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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00

Remaining: -313,650.00
The education technology company Zulama and faculty at Carnegie Mellon University worked together to develop a turnkey blended learning program that has been implemented with great success in a handful of schools in Western PA. The district team is comprised of teaching staff, administration, and community stakeholders. There will be a designated staff member for this program working directly with administration and the technology department for implementation of the curriculum from year to year. Zulama’s team is comprised of innovative professionals with extensive backgrounds in education, from teaching to instructional design to educational product development. On the surface, our program teaches critical hard and soft skills to high school students. The underlying “secret sauce” is how our blended learning program improves teaching practices using project-based learning and game-based learning. We give teachers the training and support they need to be mentor-facilitators. Zulama has an ever-growing list of not only satisfied but enthusiastic customers and high-profile stakeholders. Some of the most innovative administrators, principals, and teachers in public education are working with Zulama. Zulama’s staff has already implemented the program in other U.S. school districts, and will provide all necessary services and support to implement the program at MEYSD.

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

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

- 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

- New - never before implemented

11. Describe the innovative project.

Mechanicsburg struggles with: Too many disengaged students. Competition from cyber and charter schools. Limited sources of curriculum for leading-edge topics. Our goals are to: Re-engage our students as critical thinkers. Compete with other school choices. Build a curriculum relevant to today and tomorrow’s) job market. Keep pace with the future of learning. The most sought after jobs aren’t only doctors and lawyers anymore. Today, students are interested in becoming game designers and software developers. We need to prepare students for careers that we cannot yet imagine.

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.

Student achievement: Zulama’s Entertainment Technology Academy was created by educators at Carnegie Mellon University’s Entertainment Technology Center. It gives high schoolers experience with problem solving and thinking creatively-skills they need to earn jobs in a digital world. The program consists of eight semester-long courses that contain between 70 and 80 lessons and activities, which is equal to half a Carnegie Unit. The content is delivered through an online platform into classrooms, but students participate in hands-on, project-based activities and assignments. This blended learning
approach combines the best of both online and real-world learning. The Foundations course is titled Games Through the Ages. Once completed, students self-select into one or more Skills courses, such as Game Programming, Modern Storytelling, Game Design, 3D Modeling (Digital Art), and Mobile App and Game Design. In the two Studio courses, Game Production Studio and Real-World Project, students work on course-specific capstone projects. Each course includes -Online and offline activities -Hands-on, project-based learning -Online research projects such as WebQuests -Formatative and authentic assessments The content integrates photos, video, audio, animations, and web links for a rich multimedia experience. No textbooks are required. Learning Outcomes: -Skills defined in the Common Core State Standards -High level critical thinking skills as defined by Bloom's Taxonomy and Depth of Knowledge Levels -21st Century Skills such as: -Creativity and Innovation -Media Literacy -Initiative and Self-Direction -Proactivity and Accountability -Leadership and Responsibility -Collaboration and Communication Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom means increasing the percentage of school funding that goes to the classroom as opposed to administration, maintenance, facilities, etc. With the reduction of an expensive, facility-intensive program (industrial technology) and replacing it with this program, the one time license fee allows for the direction of more funds directly to the classroom rather than being consumed by maintenance or salaries. Reductions in personnel have been achieved among existing staff and that of a less senior new position. The reduced position will save the district $39210.00 in FY 15. The Impact Table uses the Five year forecast information from May of 2013. However, the district has made significant reductions in spending as a result of health insurance changes in August of this year. The October Five year forecast submission shows the district in a significantly better financial position.

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for continued 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.

NA

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

313,650.00 * Total project cost

* Provide a brief narrative explanation of how the project is self-sustaining.

Program cost ($150,000): Zulama's standard pricing for a district the size of MEVSOS is $5,000 for an unlimited site license for the introductory period, and $25,000 for an unlimited site license per year. To recognize the one-time opportunity to help establish Zulama's Entertainment Technology Academy program in Ohio as part of a Straight A Fund grant, Zulama offers a special pricing structure. We will grant a permanent unlimited site license for a set fee of $185,000, with no recurring costs or maintenance fees.

Research cost ($35,250): Researchers Aubrecht and Ballenger-Morris's time is allocated as follows: -Work related to data and analysis -14 days -Interviews, data gathering -9 days -Planning -10 days -Research for 18 days -33 days of Aubrecht/Ballengee research time @ $750/day -24,750 -data analysis (Esswein) = $7,000 -transcription = $3,500 Total = $33,500 Teaching and in-service costs ($1,500): Standard rate for teacher and administrative training time, substitutes and daily rate reimbursement. Retrofitting Lab ($80,000): Redesigning the classroom to include think tank learning pods, 15 individual learning stations, furniture, and upgrading technology for project based learning. Support services for installation ($7000) Classroom materials for gaming courses ($2,000) Hardware upgrades to support specific software ($20,000)

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

50,000.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

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

By granting a one-time permanent license, Zulama waives subsequent licensing or maintenance fees that are normally associated with our standard pricing (regularly $25,000 per year).

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

60,000.00 * 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).

Since the 2009/10 school year, the district has lost approximately $436,000 in student revenue as a result of declining enrollment. Mechanicsburg will be able to estimate a positive financial effect resulting from replacing a more expensive program (industrial technology) with Zulama. Mechanicsburg's teachers and administrators will train teachers in other districts, a service that Zulama will pay approx $600 per training day. Using MEVSOS teachers for training will reduce travel costs for future customers. In addition, MEVSOS teachers will be more qualified than Zulama's trainers to help regionalize and customize Zulama's program for other Ohio districts.

The Impact Table uses the Five year forecast information from May of 2013. However, the district has made significant reductions in spending as a result of health insurance changes in August of this year. The October Five year forecast submission shows the district in a significantly better financial position, realizing a true financial impact from the project.

D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning

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.

Mechanicsburg will be reducing a long standing program (Industrial Technology) in order to offer Zulama to students. The district is committing IT and teaching support to this project. Though a teacher will be assigned to the program, cost savings will result from the reduction of personnel from the high tech course and hiring of a teacher with less seniority. Mechanicsburg will partner with Zulama to conduct teacher training for the curriculum. Hence, Zulama can use Mechanicsburg as a demonstration school long term. The district is exploring the creation of a District Learning Center, focused on providing PD to area districts in technology related areas. Zulama training is a perfect compliment to the district's vision for sharing services and sustaining programs through services to other stakeholders. The lifetime license provided as a main component of the grant, allows the district to increase enrollment, train teachers through the train the trainer component, and continue the use of the software without maintenance fees. Student course fees will offset additional program material costs that will occur in subsequent years.

18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for 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 to positively impact students.

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): 01/01/2014

* Narrative explanation

[Planning, Baseline Research, Teacher Training: 1/14 - 6/14 Includes: -Identifying and training teacher(s) -Identifying and scheduling students -Raising awareness among students, teachers, parents, school administration, and board members -Meeting software/hardware and materials requirements a) Identifying and training teachers: Teaching the Foundations course (Games Through the Ages) does not require specific subject area expertise. Currently, teachers with English, social studies, art, math, programming, and science credentials are all successfully teaching this course in other districts. Our administration will ensure that faculty will have time for training and time in their scheduled to teach the course(s). Mechanicsburg is replacing Industrial Technology with the Entertainment Technology courses that more directly align with that is relevant and engaging to today's students. The district will commit IT and teaching support to this project. Though a teacher will be assigned to the program, cost savings will result from the reduction of the high tech course and hiring of a teacher with less seniority. Mechanicsburg will partner with Zulama to conduct teacher training for the curriculum. Hence, Zulama can use Mechanicsburg as a demonstration school long term. The district is exploring the creation of a District Learning Center, focused on providing PD to area districts in technology related areas. Zulama training is a perfect compliment to the district's vision for sharing services and sustaining programs through services to other stakeholders. The lifetime license provided as a main component of the grant, allows the district to increase enrollment, train teachers through the train the trainer component, and continue the use of the software without maintenance fees. Student course fees will offset additional program material costs that will occur in subsequent years.]

[Displaying posters -Distributing brochures/Presenting at Tech stroll -supplies/hardware/software: We will stock classrooms with required art supplies, hardware, and software. Stakeholders in the process include the implementation team, parents, board of education, and student groups. Barriers include scheduling conflicts and misinformation about content of courses. Those will be minimized by awareness building activities.]


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

This program will bring three instructional practices to Mechanicsburg: 1) Project-Based Learning, 2) Blended Learning, and 3) Game-Based Learning.

1) Project-Based Learning: The project is based on Project Based Learning (PBL), in which students go through an extended process of inquiry in response to a complex question, problem, or challenge. While allowing for some degree of student "voice and choice," rigorous projects are carefully planned, managed, and assessed to help students achieve important academic content and 21st Century Skills such as collaboration, communication, and critical thinking. Create high-quality, authentic products and presentations.* As educators continue to implement the Common Core State Standards, they must focus on engaging learning models. Through intentional design, project-based learning (PBL) not only teaches and assesses Common Core State Standards, but also naturally lends itself to the level of learning that the standards espouse.* - Andrew Miller - ASCD Faculty

2) Blended Learning: describes an educational system that contains multiple components. Blended learning, according to the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path and/or pace.*

3) Game-Based Learning: Blended learning implies that some type of technology is used for instruction, research, design, and/or communication. According to Digital Learning Now Smart Series (2013): Blended learning aiming at modernizing traditional teaching methodology. Zulama’s program helps teachers get comfortable with innovative and progressive techniques that engage their students. According to Jessica Trybus, Director of Education Technology Services at OSCEA (2017): "as high-engaging training we have to help teachers understand the rules and expectations for student behavior and the use of technology in the classroom. This is a very important part of the day."

* Dennis is a bright teenager who didn’t see the relevance of high school to life. He was not applying himself, and ended his freshman year with a .87 GPA. During his sophomore year, scheduling conflicts placed him into the newly-introduced Games Through The Ages class. During the semester he worked on teams with students that were not in his regular group of friends. They created and played ancient games such as Senet and Ur. He learned how different cultures used technology in their games, and became especially interested in complex strategy and story-based games. He enrolled in Modern Storytelling the following semester, and was surprised at how much he enjoyed writing screenplays. He is now interested in working in the media industry, writing and filmmaking. By the way, he hasn't missed a day of school this year, is pushing honor roll. In her sophomore year, Alyssa had an issue in her schedule and the only option that struck her interest was a brand new course called Game-Based Learning. The course turned out to be the unexpected catalyst for a 180-degree turn in her high school experience, kick-starting a sudden zeal for learning and a passion for game design—a career she hadn’t even considered before.

20. 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.

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20. 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.

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

22. If so, how?

Zulama’s Entertainment Technology Academy is commercially available on a yearly site license basis. Districts can easily implement the Academy by contacting Zulama and moving through their onboarding process. Zulama is an OESCA Business Partner, and is currently training staff at a number of ESC’s, including Hamilton, Jefferson, and Logan County, to provide teacher training and pre and post implementation support. Discounted group licenses are available to districts who purchase through their local ESC. As is the case with this learner constructing games, there is the ability to repurpose outdated and expensive programs and staff skills and subjects to introduce and sustain this support which sustains replication in a cost effective manner. This proposal includes a budget for student participants to attend Ohio conferences and raise the awareness of the program among Ohio districts. This is a commitment the district is making with its Partner Zulama after fulfilling the requirements of the project.

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

Implementing an Entertainment Technology will give our district a way to teach critical programming, art, and design skills. The program combines Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) with the Arts to give students not only the skills but also the creativity they need to thrive in the new global digital workplace. The district will be able to measure student enrollment in the Entertainment Technology program and the reductions in technology skill gaps as a result of the project. By working on projects together, they also develop "soft skills" such as collaboration and teamwork. In their Studio courses, students work on "real" projects for community businesses, nonprofits, and other organizations. For example, students in one district in Western PA are creating a tool to teach younger students in their district how to tell time.

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.

Mechanicsburg anticipates increased student enrollment as a result of demand to participate in the Entertainment Technology Academy. Increased student enrollment in learning and improved technology skills like computational thinking are shown to result in lower costs. Metrics that will be measured for benchmarking student achievement are increased resources in the classroom and reduced spending include student attendance -dropout rates -behavioral issues -changes in ADM numbers including open enrollment counts -teaching attitudes -parent/community perception of school/students -student use of the program:

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/01/2015

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

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

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

22. If so, how?

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Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/01/2015
investigate how project-based learning and game-based learning engages students and affect learning outcomes - determine if the program affects student behavior as measured by metrics such as drop-out rate, attendance, and behavioral problems. Research tasks include: - yearly summaries - writing an IRB through Ohio State University - interviewing students and teachers (qualitative) - observing teaching and students work (in class) (qualitative) - evaluating student work (qualitative) - evaluating statistical information from the school (quantitative) - a final report at the conclusion of the grant. A highly qualified team of researchers from The Ohio State University are available and have committed to conducting an impact study. Christine Ballengee-Morris is a professor of Art Education and former director of the American Indian Studies at The Ohio State University. She is the Founding Director of The Multicultural Center. She co-wrote a book, Interdisciplinary Approaches to Art Education in High School, published by the National Art Education Association. She is past president of the United States Society for Teaching through Art. Dr. Ballengee-Morris’s teaching experiences include fourteen years in the public school system, artist-in-residencies in the public schools, undergraduate and graduate level courses, and international teaching in Chile, Brazil, Australia, and Ireland. She is the recipient of the 2006 J. Eugene Grigsby, Jr Award for her commitment to diversity, 2007 Ziegfeld Award, for her service to diversity, and the 2008 National Art Education Association Higher Education Award-Western Division. - Michelle Aubrecht, History BA and Art Education MA, is a game-based learning specialist and researcher project coordinator. Michelle has been studying and researching American Indian issues and applying her knowledge of interactivity, social media, game theory, teaching with technology, and game based learning to the Earthworks Rising Project, an informal learning website and badge system. She has been the coordinator of the game-based learning conference track for OETC, Organization for Educational Technology and Curriculum for three years. - Jennifer Esswein holds a doctorate in quantitative educational evaluation and currently serves as Deputy Director of Accountability for the Tennessee Department of Education as part of her fellowship with Harvard University's Strategic Data Project. Prior to the fellowship, she worked in physics education while serving as evaluator for two Mathematics and Science Partnership grants. Data to be collected included student attendance records, numbers and types of behavioral issues, and enrollment statistics (increase or decrease). The formative outputs and outcomes and the systems in place to track the program's progress include pre and post tests/surveys/ with teachers and students to assess and determine data such as: - what they know coming into the program - expectations and preconceived ideas - ability to work in a group - abilities and expectations as related to stated program and course objectives - descriptions and testimonials about their work and experiences in the program - attitudes toward game design and design thinking - attitudes toward careers and higher education opportunities in STEAM fields. If measured progress is insufficient to meet program objectives, Zulama will provide additional teacher training and support at no extra cost. This training will be designed to address observed shortcomings.

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, Danielle Prohaska, Mechanicsburg Exempted Village School District, 60 High Street Mechanicsburg OH 43044