Good News: There's DonorsChoose!
Get that Project Funded

http://sched.co/3baK

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- **Introduction: What is DonorsChoose?**
  - It's a charitable organization aimed at helping teachers get classroom projects funded. Average time from post to funding: 51 days. (Mine tend to run quicker… Some in a day or less, thanks to a small skill I market, AND thanks to "double the donation" support you get the 1st seven days a project is posted. Tips later.)
  - Here's an introductory video (2 min, 23 sec). Consider sharing it at Back-to-School night. Here's another one with visually-enticing stats (under 2 min).
  - Here's a one-page color flyer with info on DC… great to print on the back of the flyer you send home about your DC project.
- **Why do I need to set up a DonorsChoose project?**
  - Check your receipts… teachers spend an average of $2,000 a year on classroom supplies. Stop spending your own money and spend someone else's!
  - Corporations and the public are willing to help: take advantage of it to make your classroom a better place!
- **What's it take to get a DonorsChoose project up and running?**
  - A genuine need: something you visualize for your classroom and students that will accelerate learning
  - A solution: an answer to your class' shortcomings that can be met with finances
  - A compelling story: Tie on your SuperTeacher cape, and maybe pull out a violin… tell what a difference something as simple as a cash donation can make with your classroom charges.
- **OK, what's the fine print? How much of my life am I giving up to get this project funded?**
  - Decide on a project: Instantaneous: you must have an idea on what you need... that's why you're here!
  - Sign up: 5 minutes.

    - Go shopping: 5-8 minutes. Choose the item(s) you need on their “Go Shopping” page… choose from Staples, Best Buy for Business, Amazon, and a host of others.
    - Tell your story: 20-30 minutes. Here’s where you make your case for the general public to part with their hard-earned money, since they see your project as more immediate than their next latte. Here’s a sample of what I’ve used in the past.
    - Post it: 30 seconds: Click a couple of buttons, and it’s submitted. Give it 2-3 days, and you’ll receive an email telling you the project’s online. With luck, it’s also going to have a corporate sponsor’s code which will DOUBLE any donations that come your way. Pull that code, and get ready to share it!
    - Push it: 2-3 days: Get the word out. EVERYWHERE. Parents, school, Facebook, Twitter, email, and so on.
    - Say thanks: 20 minutes: once you’re funded, let DC know you still want the item(s). Write a humble thank you for their site. Get ready to receive your stuff! Here’s a sample thank you.
    - Check your mail: Your requested item often is waiting at the front desk in a week or so, depending on the provider.
    - Write the thank you cards: Students write simple thank you cards putting in the joy, art, and typos that only your students can. You’ll be able to print up a mailing label, postage-paid, to return your thank you cards. Here’s a sample page I made available for my 4th graders when we got an Apple TV and an iPad Mini funded. Adjust to meet your needs… as needed.
    - Repeat with the next dream: consider what you need next, write it up, submit it, work it, say thanks.
- **How do I get the word out?**
    - A parent flyer: Here’s a website you can simply paste in your DC project web page, and create a quick flyer to send home for parents to share at work, or post at Starbucks, your local dry cleaners, and so on! Want to see a sample? Click here.
    - Banging the drum on social media: Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- **Who’s fair game for funding?**
    - Friends. Family. Enemies. In-laws. Outlaws. Old schoolmates. Professors. Principals. Colleagues. Titans of industry. Your local barista. Tap fellow Facebookians, the Twittersphere, scout troops, soccer moms.
    - A insider tip: Do you have a skill you can market if you make it a fundraiser? I do photography on the side, and use this skill to fundraise for DC projects. I’ll take photos at a banquet or at a running race (finish line photos), and offer the full-sized digital photo to anyone who make a donation.
- **Jeez, it sounds like a dream come true. Where do I sign up?**
    - Let’s do this! Click here to set up an account.

- **Spread the love**
    - Tell other teachers about DC… they have funding sources to tap as well. Here's a flyer you can print up and pass on, or simply email to colleagues to print and post in the teacher's lounge. Want to do a quick slideshow at a staff meeting, or maybe the DO? Click here for insta-slides.
    - Need some more videos to share? Why, DC has their own YouTube page. Click and watch!