

## 2009 Innovations Awards Program APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 09-S-41WV

**Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:**

State: West Virginia

Assign Program Category (applicant): Human Resources/Education (Use list at end of application)

1. Program Name - Teach 21
2. Administering Agency – West Virginia Department of Education – Office of Instruction
3. Contact Person (Name and Title) – Carla Williamson, Executive Director
4. Address: Building 6, Room 608  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, E.  
Charleston, WV 25305-0330
5. Telephone Number: 304-558-5325 Ex. 53227
6. FAX Number: 304-558-1834
7. E-mail Address: [cljwilli@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:cljwilli@access.k12.wv.us)
8. Web site Address: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21/>

9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

Teach 21 is an innovative website containing resources created by teachers for teachers as a result of research-based, sustained professional development conducted by the WVDE Office of Instruction. This dynamic site reflects the commitment of WVDE to change the focus of teacher development from passive learning to productive learning as teachers create resources based on their new understanding of quality classroom instruction.

10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on March 2, 2009 to be considered.

Teach 21 was introduced by a webinar in October, 2007.

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?

The Teach 21 website was created to house the resources developed by teachers from across WV as they participated in professional development designed to increase student achievement through a focus on quality standards-focused instruction. Teachers have written standards-based units, instructional guides, and Project Based Learning units featuring research-based instructional strategies and performance assessments designed to improve student learning. As the WVDE Office of Instruction continues to work with different groups of teachers across our state, teachers apply their learning by

developing a product for publication on Teach 21.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

October 2007 – Teach 21 is introduced to WV educators through a webinar led by WV Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Steven L. Paine. The site contained the WV 21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards and Objectives, Instructional Guides in all content areas K-12, and Reading English Language Arts Units in grades 5-8.

March 2008 – Strategy Bank, a collection of research-based strategies for vocabulary, comprehension and other components of good lesson planning was created.

April 2008 – Power Standards were created by content area teachers. Model School Classroom videos and lesson plans began to be added to the site.

May 2008 – Units in mathematics, science and social studies were added.

June 2008 – Sample items for the new state assessment, WESTEST2, were added to the Assessment menu.

August 2008 – Project Based Learning plans began to be added to the site.

September 2008 – Presentations done by the members of the WVDE Office of Instruction were added to the site for teachers to review and use as they deliver professional development in their schools and counties.

Ongoing – Teach 21 is a dynamic electronic resource that provides teachers time-intensive instructional designs. We constantly add resources that teachers have created as a result of the various professional development opportunities we conduct. We are currently expecting 50 elementary mathematics standards-based lesson plans with accompanying video clips and over 200 project based learning plans that were created as a result of the 2008 Teacher Leadership Institute training. Additionally, we have partnered with the State Treasurer's Office to provide leadership to approximately 40 teachers and business representatives as they create instructional guides for Personal Finance, grades K-12.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

What makes the Teach 21 site different from other teacher resource sites is that it was created by teachers for teachers. The WVDE Office of Instruction believes that if we are to change what occurs in the classrooms across our state, and thus improve student achievement, we have to change the way teachers and students work. This cannot be done by having teachers listen to a three-hour lecture and return to their classrooms expecting change. We must provide rich resources and model quality instructional design. We believe that sustained professional development as teachers work through the creation of a product and test it in their classroom is the only way to truly affect change.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

Teach 21 was started using existing materials created by teachers who had worked with the Office of Instruction. Space on the WVEIS server was given to us and we used existing staff to create the web pages and upload the teacher-created materials. Our costs of approximately \$500,000 relate to teacher stipends, substitutes, and travel.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

The Teach 21 site itself does not have a designated operating budget. The Office of Instruction has funds for paying teachers to attend professional development and create the culminating product for publication. These funds come from the Teacher Leadership Institute and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning and mathematics Legislative appropriations to WVDE of \$200,000 annually.

16. How is the program funded?

Teach 21 is supported through Legislative appropriations for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, Teacher Leadership Institute, as well as WVDE general budget.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

No, Teach 21 did not require legislation.

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

Teach 21 does not require any special equipment or software. We use the WVDE server and any necessary programming is done by WVEIS programmers and any web design is completed by the WVDE Webmaster.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Yes, as far as we are able to tell, this site is unlike any other. Teach 21 has been recognized for its depth and breadth, as well as its teacher ownership, by the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning, The Buck Institute for Education and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. There are sites in other states that contain resources for teachers, but the resources on them have not been tied to professional development within the state. Carla Williamson, Executive Director of the WVDE Office of Instruction, had the idea for a website where teacher-created products tied to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Content Standards and Objectives for West Virginia Schools could be housed. She can be reached at Building 6, Room 608, 1900 Kanawha Blvd. E., Charleston, WV 25305-0330. Her phone number is 304-558-5325, Extension 53227 and her email is [cljwilli@access.k12.wv.us](mailto:cljwilli@access.k12.wv.us).

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

One example of a similar program is the Greece NY Central School District site at <http://web001.greece.k12.ny.us/>. This site contains resources and strategies for teachers that have been gathered from experts across the nation. Teach 21 is different in that all resources on the site have been created through sustained professional development with WV teachers. The focus of all the Teach 21 resources is to help WV teachers improve classroom instruction to foster student achievement on state and national assessments and to prepare students to lead successful lives in a global society.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

No. Teach 21, by design, will continue to grow and expand as teachers participate in professional development opportunities that will improve classroom instruction. The products that they create and use in their classrooms will be reviewed by their peers and added to Teach 21. As we learn more about our global society and economy, we will keep pace with change.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

Teach 21 has only been available since October, 2007, but the statistics on its use continue to grow. For instance, in May 2008 there had only been 11,118 visits to the site since it was introduced. The latest statistics show that in the month of January 2009 there were 20,982 visits. As coordinators from the Office of Instruction travel around the state, teachers thank us for the resources they are using from Teach 21. We always give credit to the teachers who create the resources for us. Teach 21 has been used by teachers across the nation and the world. We have had over 180,000 visits from educators in 82 countries and territories. We continue to receive emails from people who have found the Teach 21 resources useful.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Teach 21 has grown as we continue to conduct sustained, product-based professional development with teachers from across our state. We continually add new teacher-created resources as they are developed and reviewed. As our stakeholders make us aware of needed resources, we strive to develop a plan that results in delivery of that resource.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

For other states to create a site like Teach 21, they would first have to examine how they conduct professional development on the state level. For too long teachers have attended a session where they listen to a speaker and are expected to make changes in their classroom instruction based on what they have heard. WVDE Office of Instruction found that this transfer was not being made and decided to revamp the way that we delivered our training. We found that by immersing teachers in sustained professional development in which they apply what they are learning toward the creation of products that

will be tested in their own classrooms, the classroom practices begin to change. The resources that are created from this model are shared on Teach 21. States could easily modify the way they deliver training to teachers and develop a site like Teach 21. Adequate server space, access to a programmer who understands the big picture, a web designer and an employee responsible for daily maintenance of the site are also required.

## **2009 Innovations Awards Program Program Categories and Subcategories**

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate *Program Category* for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

### *Infrastructure and Economic Development*

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

### *Government Operations*

- Administration
- Elections
- Public Information
- Revenue

### *Health & Human Services*

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

### *Human Resources/Education*

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

### *Natural Resources*

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

### *Public Safety/Corrections*

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

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CSG Innovations Awards 2009  
The Council of State Governments  
2760 Research Park Drive, P.O. Box 11910  
Lexington, KY 40578-1910

### **Contact:**

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This application is also available at [www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org), in the Programs section.

**Deadline: March 2, 2009**