

October 27, 2020

To the Committee on Excellence in Education:

My name is Jennie Jackson, and I teach science at Venice High School. I teach biology, marine biology, and AP Environmental Science. I would like to apply for the \$500 scholarship. If I am awarded this scholarship, I would use the money to improve my distance learning teaching. The most important thing for me as a teacher, both in the classroom and during distance learning, is student engagement. I think that it is really important for teachers to design their curriculum to maximize student engagement. This has also been the most difficult struggle with distance learning. Students are so far away, and it is taking a lot of work and preparation to keep students engaged.

There are numerous simple purchases I could make that would increase student engagement in class, and other little things I could purchase to make my tiny corner of my home more efficient for teaching. I feel that we will most likely be teaching in our homes for at least the next 6 months, and I would like to improve the quality of my online teaching.

ITEMS that would make my digital classroom more engaging for students:

- 1) \$100: yearly subscription to an interactive platform called PADLET. This program allows students to post responses and comments during a lesson. I can interact with students, and students can interact with me in a more significant way than the zoom chat box. There are many security functions on this program that will allow me to monitor what students post. Students can also interact with each others' post, which allows for great debates and discussions.
- 2) \$10: a whiteboard program that allows me to use the screen as a whiteboard. I've tried using the whiteboard in my classroom, but the glare is really bad. My students really like it when teachers write their notes on the board because many of them are visual learners.
- 3) \$70: an interactive pen that allows me to write on the screen and use it as a whiteboard. This allows me to draw scientific diagrams in detail. It is difficult to draw notes on google docs because science has so many pictures and diagrams.
- 4) \$50: I would love some money to help me send supply kits to my students' homes for things that they need to do my projects. We completed an animal model project in marine biology, and many of my students needed supplies. I delivered supplies to their home, but it was a lot of work, and it would be nice to be able to send students a package in the mail for our next project. I would only need this for a dozen students, not every single student.
- 5) \$100: Amazon science movies. Zoom has a lot of security features, and the DVDs from my classroom and videos on Netflix are not viewable on zoom. The only platform that works on Zoom is amazon. There are some amazing documentaries that I would like to show on zoom with my students. I cannot assign it as homework to view with their own Netflix account because not all of them have that option available to them.
- 6) \$50: teacher edition of QUIZLET. This program is a fun, game-based review program that students love. They compete with each other to learn content, and it is interactive and simple to use.

ITEMS that would make my personal in-home teaching space more efficient for teaching:

- 1) \$20: a green curtain so that I can use a green screen during zoom sessions
(my computer is too old to sync with the built-in set-up)
- 2) \$20: a lighting set-up for higher quality zoom sessions
- 3) \$70: a simple standing desk so that I can stand up and move around when I teach

I appreciate your continued support for us teachers during the pandemic. I feel that these purchases would greatly improve the quality of my online teaching. Thank you so much.

Thank you,
Jennie Jackson

Venice High School