

SAMPLE LANGUAGE FOR PROPOSAL

Sample Program Methodology Freshman Transition Course Integrated into English/Language Arts

High Schools for the 21st Century Grant Application

As you develop your applications for the **High Schools for the 21st Century Grants** (due no later than June 3, 2002), the following notes may be of assistance. For assistance with product information and customized budget projections, and as you customize your proposal, contact Tanja Easson, VP of Curriculum and Technical Support, at (800) 967-8016.

The following sample program can be adapted to fit your school's goals and student population. It would be a portion (20 – 40%) of your total 21st Century Grant allocation.

GOAL: Develop a 9th grade Freshman Transition program either as a separate class or integrated in English/language arts and math using the award-winning, research-based *Career Choices* curriculum as the textbooks for the course. Complete the curriculum planning and staff development necessary for classes to begin no later than second semester of the 2002-2003 school year.

With so many students dropping out, so many young girls getting pregnant, so much violence in classrooms, and so many young people leaving school educationally deficient, we as educators face an important challenge: *Engage students so they become motivated learners and responsible students and citizens.*

However, the challenge is compounded by the fact that teens (like most adults) are not likely to apply themselves to task if they fail to see the personal benefits in that task. To paraphrase a wise old saying, just as you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink, *you can sit young people in a classroom, but you can't make them think!*

The award-winning *Career Choices* curriculum (used in more than 4,200 schools) was developed specifically to help young people see personal value in learning. First, they learn about themselves—a topic guaranteed to capture the attention of every teen. Then, they determine what they want out of life and, finally, they prepare a personal course of action. Woven throughout are benefit-laden activities, clearly demonstrating the value of becoming a responsible individual and motivated learner.

By asking readers to project themselves into the future, *Career Choices* demonstrates how decisions made today have consequences as they grow. Those who view school as something to avoid learn to regard education as a path to a satisfying future. The life skills learned in class will be used throughout their lifetime.

The program also stresses attitude and personal responsibility in ways that empower young people who formerly viewed themselves as victims. It offers hope and a sense of control, which go a long way toward restoring the value of education in their minds.

And because teachers usually have little preparation time, it is important that the programs chosen can be easily implemented. With *Career Choices* the planning has been done. The comprehensive *Instructor's Guide* enables credentialed teachers with little or no career guidance experience to perform splendidly with no additional direction. The *optional* Internet enhancement, www.CareerChoices.com, allows even the most novice computer user to easily integrate technology into the classroom.

Most important, **students embrace this experience**. As Steve Rzeka, a high school counselor in Fairplay, Colorado reports, “*we do graduate surveys two years and five years after graduation. Students consistently rank this class as one of their favorites.*” You’d be hard pressed to come up with a program that does so much even if you had a full year to prepare!

Using the *Career Choices* curriculum for a portion of your program will:

- Launch freshmen enthusiastically into the high school experience
- Provide a proven curriculum for the integration of academics, career guidance, and technology
- Change student’s attitudes about the value of education and, therefore, impact retention rates
- Clearly demonstrate the need for students to learn about career and post-secondary opportunities and understand why they need to rigorously prepare themselves for these opportunities while they are in high school
- Provide integrated, Interdisciplinary course work in English, math and social science for easy implementation
- Provide a curriculum that can be used as the 9th grade English course, correlated to the California English Language Arts Content Standards for high school
- Integrate academics into real-life, real-world activities and projects, thereby providing motivation for learning basic skills so necessary in the world of work
- Provide rich opportunities for Student Portfolio and project-based learning
- Give planning committees a variety of planning options because it is flexible and adaptable to any school structure: it is used in school-within-school settings, academy, and block scheduling, as well as the required English/language arts course for 9th graders

Frequently Asked Questions

1) *What about my students who are headed for college. Why do they need career guidance?*

Studies clearly show that freshmen entering college with a career in mind are more likely to graduate than students who haven’t made a career choice. A career focus is the best indicator for academic success and matriculation for college students.

- 2) *I teach English! Why should I get involved with career and life planning?*
A career-planning theme in an English classroom—or any other academic classroom—adds instant relevancy, capturing the imaginations of even hard-to-motivate students. Students become engaged because the reading and writing assignments address the identity issues most important to adolescents. The **Possibilities** anthology includes many **required** pieces, but encourages students to view the literature from a new point of view.
- 3) *I just don't have the time to learn a whole new curriculum?*
You don't have to learn an entirely new curriculum! You simply enhance what you're already doing. **Career Choices** has ready-made English and math components and lesson plans, making integration easy.
- 4) *My students complete a computer-based interest inventory. Isn't that enough?*
Asking students to make **the second most important decision in their life** requires personal reflection, discussion, contemplation, decision-making and goal setting. Students who complete the **Career Choices** curriculum will learn a career and life planning process they can use over and over again throughout their lives.
- 5) *The kids I work with are still struggling with basic skills.*
Career Choices is academically based, providing basic skill practice disguised as self-discovery. What was once viewed as *drill and skill* is now camouflaged in meaningful personal exercises and activities. By the end of the class, attitudes about education will dramatically change as students realize how being able to read, write, and compute impacts their future.
- 6) *I work with 9th graders. Aren't they a little too young to make a career choice?*
Career Choices teaches a **proven** planning process for career and life planning. While most students may not choose a career in 9th grade, this course helps them envision a future that is realistic. Armed with that information they will be less likely to drop out of school, engage in destructive behavior, or scale down their academic goals. In four years you'll find most **Career Choices** graduates going on to post-secondary education.

Why It Works

Career Choices motivates students to learn by bringing something universally fascinating to the process: their own identities, abilities, dreams, and aspirations. When class assignments help students find answers for their most urgent questions (Who am I? What do I want?), communication and critical thinking skills become suddenly relevant. When fictional characters are seen to be struggling with these same questions, literature, too, takes on new meaning.

Teachers who use the curriculum are excited by the results. There seems to be a kind of synergy at work. Once students realize how education will benefit them in the future—

what's in it for me—they apply themselves to all their studies. Not surprisingly, their performance improves, and this encourages them to work even more diligently. Success feeds enthusiasm, which inspires still more success!

The *Career Choices* materials work, very simply, because they address the individual reader, no matter what his or her circumstance. All young people share certain concerns: Who am I? What do I want? How can I get it? By teaching self-knowledge along with reading, writing, and math, *Career Choices* makes basic skills relevant and motivates students to learn. They are willing to pay attention, to work harder, to stretch because, suddenly, what's going on in the classroom is of urgent personal interest.

I feel the usage of these materials helped my students to see the relevance of English to their lives and helped them formulate a more mature career plan. These materials have also caused them to be conscious of the quality of their assignments and the importance of doing well in school.

Amy S. Heaton
Applied Communications Teacher
Horn Lake, MS

Students are more focused, have a better understanding of why they are in school and know courses needed to better prepare for career goals. Counselors find it easier to schedule students.

John A. Holmes
Career Education Teacher
9th Grade, Directions
San Gabriel High School, San Gabriel, CA

A Sample Plan for Curriculum and Staff Development

Using the award-winning, interdisciplinary *Career Choices* textbooks as the basis for the 9th grade freshmen transition class or 9th grade English class.

FIRST: The curriculum development committee will attend a two-day comprehensive workshop, conducted by senior trainer Penelope Paine, for an overview of the curriculum and how to use it. This session will include a computer-based section so participants can fully understand the technology portion of the curriculum.

SECOND: Following the two-day staff development, the committee will review the myriad course options and lesson plans included in the comprehensive *Instructor's Guide* (over 400 pages) and online at www.academicinnovations.com/indepth.html. With the help of the curriculum and technical assistance department of Academic Innovations, they will draft a course outline and lesson plans based on standards and their project goals.

THIRD: Penny Paine will provide onsite technical support. Ms. Paine will work with the committee using their course outline draft until a course syllabus and lesson plans are finalized.

Staff development and Technical Support for course Instructors**

FOURTH: Using the school's customized goals and lesson plans Penny Paine will conduct a two-day workshop for all staff responsible for teaching the course prior to the launch of the first classes.

FIFTH: Follow up onsite visits will be made by Ms. Paine throughout the year to provide technical support and coaching to instructors as needed.

Staff development and technical support for all instructional staff**

SIXTH: Penny Paine, along with the course master teacher (identified as the course progresses), will orient all school staff to the goals of the project. They can then continue to support each student's educational and career plans through the balance of their tenure in high school.

PENELOPE C. PAINE

Educational Consultant

Curriculum • Career Technical • School-to-Work • Gender Equity

Certified Trainer for the *Career Choices* curriculum

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Education:

B.A., University of London

Experience:

Career Technical/Gender Equity, Contract Technical
Assistant/Consultant, California Department of Education: 1982 to
present
Non-profit Community Based Organization, Executive Director –
1975 to 1982
National Trainer, Career, Technical and Life Planning Programs –
1982 to present
Girls Incorporated® Leadership Services Consultant, Regions 1-2 –
1990 to present
Lifetime Honorary Membership award, ACTE Vocational Education
Equity Council, 2000

Contracts include:

California Department of Education
Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges
Girls Incorporated®, New York City, NY
TIAACREF
Business and Professional Women/USA, Washington D.C.
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity, Washington D.C.
(NAPE)
Independent contracts for over 357 workshops throughout nation

References:

Kenneth B. Hoyt, Kansas State University 913.532.5541
Louise Chiatovich, California Department of Education 916.445.5695
Jenny Erwin, Director, Dept of Labor, Women's Bureau, Region IX

TIMELINE for The *Career Choices* Portion of Your Program

September 2002–January 2003 – first semester

Using the award-winning, interdisciplinary Career Choices textbooks as the basis for the 9th grade freshmen transition class or 9th grade English class.

October/November

FIRST: The curriculum development committee will attend a two-day comprehensive workshop, conducted by senior trainer Penelope Paine, for an overview of the curriculum and how to use it. This session will include a computer-based section so participants can fully understand the technology portion of the curriculum.

December

*SECOND: Following the two-day staff development, the committee will review the myriad course options and lesson plans included in the comprehensive **Instructor's Guide** (over 400 pages) and online at www.academicinnovations.com/indepth.html. They will draft a course outline and lesson plans based on standards and their project goals.*

January

THIRD: Penny Paine will provide onsite technical support. Ms. Paine will work with the committee using their course outline draft until a course syllabus and lesson plans are finalized.

Staff development and Technical Support for course Instructors**

FOURTH: Using the school's customized goals and lesson plans Penny Paine will conduct a two-day workshop for all staff responsible for teaching the course prior to the launch of the first classes.

Second Semester–classes begin

February - June

FIFTH: Follow up onsite visits will be made by Ms. Paine throughout the year to provide technical support and coaching to instructors as needed.

May

Staff development and technical support for all instructional staff**

SIXTH: Penny Paine, along with the course master teacher (identified as the course progresses), will orient all school staff to the goals of the project. They can then continue to support each student's educational and career plans through the balance of their tenure in high school.