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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00

Remaining: -1,925,359.00
Applicants shall respond to the prompts or questions in the areas listed below in a narrative form.

A) APPLICANT INFORMATION - General Information, Experience and Capacity

1. Project Title: Innovate21

2. Executive summary: Provide an executive summary of your project proposal and which goal(s) in question 9 you seek to achieve. Please limit your responses to no more than three sentences.

3. Organization name of lead applicant: Avon Local School District

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:
   First Name, Last Name of contact for lead applicant: Mike Laub
   Address of lead applicant: 35573 DETROIT, AVON, OH 44011
   Phone Number of lead applicant: 440-937-4680

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:
   First Name, Last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Dave Kish
   Address of secondary applicant: 301 Liberty Street, LaGrange Ohio 44050
   Phone number of secondary applicant: 440-355-5132

6. Letters of support for districts in academic or fiscal distress only. If school or district is in academic or fiscal distress and has a commission assigned, please include a resolution from the commission in support of the project.

7. Letters of support are for districts that have a commission assigned, please include a resolution from the commission in support of the project.

8. Please provide a brief description of the team or individuals responsible for the implementation of this project including relevant experience in other innovative projects. You should also include descriptions and experiences of partners or organizations.

9. Which of the stated Straight A Fund goals does the proposal aim to achieve? - (Check all that apply)
   - Student achievement
   - Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast
   - Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

10. Which of the following best describes the proposed project? - (Select one)
    - New - never before implemented
    - Existing and research-based - never implemented in your district or community school but proven successful in other educational environments
    - Mixed Concept - incorporates new and existing elements
    - Enlarging/Scale Up - elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school, or consortia partnership

11. Describe the innovative project

Innovate21 is a bold and innovative concept which addresses the need for teachers to access and provide instruction using blended learning. Our initiative invests heavily in people (teachers and kids), not technology for the sake of technology. Our initiative is easily sustainable, provides clear student growth-based accountability and increases resources in the classroom. Through our innovative blended learning community, teachers across Lorain County 1) connect to newly developed, relevant professional learning networks 2) access sustained blended learning course catalogue offerings and 3) pilot blended learning instruction as students use anytime, anywhere mobile learning devices. In January and February, the leadership team will begin marketing the initiative, selecting coaches and providing training on the blended learning model and supporting technologies. Coaches will disseminate information within an online learning community through Google+ and the state of Ohio's new TeamOhio platform. The instructional coaches will begin piloting various devices (iPads, laptops, etc.) and gather data to determine which devices have the greatest impact on student learning in preparation for the PARCC assessments. Valuable data will be shared with school districts across Ohio as they move forward with professional development and mobile device purchases that support blended learning. Training will be provided to the instructional coaches through face-to-face professional development as well as the creation and utilization of a new online learning community. The coaches will be trained...
12. Describe how it will meet the goal(s) selected above. If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, include a brief explanation of how this project will advance the improvement plan.

The Innovate21 project is an investment in our educators to improve student learning through the use of instructional technologies and online learning resources. The overall goal is to increase student achievement by leveraging blended learning methodology, greater shared content, and resources.

13. Financial Documentation - All applicants must either upload or provide the following supporting information. Responses should refer to specific information in the financial documents when applicable:

a. Enter a project budget

b. Upload the Straight A Financial Impact Template forecasting the expected changes to the five-year forecast resulting from implementation of this project. If applying as a consortia or partnership, please include the five-year forecasts of each school district, community school or STEM school member for review.

c. If subsection (b) is not applicable, please explain why, in how do the project will demonstrate sustainability and impact.

Five-year forecasts of each district of this grant have been uploaded.

14. What is the total cost for implementing the innovative project?

1,925,359.00 * Total project cost

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details on the cost of items included in the budget (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.).

The overall budget for this project will cover hardware and software that will be piloted and assessed; professional development for instructional coaches and organization of Innovate21 Summer Academies, and ongoing support and project management expenses. As expected, the majority of the budget expenses will pay for the hardware and software needed for blended learning within the classrooms. The overall cost for hardware and software will be approximately $1,681,709. The online professional development for all K-12 teachers and administrators, with access for students and parents, will essentially be free through Google and ilearnOhio. Instructional coaches will receive a stipend to develop on-line catalogues for; to present at both summer academies; to receive professional development on blended learning and best practices; and present their findings and experiences in online forums and across districts. The remaining funds will be directed at all K-12 teachers within the four school districts and will cover two Innovate21 Summer Academies including stipends to attend these events and expenses associated with organizing and hosting such events; diverse online course catalogue offerings; and support from outside trainers. The total cost for supporting 500 teachers will be approximately $174,311. The remaining expenses encompass the consultation and project management fees associated with ongoing professional development, technology setup and online support from NORT2H, which is essential to the success of this project due to the increase in technology within each district. As the lead partner for this project, NORT2H will assist each district’s leadership team in the purchase of new student devices and more importantly, the implementation of blended learning within the classroom. As a direct result, students will have access to various types of intervention or enrichment apps to make learning anytime and anywhere. The overall cost for the consultation, implementation, training and continual support through online moderation will be approximately $36,000.

15. What new/recurring costs of your innovative project will continue once the grant has expired? If there are no new/recurring costs, please explain why.

15,633.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details on the costs of items included in the budget (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.).

After training the instructional coaches to implement blended learning and best practices in their classrooms with student devices, a recurring cost associated with managing those student devices will be approximately $7,480 for all four school districts. The Columbus Local School District will assume additional costs, approximately $10,000, to join NORT2H and the additional support needed for new wireless units.

16. Are there expected savings that may result from the implementation of the innovative project?

43,500.00 * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details on the anticipated savings (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.)

The expected savings over time will be a shift in professional development expenditures. Currently, when most professional development opportunities take place, there are costs involved in purchasing services (paying an institution, organization, or individual for the professional development) as well as paying stipends for teachers for time outside of the contractual day or paying for their substitute teachers. As we move to a blended learning model, less money will be spent on the above needs for professional development in a blended learning environment. Also, by hosting two summer academies, significant savings can be anticipated as there will be no substitute costs for the many teachers that will participate in these professional development opportunities. With Innovate21 we will have invested in training our own professional instructional coaches to help other teachers implement a blended learning classroom with best practices. Again, we will save in the professional development of other teachers by having coaches for other using our staff in designated in-scoles days to provide professional development with blended learning environments.

17. Provide a brief explanation of how the project is self-sustaining. If there are ongoing costs associated with the project after the term of the grant, this explanation should provide details on the cost reductions that will be made to balance the amount of new/recurring costs. Explain in detail how this project will sustain itself beyond the life of the grant.

Our Innovate21 project proposal has a high upfront investment in teachers by developing instructional coaches to create blended learning professional development pathways for teachers through ilearnOhio. In addition, Google+ will serve as the tool for our professional learning communities. Once the initial setup and professional development is completed, the NORT2H technology integration department housed within the Lorain County ESC, will maintain any local services required for the ilearnOhio and Google+ configurations and updates. Since NORT2H is funded in part with annual membership fees from the local school districts applying for this grant, the ongoing support and professional development to support this project will be sustained through the NORT2H services.

D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning

18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for the successful implementation of this project. In each explanation, be sure to briefly describe the largest barriers that could derail your concept or timeline for implementation and your plan to proactively mitigate such barriers. In addition, the narrative should list the stakeholders that will be engaged during that stage of the project and describe the communication that occurred as the application was developed.

Describe the ongoing communication plan with the stakeholders as the project is implemented. (Stakeholders include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

* Proposal Timeline Dates

Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 12/01/2013

As online mentors for other teachers. Coaches will use the ilearnOhio portal as a resource center for students, parents, teachers and administrators. The ilearnOhio portal will enable teachers to develop an individual online professional development pathway incorporating relevant educational learning modules to improve the delivery of instruction and thus learning within the 21st century classroom. Through the utilization of the Google Apps for Education Google+ tool, coaches will create professional learning communities for teachers to join and collaborate with one another. Educators will have access to trained instructional coaches, who will moderate discussions specific within professional learning communities. As the coaches and teachers post resources and questions, each post can be categorized into specific topics. Users can sort conversations based on topics, interact with other community members, and even participate in live Google Hangouts (video conferences) facilitated by the coach. Instructing the implementation of blended learning costs, the Innovation21 project will be marketed to students, staff, and parents. In late May, all teachers within each district will select professional development seminars they would like to participate in during the Innovate21 Summer Academies. These summer academies will provide professional development opportunities on best practices in areas such as early literacy, student engagement, behavior interventions, differentiation, blended assessment, and closing the achievement gap. The Innovate21 project is an investment in our educators to improve student learning and the use of instructional technologies and online learning resources. The overall goal is to increase student achievement by leveraging blended learning methodology, greater shared content, and resources.
While blended learning is a new strategy for most Ohio teachers, it is not an unproven strategy in education. Clearly, there is a movement towards blended learning given its initial successes. In the article Blended Learning in Practice: Case Studies from Leading Schools, by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, teachers in a blended model stated, "One year into blended learning, SSJ faculty have begun to observe notable—and at times unexpected—changes in class culture and student engagement with their own learning." Education Week talked to Richard E. Fertig, a Kent State University research professor and advocate of hybrid learning, who expects this approach to become much more common in the coming years. It is crucial to recognize, however, that blended learning is most successful when an in-school mentor (and in our case, instructional coach) is present—someone who can answer questions and help students through any initial adjustments they need to make to online learning. "We've shown time and time again," Fertig says, "that the extent to which the face-to-face school provides online mentors is directly correlated to how successful the students are." At Abilene Christian University in Texas, a pilot program offered 1,000 freshmen their choice of an iPhone or an iPod Touch for free. The devices enabled the students to get the information they needed when and where they wanted it and the program has reportedly proved successful. One professor incorporates the iPhones into classroom sessions, instructing students to search the web for information pertinent to the lesson, and helping them to interpret the information. Teachers are relieved of the administrative burdens—such as copying notes and distributing handouts—that can sap their energy. Students receive quizzes to test their understanding of the lesson. With blended learning, students can study at their own pace, using class notes and online materials. "The concept can encompass a myriad of experiences, which vary based on what the school, home, and library have to offer. Some teachers and students may have access to high-speed broadband access at home and prefer using a laptop or tablet; others may need textbooks, smartphones, and cell phones," the article stated. Teachers and students can be connected through technology, which makes learning more engaging and relevant. The blended learning model described in this article is not the center of the instruction but instead works alongside students as a guide. Many educators are finding that this instructional model is effectively engaging students in the process of learning and teaching.Narrative explanation

22. Describe the rationale, research or past success that supports the innovative project and its impact on student achievement, spending reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast or utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom.

E) SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT AND LASTING VALUE - Impact, evaluation and replication

20. Describe the rationale, research or past success that supports the innovative project and its impact on student achievement, spending reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast or utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom.

21. Is this project able to be replicated in other districts in Ohio?

22. If so, how?

23. Describe the substantial value and lasting impact that the project hopes to achieve.

24. What are the specific benchmarks related to the fund goals identified in question 9 that the project aims to achieve in five years? Include any other anticipated outcomes of the project that you hope to achieve that may not be easily benchmarked.

25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used.

* Narrative explanation

DECEMBER 2013 - The Innovate21 project is awarded. Our four school districts' students, teachers, and parents will be notified of grant funding. A marketing campaign will be developed by Dave Kish in conjunction with the Lorain County Development Corporation. The focus of the grant will be early literacy and closing the achievement gap within various K-12 classrooms. The Innovate21 Leadership Team will determine the final list of professional development offerings. Instructor coach applications will be sent out to all K-12 teachers. Katti Maxwell will work with NORTHD and treasurers to purchase hardware and software needed for students and teachers. Vicki Fisher will select the location and professional development dates for the January training of the selected teachers. She will also work with Ashland University to complete the forms for graduate credit for the selected teachers' upcoming professional training to become instructional coaches.

Implements (MM/DD/YYYY): 01/01/2014

* Narrative explanation

JANUARY 2014 - We will begin the selection process for instructional coaches (see below). Our main focus will be literacy, closing the achievement gap as well as familiarity with technology. The final list of selected teachers will be made by the Innovation Team. A committee of four superintendents and one superintendent from each of the four districts will be selected. Superintendents will be requested to share the selected district’s email list of teacher’s names, and select the group of teachers they wish to include in the training. In February 2014 - The selected teachers will attend a kick-off event at the ESC of Lorain County and four professional development training sessions. NORTHD staff (Dave Miller and Mike Pennington) will provide instruction on blended learning and coaching. Teachers will work with their colleagues online or in-person and meet with another Innovation Team member at each of the four professional development days. Teachers will officially be designated as “Instructional coaches,” for the Innovate21 project. Vicki Fisher will begin scheduling Innovate21 Summer Academy options 1 and 2 dates and locations. It is expected that CEUs will be awarded to option 1 teachers and that one graduate credit is awarded (for those who want the option) to the teachers who participate in both Innovate21 Summer Academy options.

MARCH 2014 - Instructor coaches will begin online creating course catalogue offerings. Additional support from NORTHD will be provided for student devices. Katti Maxwell will explain the data collection process. April 2014 - Instructor coaches continue to pilot blended learning and collaboration. Mike Von Gunten and Dave Kish will market the upcoming Innovate21 project to students and parents. Data collection continues in pilot classrooms. May 2014 - The Innovate21 online learning community is open to all stakeholders. Innovate21 Summer Academy course offerings will be shared with all K-12 staff. All paper work by May 29, 2014. JUNE 2014 - Katti Maxwell will collect data and disseminate to Leadership Team. Innovate21 Summer Academy #1 accepts. Face-to-face professional development and online collaboration using learnOhio and Google+ provide the blended learning environment from the instructional coaches to K-12 teachers. AUGUST 2014 - Innovate21 Summer Academy #2 occurs. Ashland University credit paperwork completed for all attendees and instructional coaches. Instructional Coach Positions: Co-Teaching (two teams of two (K-5 and 6-12)) = 4 people Enrichment (two teams of two (K-5 and 6-12)) = 4 people Differentiation (six total) = 6 people Balanced Assessment and Assessment Literacy (outside expert) = Closing the Achievement Gap! (outside expert) Classroom Discipline and Positive Behavior Support (one from K-4, 5, 6, and 7 total K-3 Literacy (six) = 6 total K-4 Reading/ELA (four) = 4 total 5-8 Reading/ELA (four) = 4 total 9-12 Reading/ELA (four) = 4 total K-4 Math (four) = 4 total 5-8 Math (three) = 3 total 9-12 Math (four) = 4 total K-4 Science (two) = 2 total 5-8 Science (two) = 2 total 9-12 Science (three) = 3 total K-4 Fire Arts (two) = 2 total K-12 Music (two) = 2 total K-12 Physical Education (two) = 2 total 8-12 Language (two) = 2 total

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 09/01/2014

SEPTEMBER 2014 - Final evaluations for the Innovate21 Summer Academy courses and all project costs will be completed. All data from the instructional coaches and student devices will be tabulated and prepared for dissemination. The data will inform the districts of best student devices for future purchases. The data will also show the effectiveness of blended learning and best practices and what the instructional coaches' professional development and training has had on student achievement as fall benchmarking scores are compared against spring benchmarking scores.

* Included the expected changes to the instructional and/or organizational practices in your institution.

Innovate21 will change instructional practices and pedagogy. By incorporating blended learning, educators will effectively change teaching and learning in their classrooms. The use of student mobile learning devices and blended learning methodology creates student-owned learning and promotes positive digital citizenship where students can leave a learning legacy. The blended learning model introduced and supported by Innovate21 supports a model of anytime, anywhere learning for educators and their students. Innovate21 will change our organizational practices concerning professional development. The initiative creates a blended learning model of professional development. The growth of the professional development model will have a regional impact. Schools will be able to share best-practices, teachers, and curricular resources. As the initiative grows, more schools can join, create, and collaborate. This will expand the professional learning community and allow more districts to share resources targeted at curriculum-based, blended learning methodology.

21. Is this project able to be replicated in other districts in Ohio?

22. If so, how?

23. Describe the substantial value and lasting impact that the project hopes to achieve.

24. What are the specific benchmarks related to the fund goals identified in question 9 that the project aims to achieve in five years? Include any other anticipated outcomes of the project that you hope to achieve that may not be easily benchmarked.

25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used.

* Narrative explanation

While blended learning is a new strategy for most Ohio teachers, it is not an unproven strategy in education. Clearly, there is a movement towards blended learning given its initial successes. In the article Blended Learning in Practice: Case Studies from Leading Schools, by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, teachers in a blended model stated, "One year into blended learning, SSJ faculty have begun to observe notable—and at times unexpected—changes in class culture and student engagement with their own learning." Education Week talked to Richard E. Fertig, a Kent State University research professor and advocate of hybrid learning, who expects this approach to become much more common in the coming years. It is crucial to recognize, however, that blended learning is most successful when an in-school mentor (and in our case, instructional coach) is present—someone who can answer questions and help students through any initial adjustments they need to make to online learning. "We've shown time and time again," Fertig says, "that the extent to which the face-to-face school provides online mentors is directly correlated to how successful the students are." At Abilene Christian University in Texas, a pilot program offered 1,000 freshmen their choice of an iPhone or an iPod Touch for free. The devices enabled the students to get the information they needed when and where they wanted it and the program has reportedly proved successful. One professor incorporates the iPhones into classroom sessions, instructing students to search the web for information pertinent to the lesson, and helping them to interpret the information. Teachers are relieved of the administrative burdens—such as copying notes and distributing handouts—that can sap their energy. Students receive quizzes to test their understanding of the lesson. Schools and districts have turned to blended learning, which involves a combination of traditional classroom and independent, "hands-on" instruction that's most often delivered online. The concept can encompass a myriad of experiences, which vary based on what the school, home, and library have to offer. Some teachers and students may have access to high-speed broadband access at home and prefer using a laptop or tablet; others may need textbooks, smartphones, and cell phones. Teachers and students can be connected through technology, which makes learning more engaging and relevant. The blended learning model described in this article is not the center of the instruction but instead works alongside students as a guide. Many educators are finding that this instructional model is effectively engaging students in the learning process. Tina Garrison, executive editor for product development of Herff's Foundation, sums up the situation: "If teachers take advantage of professional development when new technologies are introduced and shown how they can best be used by their students, teachers, and parents, they can become adept at addressing them in any number of ways. Technology can be one of them, but it takes time, training, and patience." Based on the stated research, Innovate21 will leverage instructional coaches to help close the achievement gap through a blended learning approach.
surveys will be used to collect data concerning student, teacher, and parent experiences regarding several aspects of traditional classroom instruction including: (1) effectiveness on student learning (2) resource management focused on availability, variety (electronic vs. traditional), and effectiveness (3) pacing of standards-based learning (4) ability to provide for mastery, differentiation, and learner independence (5) access to personal learning networks for collaboration, reflection and exposure to best practices. Interim progress monitoring will occur through the use of surveys concerning student, teacher, and parent feedback of piloted blended-learning classrooms including the 5 aforementioned categories. In addition, data will be collected throughout the implementation of Innovate21 in the areas of: (1) the blended learning model (2) efficient use of instructional time (3) availability and authenticity of digital resources (4) student engagement (5) the changing role of teacher and learner. Post-grant surveys and pre-grant surveys will measure comparable outcomes. Survey questions will reflect the effects of blended learning compared to traditional classroom practices.

By virtue of applying for the Straight A Fund, all applicants agree to participate in the overall evaluation of the Straight A Fund for the duration of the evaluation timeframe. The Governing Board of the Straight A Fund reserves the right to conduct evaluation of the plan and request additional information in the form of data, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and any other related data to the legislature, governor, and other interested parties for an overall evaluation of the Straight A Fund.

PROGRAM ASSURANCES: I agree, on behalf of this applicant agency and/or all identified partners to abide by all assurances outlined in the Assurance section of the CCIP. In the box below, enter "I Accept" and indicate your name, title, agency/organization and today’s date.