



Personalized Blended Learning

Alignment to ODE Straight A Fund

Guide for Ohio Districts looking to implement a comprehensive K-12 blended learning strategy with the goal of significantly lowering the District's projected instructional budget through a strategic plan for sustained innovation.

Goals Aligned to ODE “Straight A” Initiative

Thank you for taking the time to explore how Schoolology and DigitalPLN can help you use technology to improve productivity and student outcomes, to transform teaching and learning in Ohio for the 21st century. This alignment aims to help frame your vision of a successful blended learning implementation. Schoolology Enterprise offers a uniform platform to manage your initiative with the flexibility that affords teachers total control of their classroom; everything from a basic homework portal and automated gradebook to a completely paperless classroom—even power a virtual school. DigitalPLN provides the services to build the sustained capacity in your own staff for the adoption of a blended instructional model. The combined offering gives you greater capacity for personalized instruction across your schools and classrooms, for all students. It will lead you to savings and efficiencies of scale that can become the hallmark of your vision for technology in the District.

It is critical to understand that your blended learning plan is only one component of your Straight A application. Your infrastructure and hardware portion of your technology strategy is likely to be the most expensive portion of your proposal and a source for much debate around means for sustainability. Our discussion for sustainability may not directly address your infrastructure plan.

The document has been organized into 5 sections that will lead you from discussions of the LEA role in blended learning to the benefits of a uniform platform to manage instructional resources coupled with a strategic vision for increasing your LEA, regional and state capacity for personalized data-informed instruction. And it will help identify areas and resources by which not only can the District sustain this initiative, but also realize deep reductions in near term fiscal cycles. By benefiting the entire K-12 Community through a collaborative, content-rich PLC, your strategy for the Straight A Fund will accelerate student achievement with activities built to engage the digital native, significantly reduce cost centers of 20th century teaching and learning while leveraging greater access to data and instructional resources for the student beyond the confines of the classroom—infusing meaningful instruction into the lives of today’s learner and the learner community.

Specifically, the value and lasting impact made possible by the Straight A Fund includes: 1.) Increasing student achievement, 2.) Reducing the five-year fiscal forecast and 3.) Leveraging shared digital resources across classrooms

Key Deliverables

1. Increase Performance Index
2. Increase Value-Add Growth
3. Increase 4-year and 5-year Graduation Rate
4. Close Achievement Gaps
5. Increase Student Literacy (specifically k-3)
6. College- and Career-Readiness Opportunities

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I. Blended Learning Strategy

5 Building Blocks of a Model Implementation

The purpose of this section aims to facilitate your discussion around five essential criteria for your successful blended learning strategy in Schoology. It aims to assist you in creating a protracted plan that builds upon your instructional capacity to leverage the inevitability of teaching and learning in a blended model: a rigorous strategy aimed at deploying content with meaningful connections, adapting pedagogy to differentiated needs and engaging today's learner for 21st Century College and Career.

- i. **Define blended learning** While every LEA will individually define blended learning, it is important to have shared agreement across both administrative and instructional staff; define it early and revisit it often. *(Discuss opportunities for adapting pedagogy and personalized learning, in terms of checks for understanding and subsequently data-drive instruction.)*
- ii. **Understand online behavior** Beyond 1:1/BYOD, access points and lab schedules, educators must understand how their students are spending their time online. In addition to best practices for online safety, online behavior and the application of digital media will become a central (and ongoing) conversation across your LEA community. *(Discussion statement: Taking a homework quiz at a workstation in the library is a far different experience than on a mobile phone at your sister's basketball game.)* While it is not uncommon to find a lack of internet access at home, today's learner is now online nearly every day—the device just might not be a computer! Understanding student habits and behaviors enables educators to engage students online, even outside of school. *(Discussion statement: The same reading presented by some teachers to students via webpage/mobile app, other teachers may find useful for their students to have as a download in school, for review offline later—our blended learning platform should support both simultaneously.)*
- iii. **How data becomes knowledge** Online tools offer unprecedented opportunities for personalization and differentiation. The benefit of a blended learning platform is the insight it gives all educators—knowing how and when to intervene. *(How do you evaluate the 'data workflow' of your educators? Discuss how your blended learning strategy with Schoology increases the likelihood of your educators to transform disaggregated data sets into the knowledge that informs instruction.)*
- iv. **Professional Leadership Community** Monitored programs are successful programs, your PLC includes all facets of the LEA community—professional development, curriculum, technology and oversight! *(Discuss how shared resources, group workspaces and virtual meetings make all of our lives easier.)*
- v. **Staff development** The outcome of your discussions of these critical elements lays the foundation of your professional development plan. Your partners at Schoology are an outstanding resource to build a plan that will address teachers at all levels of readiness for blended learning best practices. *(Building milestones and points of reflection for all stakeholders will ensure success in establishing a rigorous and measurable model. How have we succeeded in accomplishing this with other strategic initiatives)*

With Schoology, your blended learning plan addresses the whole of your learning environment from all roles of faculty and staff (technology competency—*aptitude, attitude, and capacity*). It encompasses online safety, community/parent and student engagement and the role of blended learning beyond graduation.

Implementation Worksheet (Notes)

i. What kinds of student benefits and outcomes can be attributed to blended learning

ii. Resources that help understand online behavior

iii. Applying data integrations and workflows to the classroom

iv. Leadership activities that foster a professional learning environment

v. Milestones we can identify in achieving adoption and fidelity across all of our schools

II. Professional Development

Platform Training

Designed with a hands-on/minds-on approach for instructors, trainings cover the basic best practices of utilizing Schoolology and are available online (live) and onsite. We support a train-the-trainer model as our primary, recommended, best practice of implementation. Not only does this reduce your external costs, it allows you to address all of your individual needs and personalize them to your user audience; from communication to course management, parent views to student assessment. Using this model, your Schoolology trained ‘coaches’ then host their own sessions at a pace and scope appropriate to the unique needs of your staff and in line with your adopted methodologies.

Train-the-trainer Session (Target Audience; Power Users and Integration Specialists)

1. In-depth overview of Schoolology
2. Demonstrate ‘how to’ examples including
 - Course management (set-up and communication)
 - Organize classroom content
 - Administer and grade assessments
 - Gradebook periods, credits, category, weights, rubrics
 - Track overall student performance
 - Collaborative tools: Resource Groups and Shared Learning Objects
3. Schoolology best-practices discussions (as appropriate) for Early Elementary, Elementary and Secondary, Professional development as well as Parent and Community
4. Share training and support materials to assist with implementation

Where appropriate, workshops may be customized to address specific needs: e.g. large lectures, small workshops, 1:1 training, and train-the-trainer. The training session can be tailored around specific client requests. Ultimately, the staff will have a full understanding of how to use Schoolology and will then be able to train the end users in Schoolology with support from Schoolology staff every step of the way. Schoolology has developed training and help videos, posted on our website, accessible by clients with a secured login. FAQ’s, blogs, and community support also provide in-depth and detailed discussion about topics and system usage.

Technical and End User Documentation

End user documentation is provided online at help.schoolology.com. Students, teachers, and administrators can access this information at any time for questions and guidance.

Staff Development

By now you have invested some time into your vision for blended instruction. You've probably worried about how to get this all done. It is one thing to enable progressive teachers in adopting resources that transform their individual classrooms, but the entirety of the undertaking to move your teaching and learning community to engage the 21st century learner can leave you overwhelmed. That's why the Straight A Fund is so important. It provides the external resources you need to start your vision. And by turning to the proven expertise of DPLN you can count on a rigorous staff development plan aimed at, and rooted in, blended learning.

The Digital Professional Learning Network (DPLN) supports school districts by improving value-add ratings and state report card outcomes, while reducing the 5-year budget forecast. DPLN provides for a clear focus through professional development on Common Core aligned content, rigorous pedagogy (and quality assessment) and the engagement of 21st century learners.

Expected outcomes of the DPLN Blended Learning Content Competencies

Teachers will be able to create innovative lesson and unit designs, digital storyboards and provide descriptive feedback to students and other teachers in their professional learning network. They will also create content-driven, purposeful and performance-based learning strategies in their school's collaborative blended learning network.

- Examine 21st Century reading and math blended learning tools.
- Create real time digital formative and summative short cycle assessments.
- Analyze instructional strategies and student performance.

DPLN Deliverables for Improving Value-Add and State Report Card Outcomes

1. *Real time digital Performance Index of every student*
2. *Value-Add 21st century literacy strategies in core content (reading comprehension, informational text and writing)*
3. *Teachers using assessment literacy and data analysis growth targets*
4. *Teachers articulate the learning objectives and provide personalized feedback to learners*
5. *Operation Graduation measures students' academic performance toward graduation requirements*
6. *Differentiated instructional strategies to close ALL achievement gaps*
7. *Cost effective online Early College Access dual enrollment options*
8. *Job-Embedded professional development*

III. Instructional Resources

Schoology can be used for everything from a basic homework portal and automated gradebook to a completely paperless classroom—even power a virtual school. But it is the ease of implementation that sets Schoology apart. We think that you will find our implementation process to be both simple and efficient. We know you will find it enjoyable. We are excited for this important opportunity to work with you in the Enterprise LMS. Partnered with the rigorous and proven DigitalPLN method for developing your staff and school culture around fostering 21st century skills, this project aims to be a model for success across the state. It's success is not only tied to preparedness of young people in the District for college and career, but also lowering the established cost matrices for external instructional resources and expensive 'point-in-time' professional learning opportunities.

Managed Platform. In addition to the safety and security of SIIA's Best K-12 Enterprise Solution, the Schoology Enterprise district management interface and premium API affords district key managed benefits including single sign-on support (SSO), advanced user management (custom role-based permissions), reporting and analytics as well as integration tools to third party data and instructional systems. This includes notable SIS packages in Ohio such as DASL, SunGard, Infinite Campus and PowerSchool.

Content Sharing. Of course Schoology supports the migration of any legacy content in a host of formats (from Moodle to Blackboard or other LMS platforms and enables LMS standards such as SCORM, Common Cartridge, QTI, LTI (such as Florida Virtual) and assessments in ExamView and much more. But the bigger picture is that creating shared repositories of instructional resources has never been easier. Collaborating in group workspaces across schools, Districts and even states allows for customizable content that you own. Not only does this allow your learning community to personalized resources for your classrooms, it allows the teacher to individually create a personalized learning plan for every student. And it doesn't overburden your staff and teachers with complex systems to learn.

Common Core: Ohio Learning Standards. Learning outcomes are about to become more important than ever before. Through a unique approach to leveraging technology while making the tools no more difficult to use than writing an email, Schoology allows your professional development plan to focus on the benefits of the tools. How to use and manage assessments, as a function of the DPLN approach, becomes the heart of your Common Core adoption. Your staff development will move from the expensive 'point-in-time' model to an ongoing process for the growth of your educator community.

College Ready/Dual Enrollment. Early college access doesn't need to be expensive. Through unique partnerships forging the next generation of public-private commitment to success, your Straight A initiative may have access to courses that your teachers can teach, with free, transferable college credits awarded to your students.

Intervention, Credit Recovery, Grade Improvement. By creating shareable repositories at the District, regional or state-level, expensive cost centers for curricular resources, consumables and interventions can be no-longer publisher dependent, but a function of your learner community—all highly configurable and completely customizable.

Benchmarking and Common Assessment. As one of the most important factors in our partnership for ongoing success, helping your educators leverage ease-to-use and easy to access tools is central theme of Schoology and DPLN. And with the ongoing coaching and support from DPLN, creating a managed object repository for content and assessment will save instructional expenses while affording more personalized classroom resources than ever possible before.

IV. Outcomes/Evaluation

There are at least four outcomes that can be tracked through your strategy for personalized blended learning that can help to attribute the success of your Straight A Fund initiative.

- a. Cost Reductions
- b. Content Ownership
- c. Student Engagement
- d. School Improvement

Cost reductions may be tracked directly as the LEA moves away from the expensive 'point-in-time' professional learning opportunities that are commonly associated with a 20th century model for staff development. Cost matrices for external instructional resources, from consumables and interventions, to third-party credit recovery and even, simply the cost of paper can track the shift to highly customizable LEA-owned learning objects. Thanks to your managed blended learning platform, content ownership becomes a function that is becoming less and less 'publisher dependent.' The goal of DPLN's professional development model gives you piece of mind, ensuring both the quality of your District's content community as well as the ability to of your instructional activities to engage today's learner while evolving for tomorrows. The reality of student engagement has somehow become the focus of most expectations of public education, surveying student attitudes toward their learning experience has become perhaps almost as important as tracking the aptitude of student performance. School improvement is no longer an external goal, or someone else's problem. It has (or will) become part of the school community. And when everyone has a voice in a communal framework, they have ownership in its outcome. It is probably the easiest outcome to evaluate, but the ultimate goal to attain.

V. Sustainability

With any limited-availability funding initiative, the point is to maximize the impact of the investment. Building the capacity into your LEA that increases learning but decreases costs is an almost utopian goal. But it has never been more attainable that it is today.

It is critical to understand that your blended learning plan is only one component of your application. Your infrastructure and hardware portion of your technology strategy is likely to be the most expensive and ongoing line-items in technology assisted instruction. With that said it is good know that you can defray many of both costs through existing channels.

Schoology is priority 1 erate eligible at 81% (webhosting). Based on your district's erate eligibility, the net annualized cost for the platform, with no additional costs for staff or parents, can factor to around \$3 per student from local budgets, possibly less.

Title II professional development dollars may increase, but you may not need them to increase. In fact DPLN can show a greater impact over traditional development, with proven classroom success, for near a tenth of the traditional cost.

Finally, the reductions in traditional cost centers can significantly reduce your overall operating budget, even with the increasing demands for infrastructure in both a blended learning plan and the requirements for state testing online.