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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00
Remaining: -997,349.00
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: Fairfield's Innovative Learning Center - "The Fairfield Academy"

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. 30. Total Students Impacted:

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:
   - First Name, last Name of contact for lead applicant: Lani Wildow
   - Organizational name of lead applicant: Fairfield City School District
   - Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 046102
   - Address of lead applicant: 4641 Bach Lane Fairfield, OH 45014
   - Phone Number of lead applicant: 513.858.7122
   - Email Address of lead applicant: wildow_l@fairfieldcityschools.com

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:
   - First Name, last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Not applicable to Fairfield
   - Organizational name of secondary applicant: Not applicable to Fairfield
   - Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): Not applicable to Fairfield
   - Address of secondary applicant: Not applicable to Fairfield
   - Phone number of secondary applicant: Not applicable to Fairfield
   - Email address of secondary applicant: Not applicable to Fairfield

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.

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

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.

E) 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.

   "The Fairfield Academy" - an innovative learning center within the Fairfield City School District including two components: (1) an alternative educational setting and (2) a fully online learning system. Alternative Program: Some students who currently attend an alternative school outside of our district, but this program has reduced services. By creating our own program utilizing technology, research-based methods, and recognizing individual needs in a flexible environment, our students will experience success. Students who attend "The Fairfield Academy" will do so by choice. "The Silent Epidemic" by Bridgeland states that "nearly 47% of high school drop outs said that classes were not interesting." By allowing students and parents to have choices, we will reengage them in learning and inspire them to teach their fullest potential. Our alternative program will offer two sessions during the day so students can choose when to attend. By utilizing highly effective teachers, students will be immersed in blended learning. Students will be able to receive small group instruction, individualized instruction and large amounts of time devoted to blended learning. The staff will also be developing meaningful, lasting relationships with students through an advisor / advisee system. Each adult will be an advisor for a small group of students and participate in a check-in system. The check-in will be devoted to monitoring academic progress and allow for students to share other issues that may interfere academic progress. Our focus on academic achievement will also include future planning with college and career readiness - visits to or from college admissions, trade schools, and military recruiters. A high school counselor may act as the students’ liaison to high school ensuring students stay connected to our high school. High school is about a wide range of experiences both inside and outside of the classroom, and we want our students to be successful in all areas. As our own program, we will ensure our staff will have the pd needed to partner with all of our students and their families for success. We recognize that students who need an alternative setting may also need additional supports such as mental health services or social services through partnerships with community agencies. Online Learning: In an effort to reach a range of learners, Fairfield is also interested in expanding its reach beyond our current brick and mortar setting. We want to expand into the virtual world for the 200 families in our community who currently use online resources to educate their children. We will contact each of these families through a mailing, inviting them back to the "F-Family family." We want them to know we are committed to ensuring their child has a quality educational experience grounded in Ohio's New Learning Standards. One of the top benefits of online education as described by "Online Education" is that "online learning allows a more student-centered approach." We are a very large district, and some of our students and families feel lost. Our hope is to reconnect with families we have lost over the years by meeting the needs of the vastly changing learners we serve. The teachers working with our alternative students will also work with our students who need a fully online program. These teachers will be familiar with online content and will be trained to connect with and develop positive online relationships with students. In doing so, we will be ensuring Fairfield's vision of creating a true innovative learning center - one that reaches both the students who need a more flexible learning environment and the
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.

**Goal #1** - Student achievement By creating an innovative learning center in Fairfield with a more flexible, alternative setting and a fully online program where Ohio's New Learning Standards drive the curriculum and all of our partnerships with all students are at the heart of every interaction, we will be able to improve the academic outcome for more Fairfield students. Currently, Fairfield students who need a different learning environment have to go outside of our district to meet their needs, and when they leave our district, we cannot ensure that they are receiving the best possible educational experience. The Fairfield Academy will provide students with opportunities for lifelong learning on research and ensuring success. Engagement and relationships are two of the qualities that Robert Marzano’s research points to when looking for ways to improve student achievement for all students. Our staff has been utilizing Marzano’s strategies in our classrooms for the past three years as documented in our OIP plan through regular walkthroughs. These practices would carry over into this new setting and be at the heart of its success. Increasing educational opportunities for our students will help them stay connected to the rich learning environment that the Fairfield Academy will provide. The staff will enable us to assess student learning and progress and provide feedback, support, and assistance as students learn.

**Goal #2** - Programs and Services, thus “The Fairfield Academy” is easily a self-sustaining, and, potentially even a gainful program to the district in the future. Currently, Fairfield students who need a fully online program.

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.

Financial Impact Template has been included with this application.

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

997,349.00 **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, RTF money, local funding, foundation support, etc.), and 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.).

The Straight A Funds would be used as startup money for “The Fairfield Academy.” Startup costs include the renovation of a current district owned site, purchase of technology and furniture, and, most importantly, the professional development to ensure that the staff is educated and ready to serve students. The Fairfield City School District has the financial ability to maintain “The Fairfield Academy” in the years to come with the use of local funding and foundation support. This program has the potential to generate a yearly savings anywhere between $1,882,567.80 if all of the students from the virtual schools return to Fairfield to $824,767.80 if no one from the virtual schools returns. We intend to work hard to encourage our students at other online schools to return to Fairfield so that we can better serve our students as well as realize a higher cost savings. Renovation of site (211 Donald Drive) = $300,000 Purchase of computers = $35,750 x 55 per machine for 55 machines Wiring of site = $2600 Furniture for site (219, 10 Trapezoid tables for small group instruction, $225 each) = $2250 x 26 tables for computers = $5,000 x 55 tables for computers = $5,000 x 55 tables = 1800 x 2600 = $1,882,567.80

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

601,164.00 **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.

Maintenance of site (211 Donald Drive) = $30,000 per year x 1/2 Custodian = $25,000 x 5,000 materials Maintenance of computers = $6500 per year Outside services (special education) = $50,000 per year Staffing = $505,314 per year x 6 teachers ELA, math, science, social studies, two intervention specialist = $69,219 each x 1 administrator = $90,000 Ongoing professional development = Title II funds Software license = $9350 per year x $85 per seat for 110 seats

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

1,882,567.80 **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.)

Yearly cost of alternative school students 7-12 (5 seats, $7000 each) = $175,000 Yearly cost of therapeutic programming K-8 (6 students, $20,400 each) = $122,400 Yearly cost of therapeutic programming K-8 (2 teachers, $26,000 each) = $250,000 Busing to current location = $932,367.80 Shuttle from FMS to Union Day for therapeutic students 207.05 per day, 178 days = $36,854.90 Shuttle from FMS to Union Day for progressive students 368.05 per day, 178 days = $65,512.90 Potential income from students coming back from virtual community schools (200 students, $6289 each) = $1,257,800

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.

Recruiting costs from #15 = $601,164 per year Maintenance of site (211 Donald Drive) = $30,000 per year x 1/2 Custodian = $25,000 x 5,000 materials Maintenance of computers = $6500 per year Outside services (special education) = $50,000 per year Staffing = $505,314 per year x 6 teachers ELA, math, science, social studies, two intervention specialist = $69,219 each x 1 administrator = $90,000 Ongoing professional development = Title II funds Software license = $9350 per year x $85 per seat for 110 seats The expected yearly savings as outlined in item #16 is $1,882,567.80 if all of our students currently enrolled in other virtual schools were to choose to come back to Fairfield. Even without the return of the students from virtual schools, we will be saving about $20,000, and we will be educating our students. The recurring costs, even with the possible addition of more staff if a large number of virtual students do return, is lower than what we are currently spending to educate our students with outside services, thus “The Fairfield Academy” is easily a self-sustaining, and, potentially even a gainful program to the district in 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): 12/15/2013

  * Narrative explanation

  This plan has been and will continue to be shared with a small group of internal stakeholders. Once funds are secured, more stakeholders will be made aware and encouraged to offer suggestions for improving the ideas in the plan. One barrier that may exist in this process is that we may not be able to serve as many students as our secondary principals would like. In learning more from the other districts we have visited, we have found that our district has a need for more in building tier two supports. After securing this grant, we would like to spend some time working with our administrators and teachers to develop strong building level tier two supports within all of our secondary buildings.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 08/15/2014

* Narrative explanation

The Fairfield Academy will open its doors for students at the start of the 2014-2015 school year. This is an aggressive timeline, but one that we feel we can meet. After hearing that we receive the Straight A funds in December, construction will begin in January 2014. We will also begin hiring personnel (administrator and teachers). Once the personnel is in place, the real work of planning the specifics of the program can begin - what will the schedule look like, what communications will go out to students and parents, what will be our intake process, etc. It is important to us that our key
Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/15/2015

* Narrative explanation

While the summative evaluation will happen after the first year of the program is complete, there will be many "formative checks" along the way as described in #25. We are very willing to make mid-course corrections to our plan in an effort to make for more formative evaluation feedback. We will be looking to ensure that we have reached our student achievement goal of an 85% graduation rate. A possible barrier here would be that the feedback we get is not genuine. Many times when using perception data, such as surveys, participants will not give a true response. We will work to build trusting relationships with students and their families so that the information they give us about what is working and what is not is accurate so that we can build an even better program in the years to come.

6) 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.

Our RTT, goals, and Ohio RTT, goals, are to increase high school graduation rates, to reduce the graduation rate gaps, and to reduce performance gaps. To reach these goals, districts must evaluate all they are doing or eliminate or change what is not working. Through four years of RTT work and eight years of OIP work, we recognize that the learning options we are offering our students need to change. We know that student achievement and high school dropout rates are directly related. In a report from the Gates Foundation "Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts" by John M. Bridgeland, there are reasons why students drop out of high school were identified: lack of connection to the school; perception that school is boring; feeling unmotivated; academic challenges; the weight of real world events. While these are challenges, they are not insurmountable. "The Fairfield Academy" will provide supports to overcome each of these challenges. We will employ teachers who want to be teaching in the Academy and who want to make a difference for at-risk students in a blended learning environment. The daily utilization of instructional technology will overcome the "boring" element since there is motivation for students drop out of high school.

Within School and Community Perspective, "The Fairfield Academy" will be utilizing goal setting and progress monitoring with students through the advisor / advisee system. We will also be partnering with our community agencies as well as have two intervention specialists on site to help students work through the barriers of life - we won't be able to remove these barriers, but we will be able to use our students and their families to help them see that a high school diploma, and they need to work with their students and their families to ensure that they have a solid foundation to the development of the program. Involving students and parents in the development of the program is ideal as they are the ones who have the most to gain from the experience. It is also important that your School Board, Superintendent, other central office staff members, and secondary administrators are all in support of the creation of the programs so that there is a solid foundation to the development of the program and the placement process.

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

If any district should be able to create its own alternative programming model, however, it will depend upon whether or not the model would be cost effective for the district. In our case, we are spending over $600,000 per year for our students to be educated by other entities, not feeling as though they were always giving a quality education. After the initial start-up costs of the location and materials, we will be spending approximately $150,000 per year. Our cost has reduced by $450,000 to $300,000 per year. This cost reduction is due to two primary factors: 1) by offering our students an alternative program, two students are no longer served in the district, and 2) by utilizing more efficient use of resources.

The creation of "The Fairfield Academy" offers the opportunity for a critical organizational change for the Fairfield City School District. Our current system does not allow for students who need to learn differently than a traditional classroom to stay in our district. While we are moving forward in our #12 classrooms with blended learning and other methods of engagement, some students simply need smaller environments, more individual attention, etc. When you look at the reasons why students drop out of high school, you see lack of connection to the school; perception that school is boring; feeling unmotivated; academic challenges; the weight of real world events. While these are challenges, they are not insurmountable. "The Fairfield Academy" will provide supports to overcome each of these challenges. We will employ teachers who want to be teaching in the Academy and who want to make a difference for at-risk students in a blended learning environment. The daily utilization of instructional technology will overcome the "boring" element since there is motivation for students drop out of high school.

In our case, we were spending over $600,000 per year for our students to be educated by other entities, not feeling as though they were always giving a quality education. After the initial start-up costs of the location and materials, we will be spending approximately $150,000 per year. Our cost has reduced by $450,000 to $300,000 per year. This cost reduction is due to two primary factors: 1) by offering our students an alternative program, two students are no longer served in the district, and 2) by utilizing more efficient use of resources.

Any district should be able to create its own alternative programming model, however, it will depend upon whether or not the model would be cost effective for the district. In our case, we are spending over $600,000 per year for our students to be educated by other entities, not feeling as though they were always giving a quality education. After the initial start-up costs of the location and materials, we will be spending approximately $150,000 per year. Our cost has reduced by $450,000 to $300,000 per year. This cost reduction is due to two primary factors: 1) by offering our students an alternative program, two students are no longer served in the district, and 2) by utilizing more efficient use of resources.

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 benchmarks.

* Student Achievement: We will see 85% of the students in "The Fairfield Academy" graduate on time. Spending reduction: Depending upon how many students return from the virtual schools, we will see a savings anywhere from $20,000 per year to approximately $1.2 million. We are also hoping to see other benchmarks that will indicate program success such as: o Students' attendance rates increase o Students' grades improve o Students' behavior and attendance scores improve o Students' test scores improve

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

* The student's goals and benchmarks identified above will also be tracked to see if they are achieved.

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 the applicant agency and/or identified partners to abide by all assurances outlined in the Assurance section of the OCP. In the box below, enter "I Accept" and indicate your signature, title, agency, date, and today's date.

Accept Last Name: Director of Curriculum and Instruction Fairfield City Schools October 24, 2013