



\$15,000 Award Application

Please tell us how your school will use a \$15,000 Best Buy Teach Award to make learning fun by using interactive technology. Fax this completed form to **952-430-4244**, no later than **Monday, December 18, 2006**. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.

School name: Polaris K-12 School **Federal tax ID number:** 92-6000078
Address: 8700 Ashwood Street **City:** Anchorage **State:** Alaska **ZIP:** 99507
School Phone: (907) 742-8700
Teach Award Applicant Teacher: Corey E. Aist
School Principal: Denise Greene-Wilkinson

In February 2007, the school districts of each \$15,000 Best Buy Teach Award-winning school will be invited to compete for a \$250,000 district-wide Best Buy Teach Award. Please identify the appropriate school district representative to receive the \$250,000 Best Buy Teach Award RFP.

Name of School District: Anchorage School District
School District Contact: Mary Wegner
District Contact Phone Number: (907) 742-3790 **District Contact E-mail:** wegner_mary@asdk12.org
School District Address: 5530 E Northern Lights Blvd **City:** Anchorage **State:** Alaska **ZIP:** 99504

Please Answer the Following Questions. (Only complete applications will be considered.)

1. Tell us how your school would use a \$15,000 Best Buy Teach Award to expand and/or enhance a current program that uses interactive technology to engage students and make learning fun.

Motivated Learning --- Increased Student Performance --- Achieving District and State Standards

Polaris K-12 will utilize a Best Buy Teach Regional Grant to create "Portfolio Hubs" for classrooms. A "Portfolio Hub" will consist of a multimedia computer, appropriate multimedia software, and the tools to capture and create multimedia projects – digital cameras, digital video camera, scanner, printer, memory sticks, wireless microphones, etc. With teacher facilitation and support, students will utilize and have access to the "Portfolio Hub" to develop projects daily. Through cooperation, creativity, and inspiration, the students will tell "their stories" and share concepts with a variety of audiences – teachers, staff, parents, and the community. These projects will become valuable pieces of their K-12 portfolios and follow them throughout their school experience.

Polaris K-12 has known since its inception that grades do not represent the whole student adequately and have therefore embraced a portfolio model. The portfolio model celebrates the whole child demonstrating growth, knowledge, abilities, and learning processes. Portfolios are used as a focal point for open dialogue among the learner, his or her parents, and the teachers. With much hard work and success, Polaris has been on the cutting edge of portfolio development, student led conferences, and standards implementation. With consistent student success and high scores in both state and federal testing, Polaris K-12 is fully embracing the expansion of our portfolio model with the integration of digital technology.

The hands-on philosophy and multiage environment of our school is the cornerstone for this unique lab of creativity and achievement. The student portfolios are avenues for authentic experience, assessment, and the demonstration of state and district standards. The "Portfolio Hub" will become an integral part in the creation of our student portfolios and a catalyst for newly enhanced student led parent conferences. Digital projects created from the "Portfolio Hubs" will become the backbone of the student portfolios and an integral part of the multiage, project driven environment.

2. Tell us how many students participate in the program, and describe how it engages students and makes learning fun.

All 470 Polaris students participate in the student driven portfolio process. The student portfolio process creates a learning environment in which students take ownership of their learning goals and develop projects that demonstrate mastery and understanding of standards. During student-led parent conferences, student portfolios become the instrument used in conveying the child's K-12 experience, progress, achievement and success. With this focus on student ownership, Polaris K-12 student-led parent conferences enjoy a 95% attendance rate; which is a phenomenal attendance rate when compared to traditional middle school and high school programs. In addition, Polaris K-12 has enjoyed a 99% graduation rate since its inception in 1995.

Teachers facilitate and guide students through the process of choosing projects that best represent the student's strengths, abilities, and achievements. The addition of digital content provides students new learning opportunities and avenues to capture and present information. Students are motivated and wanting to use technology to tell their stories. They work together in collaborative multiage groupings throughout the entire process. Polaris K-12 students will create books, movies, slide shows, and other multimedia presentations to be utilized in student led parent conferences.

Polaris K-12's youngest students are being welcomed and mentored by older student mentors. These mentors help facilitate the use of technology utilizing a variety of ways to create, capture, and present information. A renewed sense of community is being developed by partnering students in the elementary grade levels with middle school / high school mentors who become their advocates. This sense of community has had a positive effect felt by teachers, staff and parents alike.

These projects demonstrate growth and the mastery of district and state standards. Polaris K-12 has evolved into a proving ground for student performance and is ready to integrate technology into the daily teaching routine. With student motivation and participation at high levels, achievement will continue to be a point of pride at Polaris K-12.

3. If you receive a \$15,000 Best Buy Teach Award for the program you've described, what products would you likely purchase?? Be sure to include an estimated budget with product, quantity and price. Go to www.BestBuy.com for product and pricing information.

Item	Price	QTY	Total
Canon MiniDV - ZR 500	\$299.00	16	\$4784.00
Sony - Cyber-shot DSC-W30	\$199.00	16	\$3184.00
Sony - 1.0GB MSX-1GS	\$49.00	16	\$784.00
MiniDV AY-DVM60EJ4	\$16.00	16	\$256.00
Microphones ECMHW1	\$199.00	16	\$3184.00
63" Tripod - 6400UT	\$52.00	4	\$208.00
Color Laser Printer CLP-300	\$299.00	4	\$1196.00
Maxtor - 500GBHD F01H500	\$329.00	4	\$1316.00

4. How would the products outlined in your budget enhance the program and engage students?

The Integration of technology should be seamless and accessible to all the students - everyday.

The staff and faculty at Polaris K-12 have the experience, energy, drive, and background to integrate the "Portfolio Hubs" into projects and classroom activities. As an Anchorage School District TTL (Teacher Technology Leader) and past TTL Steering Committee member, I have helped teachers understand the importance of digital projects in motivating and inspiring students. Integrating technology into everyday activities and developing creative avenues of expression and story telling has been my focus for over ten years of teaching. Successfully helping teachers develop projects that their students find purposeful, expressive, and manageable has been both rewarding and motivating. Motivating and encouraging students to use digital technology to tell their stories and express their abilities has been the catalyst to student success. The Polaris K-12 staff crave the tools needed to integrate these concepts into their classrooms and daily routines.

Even with the limited technological resources, examples of creativity and teacher ingenuity can be witnessed in a variety of ways at Polaris K-12. Just this month, teachers have been busy using digital photography to create slide shows and digital presentations at the Polaris K-12 Open House. Walking through the halls and classrooms, parents were able to view slide shows, movies, and photographic displays of their children learning and actively engaged in their classroom environments. Staff and students are finding creative ways to show Polaris' daily activities and enhance the parent experience and are ready to take technology integration to a new level.

The partnership built between our school community and Best Buy will be the bridge to a long lasting relationship that will be mutually rewarding for both partners. Polaris K-12 looks forward to a partnership with Best Buy and pushing the envelope into digital portfolios, student creativity and ingenuity.

I hereby certify that the information set forth in this \$15,000 Best Buy Teach Award application is true and accurate. In the event your school is selected for a Best Buy Teach Award, you agree that Best Buy may use information in your application for publicity and promotion of the Best Buy Teach Award Program.

Principal Signature

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 2006.

Notary Public Signature

Commission Expires: _____

[NOTARY SEAL]