First Choice Power Classroom Energy Innovation Grants

First Choice Power Classroom Energy Innovation Grants will be awarded in fall 2009. The grants, which award as much as $2,000 to teachers, will require the same creativity as the Classroom Innovation Grants with an energy focus in the classroom. Kindergarten through high school teachers of any subject are encouraged to apply summer 2009 for grants that will be put into action during the 2009-10 school year.
Energy is a growing issue and today's students are the key to its future. Classroom Energy Innovation Grants are one way we are doing our part to help support innovative learning.

First Choice Power Classroom Energy Innovation Grants provide resources to teachers with simply innovative and creative teaching ideas. We know teachers possess the power to engage the minds of their students. Providing tools and resources to teachers turns innovative ideas into excitement and learning for multitudes of students.

How to Apply

The online application consists of fill-in-the-blank screens and a mandatory attachment of the project budget on the last screen. NOTE: Pages may be missing in Safari Web browser; use of Explorer or Netscape browser is highly recommended. If you are not comfortable filling out an online application, contact your organization's computer technician for assistance. First Choice Power is not able to provide technical assistance.

Click here or copy into your web browser:
http://www.firstchoicepower.com/texas-electric/classroom-innovation.html

Application requirements

1. In order to access the online application, you will be required to set up an account with your e-mail address and a password. The next step is the eligibility quiz. If you fail the eligibility quiz, you do not meet grant qualifications. Please check the Web site for grant criteria. Once the eligibility quiz is complete, the seven-page application will appear. After reading the directions, if you have questions, please send an e-mail to grant@FirstChoicePower.com. E-mails will be answered within 24 hours. If you still have questions after receiving the response to your e-mail, then call (505) 241- 2864. Please read the entire application prior to entering fields and print a hard copy for your review. To print a copy of the application, select the "Printer-Friendly Version" option at the top of any page.
2. Complete all the boxes on each of the screens. Required information is noted with an asterisk. If you are lacking one of the required fields, the page will refresh and inform you that required information is missing. You will not be allowed to submit your application until all required information is supplied.
3. Provide the school's federal identification number or EIN in the application if your school is a private school or not a public school.

Attaching budget file

1. A project budget must be attached electronically to your application. (Please see last screen of the application). Label the budget with your last name and school name. If you do not attach a budget with your application, your application will not be considered for funding.
2. The budget must be in Microsoft Word or Excel. Provide a detailed budget for the total cost of the project and the amount requested. Please limit to one page. Your document must be named with your last name and school name. To attach the budget file, place your cursor in the box next to the File Name. Click on the "Browse" button. You will see files that are on your computer system. Select the file you wish to attach. Click "Open" and the file name will appear in the "File Name" box in the application. Then click the "Upload" button. NOTE: If you are not comfortable uploading attachments, contact your organization's computer technician for assistance. First Choice Power is not able to provide technical assistance.

Save and complete later

1. To save and complete later, click on the "save and finish later" button. NOTE: It is critical that you remember your user ID and password for future access to your application. NOTE: If your e-mail provider does not accept messages from contacts not in your address book, please add grant@FirstChoicePower.com to your address book or "safe list." If you do not do this, you will not receive your confirmation e-mail.
2. Once the application is completed, print a hard copy for your files using the "printer-friendly" feature at the top of the page, then select the submit button. NOTE: After the "submit" button is entered, the application can no longer be accessed. You will not be able to add attachments or edit your application once it is submitted.
3. If you are unable to complete your application, you may save your work and finish it later. To return to your incomplete application, select the "save and finish later" button. All the information entered will be saved, and you will be able to return to the application through a link that will be sent to the e-mail account set up. Applicants must check their e-mail to access this link.

Confirmation

1. You will receive an electronic acknowledgement after you submit your application. The e-mail will come from grant@FirstChoicePower.com. If you have a SPAM blocker or firewall, this e-mail may be sent to your SPAM folder. Please check that folder in order to receive your application acknowledgement. It is your responsibility to see if your computer will block this e-mail. The First Choice Power Fund is unable to retrieve the acknowledgement e-mail for you.
2. If you have not successfully attached your budget file, you will be contacted by the grant administrator and given the option to reapply, otherwise the application

will be rejected. A copy of your application is included in the confirmation e-mail. Check the application to ensure the name of the budget file is listed in the application.

Deadline

Applications must be submitted by September 15 at 6 pm CST. The application will shut down at this time and information that you have not submitted will not be sent to First Choice Power. You must submit your application using the "submit" button in order for it to be considered.

Notification

Applicants will be notified by early October on the status of their application through the e-mail address provided.

Ideas for Every Subject

Energy is a growing issue and today's students are the key to its future. Classroom Energy Innovation Grants are one way we are doing our part to help support innovative learning. Below are possible questions to explore for every subject and grade level:

<u>Behavioral</u>

- What is creative energy?
- How do you describe emotional energy?
- Can animals sense people's emotional energy?
- What are the relationships among our perception of color, light energy, and anatomy?
- How does human psychology affect the adoption of energy saving behaviors?

<u>Biological</u>

- How much energy does a person need to live?
- Can a plant grow without sunlight?
- How do different kinds of animals conserve energy? (e.g., lions, lizards, bears)
- What happens when muscles use up all their stored energy? (e.g., squeezing a ball for a long time)
- Does cooking affect the energy in the food we eat?

<u>Chemical</u>

- How does a calorie represent energy?
- What is the effect of sunlight on different materials? (e.g., butter, chocolate, dark paper, light paper)
- How does energy change form?
- What happens when salt water freezes?
- How can you keep water warm for a longer time?

<u>Earth/Space Science</u>

- What's the energy difference between hard and soft coal?
- Are all types of oil equal in energy content?

- How does energy travel through the earth?
- How does energy move through the oceans?
- What patterns of weather systems are related to the transfer of energy

Economics

- How much energy would the average family save if they didn't use a clothes dryer?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of using electricity as an energy source?
- What is the cost of transporting energy?
- What are the factors that go into an energy audit?
- How does increasing energy costs affect the food supply and distribution?

Engineering

- How do we store energy?
- How does changing the amount of energy affect the rate of change of an object? (e.g., increasing heat on melting ice/butter/chocolate, decreasing the amount of sunlight on a piece of paper)
- How have changes in the design of cars made them more energy efficient?
- What are the differences between subtractive and additive theories of color?
- How much energy do all the world's cell phones use?

Environmental

- Paper or plastic - which choice uses less energy?
- How can you reliably measure your carbon footprint?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of LED and incandescent bulbs?
- In music, what energy factors are most important for the listener?
- How do humans affect the energy flow in ecosystems?

Language

- How many different energy words or phrases are in our language?
- How are energy-related words used differently in common language and scientific language?
- How do writers express changes in their characters' energy?
- What is the frequency of energy words in language?

Math

- What kind of functions does energy produce when moving?
- What kind of functions does energy produce when changing?
- What are the relationships between energy and speed of phase change?
- How can a computer be used in modeling energy flow?
- What frequencies are seen when energy is released?

Music

- What is the difference in energy between discordant and chordant music?
- How do composers express different levels of energy?
- What is the relationship between timbre and energy?
- What are the relationships between pitch and loudness to rate and amplitude of vibrations?

Physical

- How is energy produced?
- What controls energy absorption and reflection in sound transmission?
- How do temperature, pressure, material and type of energy affect transfer?

- Is wind the unlimited free, clean, energy of the future?
- What kind of ball bounces highest?

Political

- Should there be energy equity in our government policies?
- What role should the government play in energy policies?
- How did energy and transportation play a role in settling the United States?
- Is taxing energy consumption to control energy use fair?
- How do different countries meet their energy needs?

Social

- Has the Internet saved energy?
- How is energy expressed in art?
- What is the influence of climate on home building materials?
- How have historical changes in scientific perspectives changed our view of energy?
- What are the societal factors that promote or constrain energy research?

Technology

- How do we measure energy?
- How have scales for measuring heat energy changed?
- How is temperature measured using specialized tools? (e.g., infrared, probe)
- What are the methods used to measures BTU's?

What's funded, what's not?

Classroom Energy Innovation Grants fund creative classroom teaching ideas that focus on energy or energy efficiency. We know teachers possess the power to engage the minds of their students. Providing simply better tools and resources to teachers turns innovative ideas into excitement and learning for multitudes of students.

We encourage teachers from all subject areas to challenge students about energy and its impact on our future. From studying climate change in high school statistics to learning about who created the light bulb in kindergarten and from understanding the importance of fuel diversity in any science class to depicting energy in the art room, the opportunities are endless.

What's been funded in the past?

Illegal Trash Dumping: A middle school teacher wanted to raise students' awareness on issues surrounding illegal dumping of trash such as health hazards to people, plants and animals, and to educate students on the different products that are recyclable, and to teach students proper disposal of trash.

What's not funded?

The following types of requests are not eligible for funding:

- Teacher training or salaries. Requests for teacher certifications, training, or for salaries fall beyond our funding guidelines. This includes stipends for substitute teachers.

- Before- or after-school programs. The intent of Classroom Energy Innovation Grants is to support teachers and their students during core school hours, not for extracurricular activities such as before or after school day care, clubs, or other activities scheduled outside of core school hours.
- Prepackaged curriculum. Classroom Energy Innovation Grants are centered on the principle of ingenuity. Funding requests that are largely comprised of prepackaged curriculum or pre-developed software lack the thread of innovation we promote. For example, a teacher hoping to provide real-life applications for science would be more successful at receiving a grant by creating a collection of commonly used items, instead of purchasing several copies of "ACME's Science Kits".
- Equipment requests not associated with a creative teaching idea. We often receive questions about equipment, such as, "Do you fund computers?" The answer is, "it depends." As you can see from the examples we have provided, Classroom Energy Innovation Grants certainly have provided equipment through guitars, computers, cameras, scales, etc. What all of these winning grants have in common is that the grant was centered on an idea that came alive. In the past we have received requests to replace overhead projectors, Smartboards or other teaching aids that have broken or are needed; these requests were denied because they were not centered on an innovative idea.
- Field trip funding requests exceeding 25 percent of the total amount requested. We recognize that school travel budgets have shrunk over the years. A grant request can include up to 25 percent of the total amount requested for travel. Keep in mind, the request must be centered on an idea, not on a field trip. In other words, the field trip should be one of several methods used to supplement the teaching idea.
- One-time events. Classroom Energy Innovation Grants are designed and developed for classroom application. Though we have funded projects that may have culminated in a poetry reading, school play, or garden harvest, we will not fund requests for special events only.