

## **RCSS MINIGRANT PROTOCOL**

This document specifies and defines the handling, evaluation and awarding of RCSS Minigrants by the RCSS Board of Directors and Officers.

**Purpose of the grants**: The grants will enhance the teaching and learning of science and math in local primary and secondary schools by providing funding to teachers which supplements that normally provided by their district. The projects funded by the Minigrants are meant to exceed the minimum program and provide enrichment and extension of existing science and math instruction. RCSS accepts Minigrant applications from teachers at schools in the following eleven counties surrounding Rochester, New York: Allegany, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, Wyoming, and Yates.

**Timing**: The deadlines for application submission are the 31st days of October and January. The RCSS Board of Directors then meets, reviews the applications, and approves acceptable proposals and the disbursement of funds. When there is an adequate number of acceptable proposals, RCSS normally disburses funds within two months of the application deadline.

**Number of grants and funding level**: The number of grants awarded depends on the number of acceptable proposals and the amount of funding available. RCSS awards proposals of up to \$200.00 each.

**Criteria for evaluating proposals**: The following are points that the RCSS considers when evaluating applications:

- The project deals primarily with science/math instruction. The project may involve other educational initiatives (including motivation), but these must be secondary to the science/math content or skills component.
- Stress on hands-on activities, keeping students involved with the active, inquiry nature of science and the application of math skills.
- Projects or equipment purchases have a durable nature, reach a large number of students initially, or are designed for sharing with other classes, use in multiple units, or use in future years.
- The teacher communicates a clear sense of direction for the project and use of the equipment, and relates this to the intended grade level.
- The teacher demonstrates careful research of the source and price of the needed materials to use funds most efficiently. Teachers may request RCSS funds to complete a project partially funded in other ways. On the other hand, if the Minigrant funding is the primary source, and the project requires some funds beyond the grant award, the teacher should clearly explain the source of those extra funds.