

Budget

Bowling Green City School District (043638) - Wood County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (302)

U.S.A.S. Fund #:
 Plus/Minus Sheet ([opens new window](#))

Purpose Code	Object Code	Salaries 100	Retirement Fringe Benefits 200	Purchased Services 400	Supplies 500	Capital Outlay 600	Other 800	Total
Instruction		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Support Services		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Governance/Admin		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Prof Development		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Family/Community		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Safety		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Facilities		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	144,579.60	0.00	144,579.60
Transportation		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	144,579.60	0.00	144,579.60
Adjusted Allocation								0.00
Remaining								-144,579.60

Application

Bowling Green City School District (043638) - Wood County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (302)

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: Beyond the Classroom Walls

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.

Bowling Green City Schools is seeking funding to construct an outdoor educational landscape, commonly known as a land lab, utilizing plans that resulted from a collaboration between Bowling Green City Schools and a BGSU graduate-level Environmental Studies class project in 2012. The goal of student achievement is addressed as students learn not only by seeing and hearing (traditional classroom), but also by smelling, feeling, tasting, and touching; the 'grip to grasp' theoretical basis of a land lab. Crim Elementary has been identified as the neighborhood school whose children would most directly benefit from a land lab as there is a predominance of apartment and low-income housing with very little or no green space; 52% of students receive free lunches and an additional 5% receive reduced lunch prices; students attend a day care program open from 6am to 6pm during the year and all summer. This low socio-economic population inhibits parent ability to travel to locations that provide learning experiences in an outdoor environment.

575 3. Total Students Impacted:

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:

First Name, last Name of contact for lead applicant: Ann McVey, Superintendent

Organizational name of lead applicant: Bowling Green City Schools

Unique Identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 043638

Address of lead applicant: 137 Clough Street

Phone Number of lead applicant: 419-352-3576

Email Address of lead applicant: amcvey@bgcs.k12.oh.us

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:

First Name, last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Todd Cramer, Executive Director of Teaching & Learning

Organizational name of secondary applicant: Bowling Green City Schools

Unique Identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 043638

Address of secondary applicant: 137 Clough Street

Phone number of secondary applicant: 419-352-3576

Email address of secondary applicant: tcramer@bgcs.k12.oh.us

6. List all other participating entities by name: Provide the following information for each additional participating entity, if applicable: Mention First Name, Last Name, Organizational Name, Unique Identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID), Address, Phone Number, Email Address of Contact for All Secondary Applicants in the box below.

Bowling Green Parks & Rec Chris Gajewicz, Natural Resources Coordinator Cinda Stutzman, Natural Resources Specialists Tax ID# 419-353-0301 Wood County Master Gardeners Chet Thomas 419-308-7186 Lisa Cook 419-297-3477 Vincent Snyder, Site Coordinator/Community Learning Centers 1687 N. Research Drive Bowling Green, OH 43402 vsnyder@wccsc.org 419-575-2929

7. Partnership and consortia agreements and letters of support: - (Click on the link below to upload necessary documents).

* Letters of support are 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.

* If a partnership or consortium will be established, please include the signed Straight A Description of Nature of Partnership or Description of Nature of Consortium Agreement.

[UploadGrantApplicationAttachment.aspx](#)

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 partnering entities.

Project Manager - to be hired; most likely a member of the Wood County Master Gardener Club Site Manager - to be hired; most likely a member of the Wood County Master Gardener Club Bowling Green Parks & Rec: Employment responsibilities include assistance with this type of project; employees provide educational activities to students in our schools on a continual basis; years of experience and specific expertise in outdoor parks; native landscaping; educational programs including but not limited to: Cinda Stutzman - prairie; coordinator of student learning activities during the construction and thereafter; Chris Gajewicz - overall project and purchasing expertise; experience with contractors; layout and design; native plants; oversees Simpson Garden Park and Wintergarden Park in BG Wood County Master Gardener 2014 Annual Project-design and construction of the sensory garden as their required annual project; Experience with a community park; experience with an annual project of significant proportion Wood County Master Gardeners - completion of the vegetable garden; gardening is their area of expertise Master Gardener Certification Program - required 50 hours of initial volunteer work (approx 20 members); on-site training by Master Gardeners Master Gardener Continued Certification Program - required 20 hours per year after initial certification (countless number of members) Community Learning Center: Children and adults who operate and attend a summer day care program; will provide basic maintenance including weed control and watering Student volunteers: BG FFA; Key Club - construction of wood seating; bird/bat houses/feeders; Eagle Scot Projects TBD Melanie Garbig: Melanie has been a strong leader and advocate for the land lab during 2012. She will continue to meet with teachers; BG Parks & Rec; Coordinate schedules for classes to be in the land lab; Communicate with all partners; Continue to advocate and encourage instructional activities Principal Crim Elementary Crim Elementary Teachers: Crim teachers have spent the past year discussing the options for a land lab; they have studied the Common Core Standards and discussed lesson plans; teachers will continue these activities and will design lessons that meet learning standards; collaborate instructional activities with the BG Parks & Rec Education Naturalist Chuck Martin, Director of Building & Grounds: Chuck will stay abreast of construction activities and serve as a liaison between Project/Site Manager and the building & grounds crew; Chuck will also oversee the acquisition of permits and licenses; Chuck will maintain communication with the City of BG leaders; Chuck will provide supervision to building & grounds crew in the maintenance of the land lab United Way of Wood County has expressed interest in a meal program for Crim students during the summer months. While this has not come to fruition due to a change in the directorship, this is an area of concern for our Crim students and United Way will be contacted for assistance in harvesting vegetables and organizing a summer meal program

B) PROJECT DESCRIPTION - Overall description of project and alignment with Outcomes

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 researched-based - never implemented in your district or community school but proven successful in other educational environments

Mixed Concept - incorporates new and existing elements

Enhancing/Scale Up - elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school, or consortia partnership

11. Describe the innovative project.

This project will transform the grounds of Crim Elementary into a handicap accessible land lab. This land lab will provide hands-on learning experiences. The land lab will provide all students, including special needs preschool; students with significant developmental disabilities; and students attending a summer day-care program, the opportunity to interact with the environment in an informal manner through play and formally through instruction guided by classroom teachers, Natural Resource Specialists, and certified Master Gardeners. The land lab will include: ? Walking track ? Sensory garden; solar-powered fountain; pinwheels; chimes ? Vegetable garden ? Prairie for wildlife ? Globe station ? Class seating from log pieces ? Kiosk information; display of student work; items such as nuts, leaves,

grasses, feathers ? Native trees ? Bird houses/feeders; bat houses ? Worm composting bin ? Rain garden (if funds exist)

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. Students will make gains in academic achievement through total immersion in the construction of the land lab as well as continued utilization of the land lab to: -apply concepts introduced in the classroom in every subject and at every grade level -practice experiential learning -create academic constructs -learn the functionality of math skills (measurement; equations; mathematical processes) -experience science concepts through a natural environment -enhance social studies skills through communication with others in this interactive setting -experience the concept of community/social studies Students will also: -develop an appreciation for nature ? utilize higher level-thinking skills of critical and creative thinking ? develop problem-solving skills ? develop and strengthen artistic skills ? learn life-long skills of gardening; responsibility; appreciation of nature ? learn life-long skills of collaboration and team work In order for students to maximize learning in the land lab, the site must be prepared which will necessitate the collaboration of Natural Resources experts from BG Parks & Rec, Master Gardeners; teachers and administrators, Project Manager and Site Manager. The following must occur to fulfill the intended outcome of student achievement: Crim Principal; Director of Building & Grounds December 2013 - September 2014 ? Maintain a detailed budget sheet ? Process purchase orders ? Approve purchases in advance January 2014 ? hire a highly-skilled and experienced Project Manager ? provide office space at Crim Elementary for the Project Manager- ? create a Land Lab team (BG Parks & Rec; Master Gardeners; volunteers) to work with the Project Manager ? establish regular meetings with the Project Manager ? administer the financial aspects of the grant in conjunction with the Treasurer- December to September 2014 Project Manager January 2014 ? analyze the schematic and technical information that was created by BGSU ENV Studies graduate students ? prepare the timeline of the construction ? secure construction companies; nurseries; other February 2014 ? order materials ? gather all needed supplies ? install tool shed March 2014-Sept 2014 ? oversee daily construction ? trouble-shoot and consult with Naturalists Teachers January-February 2014 ? explore instructional options as included in Common Core ? begin discussion with students about the construction project ? meet with the Natural Resources Specialist to plan student involvement in construction/planting March 2014 ? create lesson plans ? create a master schedule of student involvement in the construction/planting April 2014 ? continue above ? increase student involvement as weather permits ? include base knowledge in lesson planning May 2014 Students actively involved in planting vegetables/prairie grass ? Students assist with maintenance, including watering ? Students bring parents and siblings to the land lab BG Parks & Rec; Wood County Master Gardeners January - September 2014 ? participate on the Land Lab Team ? provide on-site guidance of construction ? lead the construction of the prairie ? lead the construction of the vegetable garden ? lead the construction of the sensory garden ? provide professional development to teachers-March-May 2014 ? provide on-site assistance with student activities

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for ongoing funding of the project, cost breakdown

13. Financial Documentation - All applicants must enter or upload 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 addition to how the project will demonstrate sustainability and impact.

There are no expected changes to the five-year forecast resulting from implementation of this project.

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

144,579.60 * Total project cost

* Provide a brief narrative explanation of the overall budget. The narrative should include the source and amount of other funds that may be used to support this concept (e.g., Title I funding, RttT money, local funding, foundation support, etc.), and 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.)

This is a construction project and, as such, all costs fall under: Object Code 680 Capital Outlay/Purpose of Facilities Total Request-\$144,579.60 Itemized Supplies crushed limestone 4,000 Weed matting 2,000 plants; fountain; chimers 2,600 Potting soil/top soil 2,000 Plant boxes 2,000 Mulch 500 Fencing 1,000 Fertilizer 80 Lumber 2,000 Prairie Plugs 1,500 GLOBE Station 500 4X4 post 25 cedar log pieces 2,000 kiosk kit 700 15 Trees 3,000 Watering bags 500 houses/feeders/poles 200 houses/poles 300 composting bins 300 receptacles 600 Tools 700 Compost 500 Garden hoses 250 Lawn sprinklers 250 Storage Shed 2,000 Wheelbarrows 500 Shovels; buckets 250 Contracted Services Survey 500 Excavation/compaction 6,000 Planting labor 200 Construction of walkway 20,000 Construction of raised beds 1,000 Grass removal/tilling/planting 3,000 GLOBE Station post 100 Construction of log seating 250 Kiosk installation 500 Trees Planting trees 3,000 Tree Removal 6,000 Bird/Bat Houses Construction 300 Worm Compost/construction 100 Irrigation system 25,000 Fence Installation 15,000 Salaries Project Manager 20.00/hour; 80 hrs/mth (Jan-Sept)14,400.00 Retirement/other (.1545) 2,224.80 Site Manager 20.00/hr/80 hrs/mth (Jan-Sept) 14,400.00 Retirement/other (.1545) 2,224.80 Total Construction Cost: \$144,579.60

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.

0.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

* 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.). If there are no new/recurring costs, please explain why.

Following the initial construction and purchase of materials and supplies, there will be no impact on overall budget. The grounds at Crim Elementary are currently maintained by the District Building & Grounds crew; annual appropriations for these employees are included in the five-year forecast. Volunteers will maintain the grounds following initial construction. These volunteers include the Wood County Master Gardeners (20 -50 volunteer hours per gardener are required); Master Gardeners in neighboring counties often complete their volunteer requirements in Wood County due to a lack of gardens in their home counties; student groups within Bowling Green City Schools will volunteer to meet course requirements; the PTO will volunteer as well (all PTOs in the district currently maintain at least a portion of the landscape in each building). The nature of an educational landscape/land lab is that maintenance becomes less as the vegetation becomes established. Any vegetation that needs to be replaced will be funded through the existing Crim Elementary supply budget.

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

0.00 * 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.)

There are no expected savings.

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 that are at least equal to the amount of new/recurring costs detailed above. If there are no new/recurring costs, explain in detail how this project will sustain itself beyond the life of the grant.

1. The land lab is sustainable beyond the grant terms as the grant will provide the start-up funds necessary to transform a typical school grounds into an interactive land lab. The expense of a land lab is in the construction of the lab. Once the initial construction has taken place, the sustainability is in maintenance which is explained above. The teachers and building principal must sustain their interest in hands-on learning. Teachers at Crim Elementary have been meeting and discussing the instructional/learning options available with a land lab since 2012. There is also a history of our teachers working in collaboration with the Naturalists from BG Parks & Rec. In addition, there is a high level of learning that takes place in a land lab during informal use. This would include students interacting with the land lab at recess; families in the evenings and on weekends. The community of BG has a long history of private funding and maintenance of parks. This is especially true of the Simpson Garden & Park on the opposite side of town from Crim Elementary. There is enthusiasm for a land lab and no reason to question the commitment of the community to assist in sustaining the benefits of the land lab well into the future.

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 can include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

* Proposal Timeline Dates

Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 12/01/2013-2/28/14

* Narrative explanation

There will be a brief time lag before student benefit due to the required transformation of existing grounds. This transformation requires excavation. Students will be able to participate in the construction of the land lab in planting of the prairie grass, plant-life, vegetables. The bulk of student benefit/increased student achievement will begin August 2014. December 2013 ? Hire Project Manager ? Barrier:Lack of applicants ? Solution:Solicit applicants from BGSU Environmental Studies;Owens Community College;Penta Career Tech Center January 2014 ? Project Manager sets regular meeting dates ? Project Manager creates master plan ? Barrier:Difficulty finding common meeting times; changes in personnel ? Solution:Include as many people as possible; establish regular meeting times; create construction notebooks February 2014 ? Survey site and develop specific site plan ? Secure contractors/volunteers for implementation of the plan ? Complete orders for materials ? Barriers:Obtaining contractors whose quotes are within the budget; availability of contractors ? Solution:If contractor's costs are too high, engage groups and local businesses who may donate their services (Palmer Excavating; Bostdorff or Klotz Nurseries; Master Gardeners; Home Depot Stakeholder/partner participation: 2012: The initial stakeholder in the land lab project was BGSU as the Environmental Studies class completed a comprehensive analysis of the grounds at Crim Elementary and presented 5 options for a land lab. This collaboration included several meetings and a final presentation of options. 2012-13: A team of Crim teachers met periodically throughout the year to discuss the incorporation of Common Core standards into the land lab. 2013-14: The Crim Principal discussed the land lab with the PTO and gathered strong support of the lab. Meeting with all stakeholders held on October 23, 2014. Attendees included BG Parks & Rec

Employees: Cinda Stutzman; Chris Gajewicz; Wood County Master Gardener Chet Thompson; Principal Melanie Garbig; Info from a PTO parent who could not attend was shared at the meeting.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 1/3/14-1/3/15

* Narrative explanation

April 2014 ? Continue site work ? Organize volunteers/student classes for planting ? Begin planting ? Establish plan for summer maintenance ? Barriers:weather; lack of volunteers ? Solution:provide flexibility for planting in the schedule; utilize the contacts of the Master Gardener May 2014 ? Continue site work ? Continue planting-Crim students/volunteers ? Determine schedule and process for distribution of vegetables to Crim students and families ? Barriers: Weather; Plants don't grow; lack of volunteers ? Solution: Gather experts; Crim students; analyze why plants didn't grow; make changes for future planting June 2014 ? Implement summer maintenance plan ? Volunteers, Crim students and families, continue planting ? Harvest vegetables-Crim students/volunteers ? Distribute vegetables-Crim students/volunteers ? Barriers:weather; plants don't grow; difficulty finding volunteers ? Solution:Gather experts; Crim students; analyze why plants didn't grow; make changes for future planting; solicit community volunteers July 2014 ? Implement summer maintenance plan ? Harvest vegetables-Crim students/volunteer- ? Distribute vegetables-Crim students/volunteers ? Develop plan to winterize vegetable garden ? Barriers: weather; plants don't grow; difficulty finding volunteers ? Solution: Gather experts, including Crim students; analyze why plants didn't grow; make changes for future planting; solicit community volunteers August 2014 ? Harvest vegetables- Crim students/volunteers ? Distribute vegetables- Crim students/volunteers ? Create maintenance plan for winter months ? Teachers begin holding classes in the land lab ? Develop plan to winterize vegetable garden ? Barriers:weather; plants don't grow; difficulty finding volunteers ? Solution:Gather experts, including Crim students; analyze why plants didn't grow; make changes for future planting; solicit community volunteers September 2014 ? Winterize vegetable gardens ? Review process from summer ? Revise and review plans for spring 2015 ? Determine any plant replacement needs ? Create annual plan for continued collaboration with partners ? Create annual plan for continued maintenance ? Barriers:Initial enthusiasm dwindles ? Solution:Students share information about the land lab with community; partner with the Master Gardeners class/project October-November 2014 ? Students continue use of land lab ? Teachers collaborate, critique lessons, plan for continued lessons in the land lab ? Teachers create lessons to utilize the land lab in the winter December 2014-beyond ? Repeat process

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 1/3/14-9/30/14

* Narrative explanation

The evaluation of student achievement is on-going through the various construction of the land lab and continues throughout each student's experience at Crim Elementary. The evaluation of the success of the project includes: ? Completion of the project according to the proposed timeline ? Informal evaluation through observation of students interacting with the newly created environment ? Frequency with which students are engaged in project-based learning ? Formal evaluation through assessment of project-based activities ? Analysis of student growth on state assessments (value-added)with an emphasis on science ? Analysis of student performance on teacher-designed assessments ? Achievement growth between pre-and post-tests

19. Describe the expected changes to the instructional and/or organizational practices in your institution.

It is obvious from the research that the creation of educational landscapes provides a plethora of benefit to the academic, social, emotional and physical development of children. One must wonder why Ohio's educational leaders are not taking advantage of this educational opportunity that is literally 'in their backyards'. Perhaps the answer to this question lies in the fact that the creation of an educational landscape requires comprehensive analysis of school grounds; expertise in flora and fauna native to Ohio; funding to support the transition of playground to educational landscape; knowledge of content standards and the creativity to link standard instruction to outdoor education; and sustainability of the landscape beyond the implementation year. Bowling Green City Schools has addressed each of these barriers to educational landscaping in the following manner: ? Partnered with a graduate-level Environmental Studies class under the guidance of instructor, Enrique Del Campo Gomez (Environmental Engineer). This class of graduate students completed a comprehensive survey/analysis of Crim Elementary grounds and provided full plans for 5 options for educational landscapes. ? Created a 'Green Team' of Crim teachers to study Content Standards and the link to an educational landscape. ? Gained the interest and support of the school PTO. ? Partnered with Bowling Green Parks & Recreation; the Wood County Park System; BG Garden Club; numerous service organizations in Bowling Green; numerous departments at Bowling Green State University ? Installed an irrigation system when completing a construction project at Crim Elementary Once the grounds of Crim Elementary have been transformed into a land lab, the educational opportunities to students will forever be enhanced. As land labs mature they become increasingly rich with vegetation and wildlife. In addition, as teachers experience the land lab and become acquainted with the endless possibilities for learning, their instructional approach will forever be changed. In addition, the lives of the families and neighbors will be changed as well as they will now have an interactive park of the east side of Bowling Green.

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.

The theoretical basis of outdoor education lies in the authenticity of learning through direct physical contact with a natural environment. Outdoor education is action-oriented learning that occurs through the interaction between book-based learning and sensory experiences where physical activity and movement combine to support learning. Outdoor education has been practiced in European schools for decades. Inner-city schools in the US have deliberately created 'schoolyards' that promote interaction with the environment. Yet, deliberately created outdoor educational landscapes in Ohio's schools are few. Funds are dedicated toward creating landscapes that are pleasing to adults; however, go unnoticed by students. These same funds should be spent in the creation of a stimulating, interactive educational landscape that piques student interest, enhances student achievement, and provides numerous residual benefits. The benefits of outdoor education are numerous. A study of ten schools by the National Environmental Education and Training Foundation (2000) found that when schools use the context of local areas and naturalized outdoor education in their instructional practices, academic performance improves in reading, math, science, social studies and writing. A study of 40 schools in California that used the natural environment as "an integrated context of learning" with hands-on, project-based learning found that student performance improved in standardized test scores, grades, on-task behavior, adaptability of different learning styles and problem solving (Lieberman & Hoody, 1998). Studies by Coffey (2001) and Moore & Cosco (2000) show a reduction in anti-social behavior such as violence, bullying, vandalism, and a drop in absenteeism. Research provides convincing evidence of the significant benefits of experiential learning through outdoor educational landscapes. Findings include: ? Children with symptoms of ADHD are better able to concentrate after contact with nature (Taylor 2001). ? Children with views of and contact with nature score higher on tests of concentration and self-discipline. The greener, the better the scores (Wells 2000, Taylor 2002). ? Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility, and they are sick less often (Grahn, et al. 1997; Fjortoft 2001). ? Exposure to natural environments improves children's cognitive development by improving their awareness, reasoning and observational skills (Pyle 2002). ? Nature buffers the impact of life stress on children and helps them deal with adversity. The greater the amount of nature exposure, the greater the benefits (Wells 2003). ? Play in a diverse natural environment reduces or eliminates bullying (Malone & Tranter 2003). ? Early experiences with the natural world have been positively linked with the development of imagination and the sense of wonder. Wonder is an important motivator for life-long learning (Wilson 1997).

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

Yes

No

22. If so, how?

The creation of a land lab is possible in every school in Ohio, assuming space is available. Most school districts dedicate funds to a traditional landscaping. Why not take these funds and transform a traditional landscape into an educational opportunity. Several items are important to the success and sustainability of a land lab. It is important that a comprehensive study be completed prior to beginning an educational landscaping project. The expertise of an environmental engineer to provide an overall analysis of the grounds and plan for the creation of the educational landscape is encouraged. Partnerships with local experts and gardening enthusiasts is encouraged. An educational landscaping project is not complete without a plan for maintaining the site.

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

Most outdoor space on school campuses has been transformed into playgrounds that resemble asphalt parking lots with manufactured climbing equipment and sports fields. Fewer and fewer children have the opportunity to interact with nature through exploring a wooded area; holding meaningful conversations under the canopy of the leaves on trees; watching plants grow; observing the habits of wildlife. Two-hundred years ago, most children had these opportunities in their own back yards. They were free to explore in the woods; follow the path of a stream; build a treehouse; with no real concern of safety. Today, most children live in cities or suburban areas. They do not have natural habitats in their back yards and they are not free to explore other areas due to safety concerns. Children today have few opportunities for free play and regular contact with the natural world. Pyle (1993) calls this the 'extinction of experience' and considers apathy towards environment concerns a direct result. Today, children are disconnected from the natural world and their experiences are based in media. The virtual is replacing the real (Pyle 2002). Children are losing the understanding that nature exists within their surroundings and they are further disconnected from a knowledge and appreciation of the natural world. Research supports the life-long benefits of connecting children with nature. The academic benefit to children is impressive (see research in Question 20). Additionally, Rickinson et al., 2004. P. 5, conclude that 'substantial evidence exists to indicate that fieldwork and visits, properly conceived, adequately planned, well taught and effectively followed up, offers learners opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in ways that add value to their everyday experience in the classroom'. A growing body of literature shows that the natural environment has a lasting impact on the well-being of adults, including psychological well-being, cognitive ability, fewer illnesses. It is also widely accepted that the environment is likely to have a more profound effect on children due to their greater plasticity or vulnerability (Wells 2003) that will remain with these children into adulthood. In summary, there is substantial benefit and lasting impact to both children and adults when interaction with environment occurs. Children would benefit substantially by maximizing both the informal play and formal learning opportunities that educational landscapes offer. Children would regain the opportunity to learn in their unique experiential way through the exploration and discovery made available in an educational landscape.

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.

Student Achievement: Short-Term Benchmarks ? Functional Math-calculating the number of plants needed for the prairie; vegetable gardens; flora ? Functional Science-determining plant-life appropriate for the climate; determining plant-life native to NW Ohio ? Functional Social Studies: meeting with teams of students and teams of adults to plan land lab; developing an understanding of community-at-large ? Developing an understanding of gardening techniques Long Term Benchmarks: Formative Assessment: ? teacher observation of student capability to apply functional skills ? math assessment involving skills of area; division; measurement ? assessment of understanding of communication with others through written assessment Summative Assessment: ? performance on state assessments ? value-added score for math and reading ? comparison of 3rd grade reading achievement test in the fall as opposed to the spring administration Benchmarks not specifically related to student achievement: ? Hiring a Project Manager ? Hiring a Master Gardener ? Securing Contractors ? Completing site transformation in time for the planting season ? Producing a healthy crop ? Sharing vegetables with Crim families

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

* Include the method by which progress toward short- and long-term objectives will be measured. (This section should include the types of data to be collected, the formative outputs and outcomes and the systems in place to track the program's progress).

* Include the method, process and/or procedure by which the program will modify or change the program plan if measured progress is insufficient to meet program objectives.

The evaluation of the success of the project includes: ? Completion of the project according to the proposed timeline ? Informal evaluation through observation of students interacting with the newly created environment ? Frequency with which students are engaged in project-based learning ? Formal evaluation through assessment of project-based activities ? Analysis of student growth on state assessments (value-added)with an emphasis on science More specifically: Student Achievement will be evaluated according to: Functional Math-calculating the number of plants needed for the prairie; vegetable gardens; flora Functional Science-determining plant-life appropriate for the climate; determining plant-life native to NW Ohio Functional Social Studies: meeting with teams of students and teams of adults to plan land lab; developing an understanding of community-at-large Developing an understanding of gardening techniques Formative Assessment: teacher observation of student capability to apply functional skills math assessment involving skills of area; division; measurement assessment of understanding of communication with others through written assessment Summative Assessment: performance on state assessments value-added score for math and reading comparison of 3rd grade reading achievement test in the fall as opposed to the spring administration

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.

I Accept Dr. Ann McVey Superintendent Bowling Green City Schools 419-352-3576 amcvey@bgcs.k12.oh.us October 24, 2013