

## **Application Score Sheet**

Proposed Project: Gulf School District, Technology Education (#327)  
Proposed Project/Program County: Gulf  
Board of County Commission Support:  
Rural County: Yes  
Opportunity Zone:

Total Projected Project Cost: \$8,821,731  
Match Provided: \$1,935,581  
Triumph Funds Requested: \$6,886,150 (78%)  
Triumph Funds Recommended by Staff: \$6,886,150

Score: A

ROI: \$73 in additional household income per dollar of Triumph spend

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### **Economic Analysis, Impact, and Score**

Gulf District Schools (GDS) has submitted the Technology Education Catalyst Grant seeking \$6,886,150 in Triumph Gulf Coast (TGC) funding to support a comprehensive digital tools initiative from 2026 to 2034. The project budget stands at \$8,821,731, with Triumph responsible for 78.1% of total costs and the remaining 21.9% covered by GDS contributions (\$1,144,775) and matching funds from an RUS Grant (\$790,806). This structure leverages state, local, and federal resources to build digital skills capacity across all district schools.

Triumph funds will be allocated across three major categories: personnel and administrative support (\$3,508,150), equipment, cert fees, materials and supplies (\$3,163,000), and professional development (\$215,000). Expenditures will be used for hiring program managers and technology educators, procuring classroom hardware (including computers and peripherals), obtaining software licenses and certification fees, supplying instructional materials, and delivering ongoing training programs for instructors. These investments are designed to establish a robust foundation for integrating digital tools and technology-based curriculum into the educational environment, ensuring both initial implementation and long-term sustainability.

As described by the applicant, this initiative is expected to substantially enhance academic and workforce readiness in a rural, disproportionately affected county. GDS emphasizes that embedding technology competencies into K–12 instruction will modernize classrooms, prepare students for industry certifications, and open new pathways to postsecondary education and careers. The grant will help reduce barriers to postsecondary achievement, address gaps in digital literacy, and enable the district to adapt rapidly to changing technological demands. The applicant highlights that, by broadening access to state-of-the-art equipment and curriculum, all students in Gulf District Schools will benefit, not just those earning certifications. This investment is presented as transformative, positioning Gulf County students for success in Florida's evolving economy.

With Triumph funding of \$6,886,150 supporting a goal of 6,000 industry certifications over the nine-year project period, the cost to Triumph per certification awarded is \$1,148. This cost aligns with the most competitive projects in the Triumph portfolio. While there is more uncertainty about wages because of the general nature of digital tools, use of the standard Triumph scoring rubric shows \$73 in additional household income per dollar of Triumph spend. The project is assigned an “A” score for economic impact, reflecting its high projected return on investment, ambitious scale, and potential for lasting benefits to a disproportionately affected rural community.

### **Project Summary (based on information provided by the applicant)**

The Gulf District Schools (GDS) is requesting a \$6,886,150 Triumph grant for technology education programs across the District. The project will include training all Gulf elementary through secondary students with the necessary digital skills to succeed in an increasingly technology-driven world. Students will earn 1-5 technology certifications throughout their academic careers, impacting at least 1,400 students annually through 2034, resulting in at least 6,000 industry certifications over the nine-year grant period. The Triumph funds will be used for personnel, equipment, cert fees, materials and supplies, professional development, and grant administration and compliance.

Starting in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, students will gain foundational and advanced skills in areas such as coding, data analytics, cloud computing, user interface design, cybersecurity, AI and robotics. The program will emphasize career readiness, digital literacy, and problem-solving—core competencies that align with evolving workforce needs. Certification opportunities will be embedded within academic courses, allowing students to build stackable credentials that can be used to access further training, postsecondary education, or immediate employment. Students will graduate better prepared to pursue diverse, sustainable career paths.

GDS CTE programs were historically eliminated due to teacher turnover and lack of replacement staff. The new initiative will prioritize placing certified instructors at each of the four school sites and integrating technology into core courses, for example using google docs and sheets in Social Studies and Science courses. The District will convert its existing Media Centers into state-of-the-art TECH Hubs. These hubs will serve as dedicated spaces for students to access technology resources, collaborate on projects, and gain hands-on experience with emerging technologies.

Starting in 2026, after-school and summer camp programs will offer engaging, real-world technology experiences, such as robotics, STEM, and AI training, for students to continue their learning beyond the classroom. These camps will foster a passion for technology and innovation among students.

The ultimate goal of this grant is to prepare Gulf District students for careers that don't yet exist. By providing robust technology education, students will gain the digital skills necessary for high-wage positions in fields such as data science, cybersecurity, software engineering, and more.

By the end of the grant period, the district will have a fully implemented, viable program working toward complete sustainability. Triumph funding will be used for salaries of key

personnel, including a CTE administrator, a CTE assistant (to support the grant 50% of the time), and teachers at the four school sites. Teachers will be trained and certified in digital technology areas relevant to the intermediate, middle, and high school curricula. Additionally, funds will be used to purchase software required for certification, as well as curriculum, licenses, certification exams, and other materials/supplies necessary for full implementation of the digital technology programs.

The grant represents a pivotal opportunity to advance GDS into the 21st century and bridge the technology divide for rural students. By integrating technology into core courses, offering comprehensive CTE programs, and establishing tech hubs and extracurricular opportunities, this initiative will prepare students not only for the current job market but for a future filled with technology-driven career opportunities. With a commitment to preparing students for careers that haven't yet been invented, GDS is investing in the future of its students and the communities they will serve.

GDS will engage with Florida State University, ASCENT for curriculum development and teacher training, as well as an ongoing partnership to develop teacher knowledge and integration. The RUS grant awarded in the Fall of 2024 is the initial support for supplying each teacher in GDS with a laptop and classroom technology equipment. Program development, teacher training and student recruitment has been ongoing in the 2024-25 school year and will continue throughout the grant as new teachers and staff are trained. Certification opportunities for teachers started June 2, 2025 with over 40 teachers participating. Certification opportunities for students will begin in the 2025-2026 school year.

The most recent Florida Department of Education reports fewer than 10% of students in Gulf County graduate with an industry-recognized certification, compared to 28% statewide. This proposal aims to triple certification rates within three years by embedding credentials in both core and CTE courses.

Over 25% of households in the district lack reliable access to modern computing devices or consistent digital training, putting students at a disadvantage in both school and the job market. The grant will fund computer labs, software, and cloud-based platforms to close the digital divide across all grade levels.

Gulf County's unemployment rate has consistently been above the state average, and its economy relies heavily on sectors such as tourism, construction, and public service—industries that are vulnerable to economic downturns and seasonal fluctuation. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in digital technology fields is expected to grow by 15% from 2022 to 2032, much faster than the average for all occupations. This includes roles such as cybersecurity analysts, software developers, and data analysts—jobs that will be accessible to students participating in this program.

Technology Education Catalyst Grant  
\$6,886,150.00

8/2025

	Personnel	Equipment, Material, Supplies, Curriculum, Cert Fees, Software	Professional Development & Travel	Total
Please change year # to actual year				
Project Total				
2026	729,401.00	1,160,428.00	32,000.00	1,921,829.00
2027	539,601.00	728,000.00	20,000.00	1,287,601.00
2028	514,967.00	123,000.00	20,000.00	657,967.00
2029	499,667.00	109,000.00	20,000.00	628,667.00
2030	499,667.00	803,000.00	25,000.00	1,327,667.00
2031	515,250.00	98,000.00	25,000.00	638,250.00
2032	500,500.00	93,000.00	25,000.00	618,500.00
2033	462,500.00	888,000.00	30,000.00	1,380,500.00
2034	242,750.00	88,000.00	30,000.00	360,750.00
Project Total	4,504,303.00	4,090,428.00	227,000.00	8,821,731.00
Triumph				
2026	524,700.00	233,000.00	20,000.00	777,700.00
2027	429,800.00	728,000.00	20,000.00	1,177,800.00
2028	412,150.00	123,000.00	20,000.00	555,150.00
2029	394,500.00	109,000.00	20,000.00	523,500.00
2030	394,500.00	803,000.00	25,000.00	1,222,500.00
2031	415,125.00	98,000.00	25,000.00	538,125.00
2032	397,750.00	93,000.00	25,000.00	515,750.00
2033	359,750.00	888,000.00	30,000.00	1,277,750.00
2034	179,875.00	88,000.00	30,000.00	297,875.00
Triumph Total	3,508,150.00	3,163,000.00	215,000.00	6,886,150.00
Grantee				
2026	204,701.00	136,622.00	12,000.00	353,323.00
2027	109,801.00			109,801.00
2028	102,817.00			102,817.00
2029	105,167.00			105,167.00
2030	105,167.00			105,167.00
2031	100,125.00			100,125.00
2032	102,750.00			102,750.00
2033	102,750.00			102,750.00
2034	62,875.00			62,875.00
Grantee Total	996,153.00	136,622.00	12,000.00	1,144,775.00
Match Source 1- RUS Grant				
2026		790,806.00		790,806.00
2027				-
2028				-
2029				-
2030				-
2031				-
2032				-
2033				-
2034				-
Match Source 1 Total	-	790,806.00		790,806.00
Match Source 2				
2026				-
2027				-
2028				-
2029				-
2030				-
2031				-
2032				-
2033				-
2034				-
Match Source 2 Total	-	-		-