupations, colleges or scholarships. They are given opportunities to compare and contrast options. They are encouraged to use technology to retrieve, evaluate and manage information.

The included lessons and other supporting materials for *Choices*, give teachers additional means to enhance academic achievement. They blend career development concepts, the use of technology and academic skills into interesting lessons that engage students, build on their own context and motivate learning.

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(b)(4) Other Activities: Utilizing technology to develop or expand efforts to connect schools and teachers with parents and students to promote meaningful parental involvement.

Choices CD Edition Alignment:

Schools can use *Choices* in a variety of ways to promote meaningful parental involvement. Parental influence is a key factor in student course selection and career choice. *Choices* provides parents with the results of student assessments in the areas of interests, work values and basic skills. *Choices* also contains comprehensive, easy-to-understand information about occupations, such as the skills and type of education/training they require. The combination of assessment results and occupational information offers students and parents a powerful base from which to explore career plans and make decisions.

Selecting and applying for colleges is another key area for parents. *Choices* facilitates the college search with one of the largest (more than 7,000 colleges, technical schools and graduate schools) and most accurate college databases available. Parents and students can explore and compare options quickly and easily. Links directly to college websites further enhance the process. Online college applications can also be accessed. *Choices* includes information on thousands of financial aid awards as well.

The interactive *Choices* Planner and portfolio helps students develop and document Individual Education and Career Plans. Through templates and form letters available in *Choices*, schools can easily advise parents of student progress on their plans and changes that might need attention. This is yet another way to use *Choices* to support parental involvement in their student's education.

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(b)(8) Other Activities: Using technology to collect, manage and analyze data to inform and enhance teaching and school improvement efforts.

Choices CD Edition Alignment:

The *OnTrack* accountability system provides teachers, counselors and administrators with data about *Choices* assessment results and progress with education and career planning for individual students or groups of students. *OnTrack* accountability data can be imported into applications such as Excel for further analysis and consolidation. Schools can also send *OnTrack* student information to parents and guardians quickly and easily, thus promoting parental involvement.

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