### Hamilton City (044107) - Butler County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (27)

#### U.S.A.S. Fund #:

- [Plus/Minus Sheet (opens new window)]

#### 2014 Straight A Fund

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#### Adjusted Allocation 0.00

#### Remaining -144,800.00
As the Governor, Legislature, State Superintendent, and State Board of Education consistently note, students today are in need of greater educational options than ever before. The Hamilton City School District is committed to not only creating an e-learning hub, but is also dedicated to thoughtfulness in implementation that is responsive to student, parent, and community needs and as a result provides the appropriate mix of services. In the 2012-2013 school year alone, 150 students were expelled for a variety of reasons, and an additional 80 students in grades 9-12 dropped out of school. For both groups of students, a viable E-Campus learning option would have potentially altered educational outcomes.

The Hamilton City (HCSD) District serves a unique clientele, with students ranging from fairly affluent to extremely impoverished. Currently, just over 75% of the district students qualify for free and reduced lunch assistance. The district leadership and teaching staff have received and are implementing successfully Race to the Top projects with the associated grant of 1.9 million dollars. Team members and district staff have implemented successfully three consecutive Teaching American History projects utilizing a grant total of 2.7 million dollars. In addition the district successfully manages numerous federal projects with grants totaling 8.6 million dollars and state grants 2 million dollars.

### 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 research-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 Hamilton City School District serves a unique clientele, with students ranging from fairly affluent to extremely impoverished. Currently, just over 75% of the district students qualify for free and reduced lunch assistance. While socioeconomic status may vary among students, a commonality is the need for educational options that meet the learning and life circumstances of each individual learner. Currently, the District lacks a consolidated location and overarching structure to oversee multiple digital and e-learning initiatives. Each building is left to manage its own variation of online learning components, and a unified direction has been difficult to achieve. In addition, the District currently does not have the ability to offer advanced credit courses, especially in the area of electives, due to budget constraints. It is the belief of the District that a centralized e-campus will provide the types of structures and supports that will allow all students, regardless of building location, to have access to a mix of learning opportunities that will best meet their educational needs. The District firmly believes that the creation of an E-campus hub is a necessary step in the on-going quest to serve the diverse range of learners who are in need of a variety of educational options. Once operational, the E-Campus will provide both credit recovery and advanced credit options for students in a variety of formats, ranging from a single credit recovery class to complete online learning. Through the Straight A Fund, the District is seeking funding for the hardware and software startup costs associated with launching a centralized E-Campus. Once operational, the E-Campus will be housed at Hamilton High School. During the school year, students who are enrolled in online coursework will have the opportunity to utilize the E-Campus resource to further their studies. The majority of the face to face learning and support in the E-Campus environment will take place after traditional school hours. Students who depend on busing will have their needs met through existing activity bus services. However, teacher support through the E-Campus will not be limited to only times when students are present for face to face interactions. As students who are more independent in their learning will have the opportunity to complete coursework while not present at the E-Campus, part of the ongoing support by the teachers will include online and telephone support for those learners as necessary. To this end, the E-Campus strives to be a flexible model, one that provides the right mix of in-person and remote support as dictated by the needs of the learners it serves.

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 major goal of the E-Campus Development Grant is to improve student achievement. As the Governor, Legislature, State Superintendent, and State Board of Education consistently note, students today are in need of greater educational options than ever before. The Hamilton City School District is committed to not only creating an e-learning hub, but is also dedicated to thoughtfulness in implementation that is responsive to student, parent, and community needs and as a result provides the appropriate mix of services. In the 2012-2013 school year alone, 150 students were expelled for a variety of reasons, and an additional 80 students in grades 9-12 dropped out of school. For both groups of students, a viable E-Campus learning option would have potentially altered educational outcomes. In the case of the
expelled students, an E-Campus can allow education to continue in an alternative location using flexible time models (ex. work from home online during the day and attend the E-Campus during afternoon hours after school has dismissed). For students who dropped out, having alternative learning options available through an E-Campus could have made the difference between the hope of remaining in school and the academic despair that made dropping out a viable option. At Hamilton High School, both the four and five year graduation rates are currently in the mid 80 percent range. In order to meet the goal of a 90% graduation rate by the 2017-2018 school year, it is imperative that an E-Campus be developed. In addition to all of the benefits for at-risk students, an E-Campus will create opportunities for advanced learners and those who could benefit from courses currently unavailable at Hamilton High School. Specifically, the E-Campus will provide a vehicle for accessing additional electives and hard to find college level courses directly to high school students, it also offers advantages to middle school students as well. Currently at the middle school level, students who do not find success within the traditional structure of the school lack educational options that will allow their learning needs to best be met. Offerings from the E-Campus will be delivered remotely for middle school students. This will create flexible options that will allow them to remain on track academically and not fall into the risk categories that precede difficulties at the high school level. In all areas, the lack of District initiatives as described in more detail in the answer to question 20.

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for ongoing funding of the project, in the State of Ohio

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.

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

508,085.00 * 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, RTT 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.).

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.

40,365.00 * 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.

The recurring costs for this project occur only in the staffing of the E-Campus. For the administrative support, oversight of the campus will become an extension of an assigned duty overseeing current credit recovery options. There are no additional expenses as the software is already available at the Hamilton City Schools. For the E-Campus after hours, the E-Campus will be delivered remotely for an additional physical location costs as well. For teacher staffing, the plan is for 5 teachers to each provide 15 hours of support per hour, per the E-Campus campus after the initial grant investment is $40,365 in year one and $80,730 per year in five years (at the contractually negotiated rate of $23 per hour, including fringe benefits), totaling $40,365 in year one and $80,730 in years two through five.

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

1,596,660.00 * 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.).

As stated in Table 12, there are currently 230 students in the District who are lost annually due to expulsion or dropping out. By providing alternative learning options for these students through an E-Campus, the maximum savings that could be realized is $1,596,660 (230 students times $6942 per student in State Foundation money lost). This dollar amount represents resources that will be available to the District entity for instruction and education options, that would not otherwise be available if this innovative program were not implemented for these students. In the first several years of this project, it is unrealistic to expect that all of the students who are lost to expulsion and dropping out will be able to re-captured by the District. It is the goal of the E-Campus to operate in a fiscally prudent manner beginning with the first year of operations, with increasing participation and reduced costs the goal of each successive year. To that end, the District will aggressively promote the E-Campus option to students with the goal of serving at least 100 students, with a first year expected savings of $694,205. Over and above the 230 students who are highly at risk and stand to derive benefits from an E-Campus, there are an estimated 570 additional students who potentially could benefit through access to elective credits in courses that are unavailable. This will lead to savings from increased offerings that do not require a traditional classroom teacher. The small, short term investment of $144,800 for hardware and software costs that is sought from the Straight-A Fund has the potential to provide a savings in year one and an additional $653,835 in year two through five.

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.

The financial analysis, the E-Campus project is clearly financially sustainable. The money that the District would save as a result of the students remaining with the District would more than offset the staffing costs that are associated with such a dynamic educational option. More specifically, the yearly costs for the E-Campus after the initial grant investment is $40,365 in year one and $80,730 per year in five years (at the contractually negotiated rate of $23 per hour, including fringe benefits) which will result in a savings of $575,000 in years two through five. This does not include the offset of costs due to avoiding recovery each two through five years. The offset of costs due to avoiding recovery each two through five years will result in the District maintaining an almost 100% total savings on all instructional costs for the five years.

18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for 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

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* Narrative explanation

In this phase of the project, rules and parameters for the operation of the E-Campus will be developed, staff members will be identified, and contracts will be drawn up and executed for the hardware and software components of the E-Campus. A rigorous review of the professional literature related to online learning will be undertaken in order to identify both best practices as well as potential sources of difficulty. Major stakeholders involved in this phase will include the internal District contacts listed in application items 4 - 6, current credit recovery teachers, school counselors, secondary
principals, the Board of Education, and potential E-Campus students and their families. The major derailment points could include delays due to the short turnaround time between the planning and implementation phases. To mitigate the potential for delays, work will be undertaken in the fall of 2013 to identify potential hardware vendors and staff members, and to lay out the scope of work in a manner that the E-Campus infrastructure should be awarded a grant on December 17, 2013. The District is willing to engage in speculative groundwork prior to award notification given the strong belief and enthusiasm that the District has for this project.


*Narrative explanation

If this phase of the project, students who face the prospect of discipline via expulsion from school or those at risk for dropping out will be enrolled in on-line co and through the E-Campus. Students in need of credit recovery courses will have the opportunity to enroll in courses through the E-Campus. Finally, students seeking access to elective credits or courses not currently offered at Hamilton High School will have the opportunity to enroll in courses through the E-Campus. Communication will be occurring with parents and students who are partaking in opportunities at the E-Campus, as well as those students in need of population from the regular E-Campus. This mix of face to face contact, online visits through mailings, telephones, social media, and progress updates will that leverage existing District digital properties. Again, given the quick turnaround from planning to implementation, the largest barrier will be the new quick learning curve that occurs with new initiatives. To that end, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction will be providing regular project oversight and will provide ongoing support, guidance, and leadership to the E-Campus project team. Another important barrier is the potential difficulty that the targets students may have in utilizing the online tool. To mitigate this barrier, the E-Campus design has been influenced by lessons learned from earlier credit recovery phases, and will include the critical presence of a certified teacher that will help students overcome difficulties associated with online learning.

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 6/1/2014 to 8/1/2014

*Narrative explanation

In this phase of the project, data from the initial rollout of the E-Campus will be evaluated, and planning will occur for the full first year of implementation. Communication of findings will occur with the Board of Education as well as with the community through the release of a comprehensive phase one impact report. This report will look at the number of students served, courses completed, credits earned, diplomas received, and applicable standardized test scores of E-Campus participants. The financial and academic impact of the program, the lessons learned from the first phase of implementation, and expansion plans for original credit courses as will be all covered in the year end report.

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

The straight line has arrived at a pivotal development point in the E-Learning evolution of the District. Over the last 15 months, the District has piloted the first three phases in the E-Campus development project. Phase one included a limited in-place credit recovery program for students at Hamilton Free School. The learning about delivery and support structures from phase one were invaluable as an early learning tool on what works in a credit recovery environment. Insights gained from phase one had an influence on the second phase of this project, which was the re-design of the new 4 year percentage is 82.5 and the 5 year success will be gauged on the blended learning credits earned, diplomas received, and applicable standardized test scores of E-Campus participants. The financial and academic impact of the program, the lessons learned from the first phase of implementation, and expansion plans for original credit courses as will be all covered in the year end report.

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

YES

22. If so, how?

The findings from the E-Campus initiative will allow other districts to replicate an E-Campus concept by utilizing successful practices that are identified through the implementation of this project. Districts will be able to mirror the blended delivery, credit recovery and on-line learning models by using the data and insights that the District will freely make available. It is our intention to provide leadership and support to other districts that desire to implement an E-Campus model. During the 2012-2013 school year, the District was one of ten in the State of Ohio chosen to be a part of the Student Growth Model (SGM) pilot. The same approach to sharing and outreach from the SGM pilot will be taken with the E-Campus project. It is the belief of the District that best practices are only ‘best’ if they can be shared with and used by others. It is the goal of the District to be a leader in providing and delivering e-learning tools that meet the needs of all students, and our E-Campus will be deemed a complete success only if the model can be used by other districts as well.

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

The E-Campus project will provide the valuable impact in the following areas: 1. A consistent platform that will provide equal access to on-line learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities. 2. Credit recovery options for students who find themselves in credit deficient situations. 3. On-going alternative learning opportunities for students who are subject to discipline and who would otherwise have their education interrupted. 4. Increased graduation and student retention rates due to the variety of educational choices and options that an E-Campus can provide. 5. Blended learning options for students with unique curricular and learning interests. 6. Improved graduation and dropout rates will be kept and analyzed yearly. The E-Campus will be considered successful in part by a steady rise in graduation rates and an inverse reduction in dropout rates. 7. Blended learning options for students with unique curricular interests and learning needs. 10. Yearly data will be tracked on the number of students who take advantage of a blended-learning school.

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.

Within 5 years, the District aims to have the 4 and 5 year graduation rate above 90%, which would equal to at least a grade of B on the local report card. The current 4 year percentage is 82.5 and the 5 year percentage is 82.5, which equals to a ‘F’ and ‘C’ respectively. The implementation of an E-Campus will have a substantial impact on the ability of the District to realize this goal. For the class of 2012, 220 students failed to earn a diploma due to dropping out or being expelled. The increase in options available to these students through E-Campus services would seek to reduce this number by a minimum of 50% within five years. At the moment, no student has the option to experience a blended learning day as part of their high school experience. An anticipated outcome is that students will have the opportunity to take part of the day online, and the experience the rest of our coursework in a traditional setting. For example, a student could take their core courses online, and then have the time available to enroll in multiple fine arts electives that would otherwise be unavailable within the confines of a traditional school day. Within 5 years, it is the goal to have every student take at least one online class through the E-Campus as part of a part of their graduation requirements. This goal is in alignment with the fact that it’s impactivity to college and career readiness. Hamilton in the completion rate of post-secondary programs is less than the national average. The District seeks to provide learning opportunities to students that will help them to be successful both in high school and in learning opportunities after high school.

25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact, 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).

The five value items from item 23 above will be measured in the following ways: 1. A consistent platform that will provide equal access to on-line learning opportunities for all students, regardless of the building they attend: 2. An enrollment dashboard will be developed and utilized to track online learning enrollment and course success data for students enrolled in the E-Campus. Within the proposed model, if E-Campus is as successful as anticipated, it will allow the District to track the success of the system, and the retentions of students who prevent students from being enrolled in online courses as needs dictate. The online dashboard will allow for monitoring of trends and remediation of enrollment abnormalities. 3. Credit recovery options for students who find themselves in credit deficient situations. 4. Yearly reports of credit deficient students will be generated, and the percentage of students who fail credit math games through the E-Campus hub will be tracked. The long term goal is to remediate credit deficiencies within one year of their occurrence through the leveraging of the E-Campus hub. 5. On-going alternative learning opportunities for students who are subject to discipline and who would otherwise have their education interrupted. 6. As stated earlier, Hamilton has an issue as an urban District with students who have their education disrupted as a result of discipline proceedings that result in expulsion from school. Data will be tracked from student services on the number of students who are in need of an alternate educational placement, and the goal within 5 years will be to reduce the number of students who are expelled or continue their education, as they will be able to do so from their home school and during an alternative time frame. 7. Increased graduation and student retention rates due to the variety of educational choices and options that an E-Campus can provide. 8. Students in the 21st century need educational choice. Yearly satisfaction surveys will be created and utilized to measure levels of contentment with the variety of programs being offered. Metrics on graduation and dropout rates will be kept and analyzed yearly. The E-Campus will be considered successful in part by a steady rise in graduation rates and an inverse reduction in dropout rates. 9. Blended learning options for students with unique curricular interests and learning needs. 10. Yearly data will be tracked on the number of students who take advantage of a blended-learning school.

The goal is to grow this option to allow for students to have maximum flexibility to enroll in the disciplines of their choice (eg. a fine arts or career tech education-centric schedule). Success will be gauged...
not only by the increase in participation over time, but also from survey data that indicates 100% of the students are aware of the blended-learning option. All of the metrics in items 1 - 5 allow for comprehensive data collection and examination. For each area there will be early warning indicators that will prompt specific program review processes to take place. For example, if it is determined that students from the 4th ward are underrepresented in after school E-Campus enrichment activities (from item 5), specific marketing and outreach strategies can immediately be deployed to raise awareness and student participation. If, through data analysis, the District finds that students are not taking advantage of blended learning opportunities due to an information deficit (from item 3), then communication and outreach protocols can be altered to raise program awareness.

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  Chad Konkle, Administrator for Business and Planning Hamilton City School District 10/24/2003