

Broadband USA Applications Database

Applicant Name: Trans Video Communications, Inc.

Project Title: Project Broadband Technology in the Classroom (BTiC) - Brooklyn

Project Type: Sustainable Adoption

Executive Summary

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM. In order to promote sustainable broadband adoption, the five schools located in Brooklyn that intend to participate in Project Broadband Technology in the Classroom (BTiC) need to create an educational environment where broadband use is more teacher friendly and where it is an integral part of the daily lives of students and teachers, both inside the classroom and outside. These conditions are not currently present in these schools. Without hassle-free equipment and without training, education, use and support, teachers and students will be less likely to use broadband-related services now or in the future, notwithstanding their proven benefits.

OVERALL APPROACH. Project BTiC addresses the problem by: (1) training teachers to use effectively broadband-related services as a meaningful learning tool, (2) providing teachers and students with the equipment (whiteboards and computers) needed to use broadband educational tools in school which, in turn, will result in a greater understanding of the functionality and benefits of broadband services, (3) integrating the use of broadband with the curriculum and daily lives of students and teachers, and (4) offering opportunities for parents to gain a greater awareness and familiarity with broadband-related services through parent school visits, after-school access to broadband training and working with their children in the use of broadband.

Project BTiC is innovative because it facilitates the sustained adoption of broadband in three unique ways: (1) by integrating broadband with the broadcast TV service already available in the participating schools via a common large-screen display (which enhances both services and makes it easier for teachers to use), (2) by providing both technical and educational training in this media based educational approach (which will help remove a key obstacle to sustainable broadband adoption by schools, namely, teacher fear of the technology), and (3) by making possible the redesign of elementary school education to create a more successful learning environment and one that can flourish even during challenging economic times. It aims to redesign the technical and educational infrastructure needed to integrate broadband capabilities into the traditional classroom.

AREAS, DEMOGRAPHICS, ESTIMATES OF POTENTIAL NEW SUBSCRIBERS. Project BTiC will serve five schools in Brooklyn and the parents of the students in those schools. (Trans Video Communications, Inc. (TVC) has filed a similar application to implement Project BTiC in five schools located in Queens.) These schools are anchor institutions in their communities. The student population of the five Brooklyn schools, all of which include grades K – 8, is 1,261. These are in distressed communities where the median family salary ranges between \$17,981-\$28,388, and where, according to an ex-parte filing submitted to NTIA by the NYC Dept. of Information Technology & Telecommunications, dated 4/1/09, the broadband adoption rate citywide for low-income residents is only 26%. These schools include student and families that are hispanic, non-hispanic white, non-hispanic black, non-hispanic Asian, and students from several other ethnic groups.

It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which Project BTiC will increase the number of household subscribers to broadband. However, by training 1,261 students in these Brooklyn schools, their 70 teachers and principals, and hundreds of their parents in the use and benefits of broadband, it will undoubtedly influence them to seek such access at home.

QUALIFICATIONS OF APPLICANT. TVC has been providing full-time instructional television to its schools since 1966. It also provides access to tens of thousands of instructional video clips via its extensive instructional web site. The business of broadcast and web-based technology in the classroom is its specialty.

Monsignor Michael J. Dempsey, the Director of Project BTiC, has 48 years of experience in education as Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Secretary of Education and director of the TVC television system. He is also experienced as designer and manager of several projects similar to Project BTiC (e.g., START (Schools that are Retraining Teachers) and PLAN (Program of Learning According to Needs)). Grace Sommero, the Assistant Director of Project BTiC, trained and experienced as an attorney and in finance, also brings the experience of working with Msgr. Dempsey on Project EXCEL, an effort, similar to BTiC with respect to the technology involved. Elizabeth Murphy, a support person, has considerable experience in teaching adults, especially in developing their computer and computer networking skills.

JOB TO BE SAVED OR CREATED. These five schools provide jobs for about 100 people, including principals, teachers, aides, janitors, lunch room employees, nurses etc. They also help sustain the jobs of others who provide services to the schools, such as equipment suppliers, repair people, television personnel, as well as parents and guardians who depend on the schools to take care of their children while the parent or guardian is at work. Project BTiC protects those jobs by making the schools more efficient and sustainable. If a school closes, the entire community is diminished. In addition to the

school and community jobs, Project BTiC helps sustain dozens of manufacturing, installation and distribution jobs in the equipment companies involved. A vast majority of the funds will go directly to outside vendors who provide and install the electronic whiteboards and computers needed. Project BTiC is economically stimulating.

OVERALL COST. The budgeted cost for Project BTiC in Brooklyn is \$301,670.00, with 82% of that cost being for the school equipment needed.