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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00
Remaining: -3,835,000.00
Application

Menlo Park Academy (000318) - Cuyahoga County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev II - Straight A Fund - Application Number (324)

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: Menlo Park Academy-Building a 21st Century Laboratory of Innovation and Excellence

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.

Since 2008, when Menlo Park Academy opened as a charter school for gifted and talented learners, a flourishing community that began with 38 students and now demonstrates successful growth with a student base of more than 350. The Menlo Park Academy: Building a 21st Century Laboratory of Innovation and Excellence builds on this successful growth by leveraging seed money from the Straight A Fund to create the optimal environment to elevate best practice in instruction and student support while enabling measurable growth in gifted learners. This project is sustainable through building on the proven, highly-effective and targets grant dollars to perfect a replicable program.

450. Total Students Impacted:

3. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:
First Name, Last Name of contact for lead applicant: Caroline Zito
Organizational name of lead applicant: Menlo Park Academy
Unique identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 000318
Address of lead applicant: 14440 Triskett Road Cleveland Ohio 44111
Phone number of lead applicant: 440 925 6365
Email address of lead applicant: caroline.zito@menloparkacademy.com

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:
First Name, Last Name of contact for lead applicant: Paige Baublitz-Watkins
Organizational name of lead applicant: Menlo Park Academy
Unique identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 000318
Address of lead applicant: 14440 Triskett Road Cleveland Ohio 44111
Phone number of lead applicant: 440 925 6365
Email address of lead applicant: paige.bw@menloparkacademy.com

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:
First Name, Last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Paige Baublitz-Watkins
Organizational name of secondary applicant: Menlo Park Academy
Unique identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 000318
Address of secondary applicant: 14440 Triskett Road Cleveland Ohio 44111
Phone number of secondary applicant: 440 925 6365
Email address of secondary applicant: caroline.zito@menloparkacademy.com

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.

Rei Harrison, Board Chairperson, Menlo Park Academy, 000318, 14440 Triskett Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44111, 440-925-6365; Rei.Harrison@menloparkacademy.com Dr. Sylvia Rimm, Director, Family Achievement Clinic Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, Cleveland Ohio, Tax ID: 54-1449580, sylviarimm@yahoo.com Dr. David Silverberg, President, Teach The World, LLC, Tax ID: 445921559, Adjunct Professor, Ashland University 1193 Bridgport Drive, Medina, OH 44256 (330) 988-2873, dave@teachtheworld.org Dr. Susan Rakow, Clinical Associate Professor of Curriculum and Development, and Dr. Sajit Zachariah, Dean of the College of Education, Cleveland State University, Tax ID: 54-1823724, 2121 Euclid Avenue, JH 210 Cleveland, Ohio 44115; 2121 Euclid Avenue, JH 210 Cleveland, Ohio 44115 1224 (216) 681-2000; s.rakow@csuohio.edu

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

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

UploadGrantApplicationAttachment.aspx

8. Please provide a brief description of the team or individuals responsible for the implementation of this project including relevant experience in other innovative projects. You should also include descriptions and experiences of partnering entities.

Page Baublitz-Watkins - Ms. Baublitz-Watkins has worked in education for twenty-two years. During that time she designed and implemented new special education units as well as gifted programming in a variety of public school districts. During a yearlong graduate assistantship in administration, Mrs. Baublitz-Watkins helped to open and administer International Baccalaureate (IB) programming at the campus International School at Cleveland State University. She has led student groups in national recognition through programs such as Disney Planet Challenge and NASA Long Distance Learning. Caroline Zito - Mrs. Zito is a certified school treasurer working in community school finance for 5 years. She has assisted in writing several grants, and has led implementation and compliance for the following competitive grants: Race to the Top (RtT) and SIG. Teri Harrison - Teri Harrison, MPA Founder and current Board Chair (2010 - present), has experience creating and managing the implementation of innovative projects such as the proposed “Menlo Park Academy: Building a 21st Century Laboratory of Innovation and Excellence”. As one of the original founders of Menlo Park Academy, she is driven and ambitious, as well as her ability to see the big picture and lead a team towards achieving that vision is remarkable. Her talents and collaborative style have allowed her to successfully lead teams of faculty members and parent volunteers on the continued development of our program and school community. Creative and thoughtful scheduling, resource utilization, and student groupings are just a few of her ideas that have helped shape MPA into the excellent model it is today. Dr. Sylvia Rimm - Dr. Rimm has guided families in raising their gifted children for more than 30 years. NBC’s Today show used her as a parenting consultant for 9 years and she advised parents and educators on national public radio for 15 years. Her innovative ideas for guiding parents and teachers have literally inspired thousands of gifted children to learn to their potential and find careers where they could contribute to making our world a better place. Dr. David Silverberg - Teach The World, LLC, is an educational consulting firm that contracts with schools, universities, and non-profit organizations to deliver high-quality professional development and program evaluation services. Dr. David Silverberg is president of this company as well as an adjunct professor at Ashland University’s Founders College of Continuing Education. Dr. Silverberg works with school districts across Ohio conducting K-12 Curriculum Audits and facilitating the implementation of new Teacher Evaluation programs. He has his doctorate in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy form Pepperdine University (CA) and will be releasing his new book (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers) and documentary (Choices, Inc.) on the topic of Teacher Evaluation in the spring. Dr. Susan Rakow - Dr. Susan Rakow was a teacher of the gifted and gifted program coordinator for over twenty years in a public school district. Dr. Rakow is the author of “Teaching to the Top” (NMSA) and “Educating Gifted Students in Middle School: A Practical Guide” as well as numerous articles in education publications. In addition to being a frequent presenter at state and national gifted conferences, she has collaborated with schools and districts across Ohio on designing and differentiating curriculum and instruction or gifted and gifted advanced learners. She designed, implemented, and taught a multi-age multi-disciplinary gifted program for grades 6-8.

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

9. Which of the stated Straight A Fund goals does the proposal aim to achieve? - (Check all that apply)
   - Student achievement
   - Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast
   - Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

10. Which of the following best describes the proposed project? - (Select one)
   - New - never before implemented
   - Existing and researched-based - never implemented in your district or community school but proven successful in other educational environments
   - Mixed Concept - incorporates new and existing elements
   - Enhancing/Scale Up - elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school, or consortia partnership

11. Describe the innovative project.

This innovative project provides deep learning opportunities for students with high cognitive abilities. As the only community school exclusively serving the needs of gifted learners in Ohio, we are uniquely

2000 s.rakow@csuohio.edu
positioned to create a model that can be replicated throughout the state. Our students are identified as gifted using the measures defined by the Ohio Department of Education. At Menlo Park Academy (MPA), we implement gifted education strategies on a daily basis. Acceleration, Ability Grouping, Compacting, and Differentiation are critical methodologies to our program. MPA proposes the refinement of our current rigorous curriculum which is built on traditional learning. Gaining the opportunity to participate in real world work in STEM areas as well as performance/arts studio, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, service learning, and sustainable “green” initiatives. 2. Unique Learning Spaces—Utilizing MPA’s flexible scheduling model, which provides accelerated, ability-based instruction across grade levels, and enhancing it with spaces that can be easily reconfigured for multiple uses and age groups throughout an instructional day, week, or year to expand targeted resources and optimize student growth. These unique learning spaces will facilitate flexible grouping and appropriate rigor at all grade levels. Technology, laboratory and studio spaces will be designed that are not only physically adaptable to varying class size but equipped to meet a wide range of academic capacity as well. Learning spaces will not be “one size fits all” but dynamic environments for accelerative experiences. 3. External Partnerships—A key element of this process is continued nurturing of partnerships with organizations such as Cleveland State University, the CSU Community College, MPRP, the Cleveland Science Center, Great Lakes Science Center and off-campus partners such as Cleveland Museum of Art,案 example, the Cleveland Museum of Art would benefit by offering unique programing and field trips that would impact the students’ learning experiences. The proposed MPA model would provide students with accelerated and enriched offerings with competent mentors. For example, a 1st grade student with a proclivity for the arts would have courses integrated into the curriculum that incorporate artistic expression. A middle school student interested in the medical field may have core classes woven around that theme with opportunities for aligned field trips, contests, in-house programs and activities that have become an integral part of our school culture. The school has put in place innovative, customized programming that encourages gifted students to thrive. A key element of this process is continued nurturing of partnerships with organizations such as Cleveland State University, Cleveland Regional Science Park, Great Lakes Science Center and off-campus partners such as Cleveland Museum of Art, Case Western Reserve University, and Dr. Susan Rakow, Clinical Associate Professor of Curriculum and Foundations at Cleveland State University. These partnerships will help MPA support the whole child as well as twice-exceptional learners. Together we will create student-centered learning environments that will build intrinsic motivation to push harder and farther because learning is designed to individual strengths as well as interests. We believe that receiving this grant will help us to establish many of the necessary connections that will elevate us from “only gifted community school in the state” to “premier gifted program in the state.” Unique learning spaces will also provide the opportunity for paths of deep learning, engaging student potential beyond traditional theory and numeracy. Movable furniture and technology, lab spaces accessible by varying student ages, spaces designed to increase collaboration or focused individual work would create an environment conducive to flexible-performance interest based instruction. These practices can be easily replicated by others through analysis of our evaluation tools as well as provision of detailed program delivery standards that MPA is committed to creating. In this way, Menlo Park Academy has the potential to turn value-added around the gifted and talented learner, to identify the potential for gifted education programs, and to create/offer programs that would benefit both the student and the environment. In some cases, these classes would be certified as AP classes and earn dual credits which would benefit for our students, adjustable sinks and washbasins would promote interactive science labs for our younger student body, and sensory furniture that would allow our twice exceptional students the comfort they require while engaging in STEM activities that demand deep concentration. Such places (for example, Breton's Labs) can typically cost as much as $40,000 each.

C) SUSTAINABILITY

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.

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

3,971,000.00  Total project cost

* Provide a brief narrative highlighting the budget used. 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, corporate sponsorships, 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.

34,000.00  * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

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

0.00  * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

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

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details on the cost of items included in the budget (i.e. staff costs and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.). If there are no new/recurring costs, please explain why.

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

3,971,000.00  Total project cost

* Provide a brief narrative of the budget used. 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, corporate sponsorships, etc.).

19. What are expected savings that may result from the implementation of the innovative project?

0.00  * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

* Provide details on the anticipated savings (i.e. staff costs and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.).

20. Is MPA anticipating that, upon completion of this funding, there will be a savings of approximately $100,000 per year in facility lease costs. MPA pledges to use $34,000 annually of these savings to continue the important work of the grant with its support purchased services partners. The balance of the savings would be used to pay for anticipated increased utility costs (estimated at $50,000 per year) and the creation of a property maintenance fund to manage maintenance costs of this larger facility ($25,000 per year).
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 plan with the project as implemented. (Stakeholders can include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

**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, changing reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast or utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom.

The dilemma that many school districts face across the state is how to grow the intellectual capacity and talent level of our future graduates. Menlo Park Academy offers a unique opportunity to study the impact of intensive personalized learning opportunities that are grounded in educational best practices. Research in this area clearly demonstrates that "highly talented students profit greatly from work in accelerated classes and out-perform non-accelerates by an average of one full year." In addition "curriculum designed to broaden and deepen their learning outcomes... by four to five months."(Kulik, James. An analysis of the Research on Ability Grouping... National Research Document. The proposed instructional model would build on the research-based factors known to demonstrate growth in gifted education environments, scheduling and pacing, fixed and in-depth learning opportunities geared to data-driven student needs is an innovative strategy for success. Not only will Menlo Park Academy be able to demonstrate student achievement but the mobile, multi-use layout of learning spaces will allow for a greater share of resources to be distributed among grades levels.

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

**Yes**

22. If so, how?

Yes, this project is able to be replicated. It provides optimal use of flexible spaces based grouping, innovative spaces for cross curricular and grade level instruction, and establishment of high quality learning environments. Several new and partnerships for the school that includes work with local businesses, district administrators, and partners to develop innovative learning environments. Menlo Park Academy has been able to accommodate a wide range of students through its innovative approach to learning. Our teaching staff will gain higher levels of expertise needed for this process through professional development opportunities and partnerships with local universities and organizations. Through a three-tiered approach of faculty development, scheduling improvements, community partnerships based on data, Menlo Park Academy will become a more robust learning environment. One that incorporates research-based best practices to demonstrate student growth in tangible and measurable ways.

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

The substantial value to investing in gifted and talented education in Ohio is the payoff of growing the intellectual capacity and talent level of our future graduates. Menlo Park Academy has the opportunity to provide the tools to assist not only our current students but students throughout the state in helping them to reach their fullest potential. This will be done by creating baseline on-grade as well as above-grade level testing processes that will be created with universal growth in mind. The school facilities Felix is a large commitment to the students' development. In addition, there is a focus on the next level, which will be measured by the Common Core Standards and be used to drive our educational goals. With full enrollment of 450 students, which will further enhance sustainability of the project.

**D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning**

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

Menlo Park Academy currently provides above grade level instruction with accelerative options. We offer course work in STEM areas such as robotics, movie making, engineering, high school biology, and mathematics up to algebra II. This year we initiated exposure courses in six languages and multi-media arts courses. This is just a small sampling of what MPA has been able to accomplish with minimal resources, creative thinking, and the active community of dedicated families commit to a minimum of five hours of volunteering per month which creates a school community dynamic that is unmatched. The commitment of parents, teachers, administrators, and partners to the gifted learning is the key to how Menlo Park Academy has achieved so much in such a short time. The expected changes to our current organizational practices at Menlo Park Academy are large. This proposal would change the physical dynamic of our facility, creating instructional spaces that would allow for improved accelerated offerings. The programming implementation timeline is as follows:

- Beginning in January 2014, MPA will focus outreach to community organizations to build mentor opportunities. At the same time, MPA will continue its curriculum development and partnerships based on December data analysis. MPA will begin the development of whole child therapeutic support model and will schedule parent information and involvement events in conjunction with its educational partners. Several members of administration are scheduled to attend a scheduling conference in February. This will begin the process of finding a suitable program or vendor with the capacity to create customized student schedules. Meetings between MPA and staff will begin. In March, mentor partnerships will be initiated, above grade level testing all grades for data comparative comparisons will take place, and Interest and career assessment will be administered to students. Scheduling software selection will be made and key staff will be trained in using the system. April: Implementation of Mentor PD program and Technology PD will begin. A flexible/enriched student schedule for 2014-2015 will be finalized. May: Mentoring & Technology PD continues Whole child therapeutic model PD begins June: Physical move to new space

Timeline, communication and contingency planning

The achievement of Phase I of this project will provide the foundation for a replicable model that can be implemented in Phase II. At this new facility MPA will be able to immediately scale up to full enrollment of 450 students, which will further enhance sustainability of the project.
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.

Year 1: Secure and retrofit new facility; complete staff PD initiatives; implement new scheduling software programming; analyze student data to create baselines; secure mentorship commitments from outside partners. Publish program module guides in areas such as STEM. Mentorships, Counseling. Fully develop curriculum and course guides. Year 2: Administer school-wide student assessment measures, analyze results and compare to baseline data, perform gap analysis to inform program delivery; integrate program standards with OTES protocols aligning practice and assessment of instructional staff. Refine curriculum based on data analysis. Year 3: Reassess and refine program based on prior years' data. Solicit feedback from all project stakeholders. Re-evaluate current partnerships and look for opportunities to expand and refine. Adjust program delivery where needed. Year 4: Reassess and refine program based on prior years' data. Solicit feedback from all project stakeholders. Re-evaluate current partnerships and look for opportunities to expand and refine. Adjust program delivery where needed. Year 5: Reassess and refine program based on prior years' data.

25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used. Include the method by which progress toward short- and long-term objectives will be measured. (This section should include the types of data to be collected, the formative outputs and outcomes and the systems in place to track the program's progress).

MPA will monitor progress towards short term objectives by administering the following assessments annually: IOWA Acceleration Scale, PLAN, and EXPLORE at above grade level State mandated diagnostics in reading, writing and mathematics at primary grade levels OAA's grades 3-8 Conditions of Learning Inventory Interest Inventories and Career Cluster in the PLAN and EXPLORE assessments. The data will be used to refine curriculum and adjust students' schedules based on performance and aptitude. The long term objectives will be measured by an analysis of yearly data compiled to track individual student growth during their tenure at MPA as well as assessing overall program delivery through grade level and building-wide performance measures. Community schools are dynamic organizations by nature and have the distinct advantage of being able to adjust programming rapidly based on analysis of program delivery outcomes. Longitudinal study of current 6th & 7th Graders/current course work and college plans.

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. Caroline Zito, Business Manager, Menlo Park Academy 10/24/13