2. Project Detail

Funds are being requested from the WHAS Crusade for Children to purchase tablet devices, apps (for augmentative communication, reading, writing, organizing, note taking, and switch training), tablet accessories, and adapted curriculum classroom kits to provide students with disabilities increased independence in accessing the curriculum. These items will be available for evaluation, trial, and loan through the Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services (NKCES). NKCES serves seventeen public school districts in the Northern Kentucky area. It is one of nine Special Education Cooperatives located across the state and serves students who qualify for special education services, including students with low incidence disabilities such as children on the autism spectrum, students diagnosed with functional mental disabilities, and students with multiple disabilities. The Special Education Cooperative Network is funded through federal dollars awarded to Kentucky under Part B, Section 611, of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. The purpose of the network is to assist in meeting the needs of its member districts and to carry out priorities for the state that have been identified in the State Performance Plan.

Research shows that assistive technology (AT) can help close the achievement gap for students with disabilities. AT helps foster independence and allows students to access the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment. Awarded funds would be used to purchase four tablet devices, apps (to support augmentative communication, reading, writing, organizing, note taking, and switch training), tablet accessories and adapted curriculum classroom kits for the NKCES loan library. There are currently a collection of Apple tablets available for loan including six iPads. Four of the six iPads are second generation iPads that do not support voice recognition which is often used as a writing accommodation. These iPads also have a lower quality camera that does not work well for optical character recognition which can be used as a reading accommodation or for mangnifying classroom materials for students with visual impairments. Funds are being requested to purchase four new Apple tablets so that the loan library can incrase the number available for loan that have the capacity to support students that need reading and writing accommodations. The four second generation iPads will continue to be part of the lending library and can still be used by students who need to use the iPad as a communication device but do not need use of voice recognition or a high quality camera.

School district educational staff and assistive technology consultants will provide input on which apps will be purchased and made available for trial. AT apps typically cost between $30 and $200 per copy. $400 in app purchases is being requested per tablet to allow a variety of apps to be purchased for each of the tablet devices requested in this grant. Apps that would be purchased with WHAS funds will provide supports for augmentative communication, reading, writing, organizing, note taking, and/or switch training. A list of specific apps is not included with this grant application because it is anticipated that new apps will be released in the eight month period between when the grant request is made and when the funds will be available.

Several companies have now developed adapted curriculum classroom kits targeting students with moderate-to-severe developmental disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and autism. These kits contain materials that students directly interact with such as manipulatives to support learning concepts and adapted text to support various literacy levels such as students who use objects,

photos, or symbols to communicate. Awarded funds would be used to purchase three different curriculum kits that would benefit students with special needs from elementary through high school. These kits would be added to the loan library for teachers to try with their students.

It is important to determine if a student will be successful in using a specific tablet device, app, or adapted curriculum classroom kit before it is purchased. The goal of the AT evaluation services and the AT loan library is to make a wide variety of AT devices available so that educational staff in the Northern Kentucky area can better determine what equipment may allow a student to become more independent and successful in school before district funds are used to purchase these devices.

The funds requested from the WHAS Crusade for Children would allow NKCES to increase the capacity to provide quality assistive technology evaluation services for students in Northern Kentucky and to expand the number of tablet devices, apps, and adapted curriculum classroom kits that are available for loan to school districts for trial. Evaluation services and loans are currently provided at no charge to the NKCES member school districts which provides a savings of $600 to over $1000 per student for evaluations and $10 to $250 per month in equipment loan fees. Over the past few years the majority of AT evaluation and loan requests have involved determining if use of a tablet device would be appropriate for a student. School districts are also under a lot of pressure to close the achievement gap between students with and without disabilities and are looking for ways to better instruct and engage students with special needs through curriculum changes. Acquisition of the requested items will allow school districts and students with special needs to have access to current technology for evaluation and trial. This is critical because of how quickly technology now changes. Funding through the WHAS Crusade for Children would provide state-of-the-art resources for school districts and students with disabilities in Northern Kentucky.

3. Detailed List of Requested Equipment

Priority	Item	Unit Price	Quantity	Total
1	Tablet	$699.00	2	$1,398.00
1	Augmentation Communication, Reading, Writing, Organizing, Notetaking, and Switch Training Apps/Software for Tablet Requested Above	$400.00	2	$800.00
2	Teaching to Standards: English Language Arts, Classroom Kit	$699.00	1	$699.00
2	Early Numeracy Curriculum, Classroom Kit	$599.00	1	$599.00
2	Equals Pre-Algebra and Pre-Geometry, Classroom Kit	$900.00	1	$900.00
3	Tablet	$699.00	2	$1,398.00
3	Augmentation Communication, Reading, Writing, Organizing, Notetaking, and Switch Training Apps/Software for Tablet Requested Above	$400.00	2	$800.00
4	Tablet Wireless Keyboard	$50.00	4	$200.00
4	Ruggedized Case for Tablet	$80.00	4	$320.00
			Grand Total:	$7,114.00