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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00

Remaining: -9,096,100.00
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.

1. Project Title: Mahoning Valley Academic Cloud (the MAC)

B) PROJECT DESCRIPTION

I. Introduction (background and project definition)

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.

II. Detailed description of project

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.

III. Project rationale

Reference the obstacles to successful blended learning in the classroom by providing access for all students, quality curriculum, and professional development for educators.

IV. Applicant information

1. Applicant Name: [Applicant Name]

V. Applicant contact information

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):

V. Applicant contact information

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

VI. Applicant information

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.

VII. Applicant contact information

9. Which of the stated Straight A Fund goals does the proposed project aim to achieve? - (Check all that apply)

B. Student achievement

C. Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast

D. Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

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

F. New - never before implemented

VIII. Applicant contact information

10. Which of the following best describes the proposed project? - (Select one)

B. Student achievement

C. Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast

D. Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

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

F. New - never before implemented
11. Describe the innovative project.

The Mahoning Academic Cloud (MAC) is a unique concept that allows all school districts in the region to access high-quality teachers to instruct in a blended environment regardless of where they work or live. Currently, school districts have reduced opportunities for students by eliminating electives that cannot be sustained financially. Students, by virtue of their residence, are limited in opportunities for Advanced Placement and college-level courses and are not exposed to any opportunities for teachers to use their students inside and outside of the traditional classroom. The MAC allows districts and families to access qualified educators that provide access to a course and eliminates the need for students to be prisoners of their current school. The MAC also creates a new resource for school districts. The MAC allows all students in the region to gain experience with this essential skill.

12. Describe how it will meet the goal(s) selected above.

purchases, ceasing contracts with software vendors and retaining students who would otherwise leave for online alternatives. It is projected that there will be ongoing costs in content and data plans for students. Districts are forced to conduct courses that have a limited number of students in them in order to retain students in the districts. Many are also limited in the amount of credit recovery courses they are able to offer. districts will no longer need to purchase additional software for intervention nor purchase textbooks. Finally, districts will no longer need additional software for intervention nor purchase textbooks. The MAC allows districts to retain students and cut some of the expected savings that may result from the implementation of the innovative project.

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 consortium 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.

NA

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

9,096,100.00 * 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 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.

655,000.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details of the costs 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.

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

600,919.60 * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

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

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 may 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 MAC is projected to sustain itself in the future because of course and data plans. The cost is fixed for both in the five-year grant period. After the first five years the districts will spend $10.00 per student, per year for the cost. Using the projected savings and the cost of the cost in reducing need cost for new teachers or teachers who wish to review the techniques for successful blended learning tools, and creates a new resource for school districts. The MAC allows districts and families to access qualified educators that provide access to a course and eliminates the need for students to be prisoners of their current school. The MAC also creates a new resource for school districts. The MAC allows all students in the region to gain experience with this essential skill.

D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning

The MAC is projected to sustain itself in the future because of course and data plans. The cost is fixed for both in the five-year grant period. After the first five years the districts will spend $10.00 per student, per year for the cost. Using the projected savings and the cost of the cost in reducing need cost for new teachers or teachers who wish to review the techniques for successful blended learning tools, and creates a new resource for school districts. The MAC allows districts and families to access qualified educators that provide access to a course and eliminates the need for students to be prisoners of their current school. The MAC also creates a new resource for school districts. The MAC allows all students in the region to gain experience with this essential skill.
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 project was developed.

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

- Proposal Timeline Dates

Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 01/30/2014
- Narrative explanation

1. Upon receipt of the grant, an advisory committee will be appointed. This advisory committee will work to counteract an identified barrier to the success of the project, communication. This committee will meet quarterly and ensure that all parts of the grant are being fulfilled with fidelity.

2. Contracts will be secured with internet providers and with Aventa for course content.

3. Professional development will occur for teachers of the blended learning courses. Districts will purchase the equipment needed for the successful implementation of blended learning.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 09/04/2014
- Narrative explanation

1. Teachers will begin implementation of blended learning courses. This will continue through the five years of the grant.

2. Blended learning coaches will provide job-embedded professional development for teachers during year 1 of the grant.

3. Professional development will be digitally recorded and made into a virtual course so that future teachers of blended learning courses will have access to the professional development in perpetuity.

4. The Academic Cloud will be created and hosted on the MCCTC server. Communication regarding the progress of the grant will occur monthly through the five years of the grant at Mahoning County Superintendents' meetings.

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

This grant seeks to change the instructional practices in all districts through expanding multiple ways to deliver instruction to students. It will provide blended online courses and dual credit options for every student who wished to take advantage of the opportunities. Students will matriculate at their own pace with individualized online options. Classes in school districts will have a combination of online and physical students ensuring courses not normally offered will be sustained by allowing students in the county to fill the seats virtually using the MAC. Teachers have expanded opportunities to create and offer courses using the MAC. School districts will use the MAC to assist students who need additional assistance courses by accessing teachers in the cloud in an online environment. Students will choose a stay in school districts and not choose online options because rich online options will exist in their resident school district. Time will be flexible and learning will be the constant. The normal constraints of traditional school will be eliminated. There will be the opportunity for mid-term graduations for those ready to move to the college environment along with an increase in students who will achieve college credit prior to graduating from high school. Educational professionals will have more opportunities to create and offer courses using the MAC. In doing so faculty will evolve as next generation educators. Just as it is essential that students experience online learning as an essential 21st Century skill, educators will develop the essential skill of online delivery of instruction. Subsequently, the more experience they have in an online environment, the larger the pool of the content and delivery high school bridge the gap from high school to college level coursework. With the implementation of Ohio's New Learning Standards and the Next Generation of Assessments, student experience to academic content at the college level ensures success with both relativities. A partnership with Youngstown State University (YSU) will facilitate the development and delivery of online dual credit options based on Quality Matters Standards. This grant will show a marked increase in collaboration districts along with increased sharing of precious resources. Each district ability to provide rich online content, coupled with savings, will reduce the need for schools to ask voters for additional levy funds.

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.

In an upcoming publication on distance education, Graham (2013) maintains that the most effective form of distance education takes the form of a blended model of delivery. Market analysts suggest that the option of self-paced learning is projected to increase by 28% annually, with the largest segment of learners being pre-K to 12th grade (Nagel, 2011; Picciano et al., 2011). A 2010 U.S. Department of Education (USDE) study concludes that online learning, and specifically e-learning that includes a blended delivery, is effective for postsecondary students (USDE, 2010). Blended delivery is most commonly defined as the delivery that occurs when students experience a combination of face-to-face (in person) time as well as online time with the instructor and instruction. With this type of delivery, students are able to take more responsibility for their educational progress, while reducing the seat-time requirements of the brick and mortar classroom (Graham, 2013). The USDA study concluded that students who took “blended” courses – that combine elements of online learning and face-to-face instruction – demonstrated the greatest gains in learning (USDE, 2010). Researchers suggest that these outcomes are likely due to increased time on task and engagement with course information on the part of the students. Looking more closely at the available research on online instruction for K-12 student populations, only one study cited by the U.S. Department of Education (2010) research found that students receiving face-to-face instruction outperformed their blended-curriculum peers (Rockman, et al., 2007). The Rockman et al. investigation looked specifically at the efficacy of online instruction for a 7th and 8th grade Spanish class. Contrasting these findings, four other studies found that middle school students who received a certain intervention showed a larger impact on student learning for post-secondary students (undergraduates). It also suggests that the five studies on the efficacy of online instruction, four of which included blended instruction, provide promise for this delivery modality in the pre-K to 12th grade curriculum. The proposed development of the blended curriculum will be used to facilitate positive student outcomes and student preparation for post-secondary education by: 1. Offering courses not otherwise available at the school; 2. Meeting the needs of specific groups of students; 3. Offering Advanced Placement or college-level courses. 4. Redefining scheduling conflicts for students and 5. Allowing students who failed a course to take it again (Picciano & Seaman, 2007, p. 9) A blended approach feeds the academic curiosity of students who needed something beyond the traditional curriculum.

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

- Yes

22. If so, how?

The MAC would serve as a model for an Academic Cloud for other districts or for the entire state of Ohio. Through this state-wide Cloud, districts would be able to pool resources statewide to provide access and resources to all Ohio high school students. The MAC is a flexible and self-paced model designed to provide the unique learning opportunities to all students. If Ohio is able to create an academic Cloud, all of Ohio’s students would have access to high-quality, rich and limitless curriculum delivered in a blended environment. All students would have the experience in an online environment and able to obtain college credit, have limitless access to course offerings, and access to additional assistance for struggling students. Teachers would have new ways to create income as they would become independent contractors that are hired based on performance and the quality and worth of the courses offered. The project is implemented, a handbook for designing and implementing an Academic Cloud will be created with concrete examples of obstacles coupled with solutions.
23. Describe the substantial value and lasting impact that the project hopes to achieve.

The MAC will change the way students in the county access curriculum and increase the overall opportunity for learning. Students will have the option to work not just in the confines of the school day but anywhere, at any time. This project will achieve delivery of individualized on-demand learning for all students in the county. Many students will benefit from increased college-level coursework while others will benefit with a more individualized approach to help enhance their learning. By removing the obstacles to blended learning for teachers, classes will become more interactive and teachers will become facilitators of content, not the deliverers of content. Districts will become more efficient in the usage of teacher resources filling classes that are not normally filled to capacity, many courses that are at higher levels and provide opportunities for college-level work. Additionally, this changes a paradigm of how teachers are paid for services. In the Mahoning Academic Cloud, if the class is offered outside the contracted day it could be for payment of services rendered. This changes the teacher to independent contractor with students and parents making the choice to take a course offered in the cloud. If a parent needs a tutor for his/her child, he/she could access the cloud for services.

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.

The project will improve student achievement in the county. The proposed development of the blended curriculum using the MAC will be used to facilitate positive student outcomes and student preparation for post-secondary education by: 1. offering courses not otherwise available at the school; 2. meeting the needs of specific groups of students; 3. offering Advanced Placement or college-level courses; 4. reducing scheduling conflicts for students; and 5. permitting students who failed a course to take it again. (Picciano & Seaman, 2007, p. 9) A blended approach will feed the academic curiosity of students who needed something beyond the traditional curriculum. Additionally, with a substantial cost savings for districts, not only is this project but its self-sustaining capability, it reduces each district's five-year forecast by gaining efficiency and increased sharing of resources. Most importantly, with the savings this grant will have increased greatly the resources available to all students in the classroom.

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

Academic Achievement: Existing data will serve as a baseline for all measures of change in academic achievement. Specifically, changes in academic achievement will be evaluated according to impact on academic achievement, program usage, fidelity, and overall outcomes. Academic achievement impact will include: 1. Changes in academic achievement will be evaluated for all existing students in particular grade levels across the three topologies, i.e., across all second graders in the urban settings, etc. This will include but not be limited to examining the high stakes scores of students who participate in the online environment relative to students who do not, as well as incorporate the usage level differences on academic achievement gains (dosage impact); 2. Changes in academic achievement will be evaluated for all re-entering students as described above. This will include but not be limited to examining the high stakes scores of students who participate in the online environment relative to students who do not, as well as incorporate the usage level differences on academic achievement gains (dosage impact); 3. Changes in academic achievement will be evaluated for all high school students taking college level coursework in the online environment. This will include but not be limited to examining the ACT scores of students who participate in the online environment relative to students who do not, as well as incorporate the usage level differences on academic achievement gains (dosage impact). 4. College entry and first year college achievement will be tracked for students matriculating from the high school to the YSU university system. This will be assessed across those students who participated in online dual enrollment coursework, relative to those who did not. Student retention, academic success, and completion of the first year of college will be tracked. 5. Changes in teacher evaluations will be assessed from baseline through year five, for those who participate in the online development and delivery of online curriculum. 6. Changes in teacher evaluations will be assessed from baseline through year five, for all teachers engaged in the online delivery environment, based on dosage of participation in professional development. Program Outcomes: Overall program outcomes will be assessed in an effort to understand how the MAC has not only impacted the student achievement across the Mahoning Valley Region, but in an effort to support the dissemination of all project components to educators across the State of Ohio. A good deal of time will be spent outlining various aspects of the online learning environment, the program impact, usage and fidelity, but will also include details as to procedures and obstacles identified and resolved during each formative term of the five year proposed project. This Program Outcome report will be rolled out three months after the close of each academic year, and summatively at the end of the grant period. All data will be evaluated both formatively (mid-term) and summatively (end of year) during each year of the grant activities. Dr. Karen Larwin, a quantitative methodologist and nationally recognized program evaluator will provide guidance for the data collection, program impact, program fidelity, and program usage for the five year grant period. Dr. Larwin will work in partnership with the MCESC and the MAC Council to provide regular updates on the progress of the MAC implementation and evaluation including suggesting mid-course corrections if needed. The evaluator's approach is best described as a CIPP model of evaluation (Stufflebeam, 1999). CIPP is a holistic evaluation approach that examines the context, inputs, processes and products (outcomes) of all activities and initiatives. Through this approach, the goals, resources, implementation and outcomes of the MAC its impact on the education of K-16 students in the Mahoning Valley.

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.

ACCEPT Dr. Roan Craig Mahoning County Career and Technical Center (MCCTC) Superintendent of Schools for the MCCTC October 23, 2013