



Ron Cole
Boulder Language Technologies
2960 Center Green Ct # 200
Boulder, CO 80301

November 9, 2009

Dear Ron,

I was delighted to read your proposal to the NSF to improve science learning through classroom dialogs linked to media following FOSS investigations. I expect that the NSF will be most interested in this project as they funded development of the FOSS program. Delta Education and, now, School Specialty Science has been publishing the FOSS program for the last 15 years in partnership with the Lawrence Hall of Science at the University of California, Berkeley.

As the person responsible for working with the Lawrence Hall of Science team to develop and distribute revised and improved versions of FOSS every 5-7 years, I believe there is strong potential to improve understanding of concepts by engaging students in conversations that are likely to improve their understanding of concepts encountered in investigations.

Since July 2009, it has been my pleasure to work with you and your colleagues at Boulder Language Technologies to develop multimedia learning tools that will be distributed with the next release of FOSS. My interest in developing multimedia learning tools for individual instruction was stimulated by the talk you gave at Berkeley to the FOSS team in which you showed the integration of flash animations and illustrations in MyST dialogs. I believe there is great potential for improving student achievement through tutorials and virtual investigations that incorporate a lifelike virtual tutor.

I am very pleased that you will be able to use and extend the flash animations that you are developing under our support for use in exploring the use of classroom dialogs linked to these media. It is to our mutual benefit that this is work funded so teachers can be trained to conduct classroom conversations that use media to improve learning. It would be of great benefit to teachers and students throughout the U.S. who use the FOSS program if you are able to demonstrate significant learning gains through the use of your program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mathew Bacon".

Mathew Bacon
Vice President, Product Development
School Specialty Science

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