

That's how much, you say?

Have you ever heard of so many billions? In earlier days, the yearning was for thousands and even some raised their thoughts to millions, but today the education picture is being painted in billions of dollars. These dollars initiated by the president and the congress with the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will aid in the attempt to recapture the lead in education from other nations. President Obama said, "Our people will compete for jobs in a global economy that too many of our schools do not prepare them for. We must invest in innovative programs that are already helping schools meet high standards and close achievement gaps." Education Secretary Arne Duncan added, "this is a historic investment . . . and will help more students succeed once they get to higher education."

It was as if, in essence, saying that Pitsco Education and LEGO® Education curricula, materials, and equipment are ready-made fits for stimulus-funded programs. New models of learning and blended learning environments combined with credit recovery as demonstrated by the success of the Star Academies can be the bedrock on which to build the learning environments previously described. Pitsco and LEGO Education curricula provide the vehicle that enables every child to learn at their own pace using technology in a traditional or alternative school setting. Now is the time when board members, administrators, principals, and teachers should be approached to acquire these curriculum solutions to help their students while the enthusiasm exists.

One billion dollars for twenty-first-century classrooms for technology are available through a variety of grant offerings. **21st Century Community Learning Centers**, which expand learning activities including technology and telecommunication education, would be a viable choice. Learn more at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/21stccle/index.html>.

There is also \$14 billion for school modernization that would accommodate labs for any of the Missions, Modules, Suites, or CareerPorts. The **Enhancing Education Through Technology** program fits the objectives of the plan and has \$650 million to fund Pitsco Education labs. Learn more at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/edtech/index.html>.

The granddaddy of them all is the **Title I** federal grant. This program is structured to assist high-poverty schools in giving their students an equal opportunity to meet state standards and puts great emphasis on acquisition of math skills. Learn more at <http://www.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/index.html>.

The gates are further opened as there is emphasis placed on the improvement of teacher education. With the thrust for greater technological skills, the inclusion of Pitsco labs in the teacher education programs of colleges would create knowledgeable, well-skilled teachers armed with the technological skills to guide our future leaders.

The **National Science Foundation** will receive \$25 million to promote and advance scientific programs in the United States and advances grants for science, math, and engineering research. These dollars would fund several NXT, TETRIX™, and Algebra solutions in addition to any of the Mission, Module, Suite, and CareerPort labs. Learn more at <http://www.nsf.gov/funding/>.

In addition to the windfall of government dollars, there is also the corporate world that is equally enthusiastic in supporting worthwhile and long-term projects:

Paul G. Allen Family Foundation

This foundation supports the development of new models of education and integration of a rigorous academic program.

More information: <http://www.pgafoundations.com/>

Agilent Foundation

Agilent's investments favor early-stage funding of new models for science education, specifically programs with a strong possibility of long-term success. The Pitsco Education *Forensic Science* and *Genetics* Modules would be an excellent fit for providing such success.

More information: <http://www.agilent.com/contributions/foundation.shtml>

Milken Family Foundation

Milken supports charter schools whose objectives are researching and implementing programs to improve the quality of teaching and education available to students.

More information: <http://www.mff.org/>

Teacher's Pet

(Grant tip geared specifically toward teachers' smaller projects)

Lowe's Toolbox for Education

Lowe's supports a variety of projects to improve schools.

More information: <http://www.toolboxforeducation.com/>