

Budget

Mentor Exempted Village (045492) - Lake County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (533)

U.S.A.S. Fund #:

Plus/Minus Sheet (opens new window)

Purpose Code	Object Code	Salaries 100	Retirement Fringe Benefits 200	Purchased Services 400	Supplies 500	Capital Outlay 600	Other 800	Total
Instruction		120,800.00	0.00	923,460.00	3,352,500.00	2,682,000.00	0.00	7,078,760.00
Support Services		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Governance/Admin		65,000.00	0.00	1,031,361.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,096,361.00
Prof Development		120,000.00	0.00	4,727,060.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,847,060.00
Family/Community		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Safety		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Facilities		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Transportation		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total		305,800.00	0.00	6,681,881.00	3,352,500.00	2,682,000.00	0.00	13,022,181.00
Adjusted Allocation								0.00
Remaining								-13,022,181.00

Application

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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: Mentor - Ohio Blended Learning Consortium

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.

The Ohio Blended Learning Consortium seeks to significantly improve student academic achievement by making fundamental shifts in teaching and learning to personalize education for each student. Those shifts will result in smarter use of technology in the classrooms of 13,000 students across 34 buildings and 12 schools and districts. The consortium proposal also seeks to build capacity in Ohio and the will among others to make those same shifts, sparking a movement to high-quality blended learning in the state.

13410 3. Total Students Impacted:

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:

First Name, last Name of contact for lead applicant: Matthew J. Miller

Organizational name of lead applicant: Mentor Public Schools

Unique Identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 045492

Address of lead applicant: 6451 Center St., Mentor OH 44060

Phone Number of lead applicant: 440.974.5220

Email Address of lead applicant: MMiller@mentorschools.org

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:

First Name, last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Stephen Dackin

Organizational name of secondary applicant: Reynoldsburg City Schools

Unique Identifier (IRN/Fed Tax ID): 047001

Address of secondary applicant: 7244 E. Main St., Reynoldsburg, OH 43068

Phone number of secondary applicant: 614.501.1023

Email address of secondary applicant: sdackin@reyn.org

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.

John Marschhausen Superintendent Hilliard IRN: 047019 2140 Atlas St., Columbus OH 43228 614.921.7000 John_Marschhausen@hboe.org Hannah Powell Executive Director KIPP Columbus Journey Academy IRN: 009997 2750 Agler Rd., Columbus, OH 43224 614.517.0949 hpowell@kippcolumbus.org Kevin Snyder Director of Educational Information and Technology Services Lancaster City School District IRN: 044206 345 East Mulberry St., Lancaster OH 43130 740.687.7300 Ext. 7372 k_snyder@lancaster.k12.oh.us Sam Ison Superintendent Middletown City Schools IRN: 044404 One Donham Plaza, 4th Floor, Middletown, OH 45042 513.423.0781 sison@middletowncityschools.com Robert Farrell Superintendent Milford Exempted Village School District IRN: 045500 777 Garfield Ave., Milford, OH 45150 513.831.1314 Farrell_R@milfordschools.org Joe Clark Superintendent Nardonias Hills City Schools IRN: 050047 9370 Olde Eight Rd., Northfield, OH 44067 330.467.0580 Joe.clark@nardoniaschools.org Andrew Jackson Superintendent Northwest Local School District IRN: 047365 3240 Banning Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45239 513.923.1000 ajackson@nwlsd.org Julie Novel Lead Instructional Advisor Pickerington Local Schools IRN: 046896 90 East St., Pickerington, OH 43137 614.920.6170 Julie_Novel@plsd.us Colleen Lennon Curriculum and Technology Specialist Stepstone Academy IRN: 013148 2121 E. 32nd St., Cleveland, OH 44115 440.260.6403 Colleen.lennon@stepstoneacademy.org William Kirby Superintendent Valley View Local Schools IRN: 048744 59 Peffley St., Germantown, OH 45327 937.855.6581 wvbkirby@mdeca.org

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

* Letters of support are for districts in academic or fiscal distress only. If school or district is in academic or fiscal distress and has a commission assigned, please include a resolution from the commission in support of the project.

* 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.

Mentor Public Schools is working with experienced partners who have extensive involvement with grant-funded projects, multi-district education reform initiatives, and education service delivery in a variety of venues and settings. In addition, Mentor Public Schools have veteran leaders who are innovative and experienced in the education field. Mentor Public Schools Mentor Public Schools, an 8,000-student school district in Lake County east of Cleveland, is led by Matthew Miller, who was named superintendent in 2012 after leading the Celina City School District for seven years. Mentor's Chief Financial Officer Daniel Wilson has more than 39 years of experience in the fiscal management of Ohio public schools, the last nine in Mentor. He previously served as Associate Superintendent for the Center for School Finance Accountability at the Ohio Department of Education. Smarter Schools Smarter Schools is a Cincinnati-based non-profit organization created to encourage efficiency and effectiveness in education. Its Executive Director is Andrew Benson, who was most recently a Vice President at KnowledgeWorks Foundation. During his past decade at KnowledgeWorks, Benson spearheaded education and policy initiatives statewide, including the Ohio Smart Schools project at the request of Ohio's governor and state superintendent (2010), working on the turnaround section of Ohio's \$400 million Race to the Top grant (2009); handling policy and communications for the foundation's Ohio High School Transformation Initiative of 72 schools in 11 districts and for the Ohio Early College High School initiative, covering nine new high schools on college campuses in the state (2003-08); and managing millions in grants made by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for projects in Ohio since 2001. Benson previously earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Education Elements Education Elements was founded in 2010 by Anthony Kim, a longtime education technologist who wanted to help schools rethink the structure of schooling and the way technology could strengthen instruction and streamline operations. Working with charter school management developers, foundations and technology developers, Education Elements has since pioneered new approaches to blended learning. Today, the firm is involved in 75% of the blended learning schools in the country, or more than 50 schools, including, the PA Hybrid Learning Initiative of 15 schools and school districts in Ohio (Mentor Public Schools, Reynoldsburg City Schools, and Stepstone Academy.) University of Cincinnati Economics Center Founded in 1997, the Economics Center at the University of Cincinnati has provided valuable insights through high quality economic analysis. The Economics Center has conducted program evaluations for education clients, including school districts and Educational Service Centers (ESCs), and provided them with a deeper understanding of their particular program's effectiveness and cost-benefit trade-off. Michael Jones, the Director of Research for the Center, earned a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Notre Dame. Educational Service Centers The eight Educational Service Centers are part of the state's regional structure of support for public school districts in Ohio. The state broadened the scope of ESCs to include more comprehensive support to school districts and charged them with helping districts to share services in order to reduce costs and improve outcomes along with providing technical assistance and direct service in a myriad of instructional and non-instructional areas. The Ohio Blended Learning Consortium is also partnering informally with The Learning Accelerator, a new non-profit focused on supporting high-quality blended learning in school districts across America.

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

11. Describe the innovative project.

Students in too many Ohio classrooms are not getting an education that will make them competitive in the global workplace. Just 28% of Ohio graduates taking the ACT were considered college ready - one benchmark of global competitiveness. And not enough Ohio schools and districts are taking on and sustaining education reforms that can fix that. This proposal offers to make fundamental shifts in teaching and learning to personalize education by using technology smarter in the classrooms of 13,410 students so that more of them are college ready. This proposal is also designed to build capacity and the will for others to make those same shifts with blended learning to benefit thousands more. In essence, this proposal will spark a movement to high-quality blended learning in the state. Teachers in today's traditional classrooms are not easily able to differentiate learning so that all students gets the attention they need. Higher standards and fewer resources are squeezing teachers who are being asked to do more with less. Common Core standards and on-line assessments offer an opportunity to propel students into 21st century learning, but how will we seize that opportunity? "Implementation of blended learning is about bringing to life fundamental shifts in teaching and learning," write the authors of the Blended Learning Implementation Guide 2.0. "It means inventing or adopting new learning environments that work better for students and teachers." The problem for the typical school and classroom in Ohio is that the need to provide personalized learning is greater than the ability of teachers to provide that. Teaching to the middle means that few students get what they need, and while technology is present in many classrooms, the productive use of that technology to change instruction has not occurred. Blended learning allows for personalized learning with the same or fewer resources. For example, in a classroom rotation blended learning model, some students are learning on a computer while others are working on projects applying what they learned while others are working with the teacher to catch up or get ahead. Then, they rotate. The state has acknowledged through policy changes the efficacy of blended learning, but Ohio struggles to provide high-quality demonstrations and widespread application. The problem is that innovations like blended learning often become isolated examples, and they don't always translate into a movement. Even when reforms are planted locally, they frequently disappear under new leadership or budget cuts. This proposal incorporates activities that will seed the state with innovations, support them in their development, build capacity for replications, and draw attention to these lighthouses. This proposal makes it possible for high-quality blended learning to be created and implemented in middle school grades in 12 schools and districts in three regions. But, just as importantly, by training trainers, it builds capacity for these districts and schools to do more, representing more than 71,000 students. As the lighthouses of innovation become beacons for others, the innovation of blended learning will spread. The proposal incorporates "learning exchanges," purposeful engagement of nearby schools to see the progress as changes are occurring. The proposal also incorporates storytelling, a communications approach that imbeds writers into schools and classrooms to chronicle the progress. And in order to create additional capacity, the proposal trains a blended learning trainer in eight Educational Service Centers and creates training centers in each of three metropolitan areas of the state. Finally, the proposal creates the Ohio Blended Learning Network, which will support districts, set high-quality standards for blended learning, and work with the state to create an education credential for blended learning.

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.

"I can multiply myself within the classroom to better serve student learning. I can remediate and accelerate students with the touch of a button. I am better able to reach students academically and personally in ways that were previously unavailable to me. We are actively learning together, and we are loving it." - Carmen Walker, 7th grade teacher, Ridge Middle School, Mentor Public Schools This proposal will advance blended learning with a cohort of teachers - some already practicing blended learning; others just learning what it is - who are serving 13,410 students in 34 buildings across nine counties. When the implementation is underway, teachers will be collaborating in buildings, planning and designing blended learning approaches for their classrooms. Teachers will also be collaborating across districts at convenings designed to stimulate thinking. The work will progress in an atmosphere of transparency. Local stakeholders will be engaged, and educators from nearby districts will hear from consortium educators about the move to blended learning. Here is how the theory of action predicts significant improvement in student achievement. Overview: The theory of action lays out how the program will lead to goal of school-wide transformation over multiple years. The theory of action focuses on two parts: student outcomes/teacher outcomes: ? In Year 1, the focus should be on successfully implementing blended learning model. ? Student outcomes: increased student investment + increased grade level proficiency ? Teacher outcomes: increased teacher investment + successful adoption of blended classroom practice. ? In Year 2, schools track more robust measures. ? Student outcomes: accelerated student proficiency ? Teacher outcomes: increased teacher efficacy Indicators of success Overview: The theory of action implies that the school will want to track both leading and lagging indicators that measure progress along the way. District level: ? Leading indicators (Years 1-2) ? What should be happening: ? School leaders message vision to staff ? Data systems are in place ? Teachers and parents understand blended learning ? How to measure: ? # of schools implementing blended learning with fidelity ? Time spent by leaders and teachers reviewing data ? Hours using online content per student ? % of parents discussing student progress based on data ? Lagging indicators (Years 2-3) ? What should be happening: ? Achievement gap decreases ? Teacher and leader retention increases ? Program sustainability ? How to measure: ? Standardized test scores ? Staff satisfaction scores ? High quality teacher retention rate School level: ? Leading indicators (Years 1-2) ? What should be happening: ? Data and accountability structures in place ? Quality of IT, program support ? Fidelity of academic programming ? How to measure: ? Frequency of staff collaboration ? Hours of BL professional development ? Ticket response, resolution time ? Lagging indicators (Years 2-3) ? What should be happening: ? Proficiency on standardized assessments ? Teacher efficacy, satisfaction ? Program sustainability ? How to measure: ? Standardized test scores ? Rubric scores for evaluating blended learning teaching proficiency ? Staff satisfaction scores ? High quality teacher retention rate Classroom level: ? Leading indicators (Years 1-2) ? What should be happening: ? Use of data to drive instruction ? Frequency of differentiated small group instruction ? Effectiveness

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for ongoing 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?

13,022,181.00 * 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, RttT 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).

PERSONAL SERVICES -- \$305,800 Instruction \$ 120,800 - Provides stipends to each district and school staff of the 13 consortium members to be coordinators for consortium grant project, which includes \$2,000 per building coordinators and \$4,400 for district-level staff. Governance/Administration \$65,000 - Provides \$65,000 to Mentor Public Schools to offset the administrative costs of serving as the lead applicant and fiscal agent. Professional Development \$120,000 -- Provides stipends of \$60,000 each to Mentor Public Schools and Reynoldsburg City Schools to provide staff time for coaches to develop blended learning training centers. PURCHASED SERVICES - \$6,681,881 Instruction \$923,460 - Provides support to 12 members of the consortium to pay for half of the two-year package for the Education Elements platform (Hybrid Learning Management System) at \$56 per student and \$7,500 per building set up fee. Governance/Administration \$114,466 - Provides support to the University of Cincinnati Economics Center for evaluation of the Ohio Blended Learning Consortium grant-funded project. \$916,895 - Provides \$505,673 to Smarter Schools, for grants and project management and oversight, includes overhead for Smarter Schools. Provides additional \$52,122 for staff time to conduct monthly site visits for grant compliance. Provides \$105,000 for writers in three districts to write reform for a report. Provides \$60,000 to implement civic outreach plan to build support among local stakeholders. Provides \$134,100 (\$5 per student per year for two years) to create the Ohio Blended Learning Network. Provides \$60,000 to support work in Southwest Ohio to establish a training center. Amounts cover all travel and expenses for contractors Professional Development \$574,882 - Provides to each of the 12 consortium members 1 year of 2-year package of professional development from Education Elements calculated at \$21,000 per building. \$3,481,928 - Provides support to Education Elements for technical assistance and coaching to all 12 members of the consortium and nine Education Service Center staff. Includes consulting time for a readiness assessment, on-site planning and design support, regional convenings, and on-line technical assistance. Fees also include half of the two-year package of access to the Education Elements platform (Hybrid Learning Management System) at \$56 per student per year, \$10,000 per building set up fee in the first year. Amount covers all travel and expenses for the contractor. \$380,250 - Provides support to eight Educational Service Centers on a \$25 per pupil basis to provide staff member to participate in 100 hours of blended learning training. Includes Educational Service Center of Central Ohio at \$66,500; Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County at \$50,350; Hamilton County ESC at \$30,850; Fairfield County ESC at \$75,825; Clermont County ESC at \$25,575; Summit County ESC at \$13,575; Montgomery County ESC at \$49,050; and Lake County ESC at \$45,000. \$230,000 -- Provides \$130,000 to Mentor Public Schools to pay for 1 year of consortium convenings and \$100,000 to support up to 30 blended learning pilot classrooms with content across buildings in the consortium. \$60,000 - Provides \$60,000 to Smarter Schools to plan and create learning exchanges in which schools and districts near the consortium members will visit and learn about progress and challenges of shifting to blended learning. SUPPLIES & MATERIALS - \$3,352,500 Instruction \$3,352,500 - Provides support to each of the 12 consortium members to purchase digital content, calculated at a rate of \$250 per pupil. CAPITAL OUTLAY -- \$2,682,000 Instruction \$2,682,000 - Provides support to each of the 12 consortium members to purchase computer devices (laptops or tablets) at \$500 per device to achieve a ratio of students to computers of 3:1. Includes \$33 per student for other technology devices (carts, headphones equipment.)

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.

1,884,510.00 * 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.

Blended learning holds the promise of schools and districts doing more with less. The effective integration of technology into the classroom results in the technology enhancing and extending the skills of educators. A classroom of 30 students becomes a student-to-teacher ratio of 10:1, 10:1 and 10:1 - with the teacher being able to individualize instruction to a much greater degree than with a traditional classroom. Best practices have indicated that successful blended learning could result in savings on textbooks, paper, printing and copying, and ultimately staffing. Consortium members in this grant-funded project will experience some of those savings as they also incur new costs related to purchasing digital content and maintain access to platforms and networks. Below is an estimate for recurring costs for districts, though it should be noted that each district will have its own context: Choices and preferences within the larger expectation that these costs should be addressed in some manner going forward. Recurring costs Annual Platform Fee -- \$923,460. This provides access to the Hybrid Learning Management System of Education Elements. It is calculated annually at \$56 per student with a \$7,500 set up fee or each building. Some consortium members may opt out of the Hybrid LMS and have budgeted for an alternative platform already, and a few districts have already budgeted for the Hybrid LMS because of a previous relationship with Education Elements. (Year 2 is included in a two-year package in the grant period.) Digital Content -- \$894,000. This provides refreshment of digital content in the classrooms to support and augment instruction. Some consortium members are planning on creating their own content, which could reduce or in a few cases eliminate this cost. Some have already budgeted for it due to prior experience with BLs. Annual Network Fee - \$67,050. This \$5 per student cost supports the creation and operation of the Ohio Blended Learning Network, which supports collaboration, coordination and advancement of blended learning and the network members work in the state.

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

0.00 * 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.)

Recent implementations of blended learning have resulted in savings for schools and districts, often in textbooks, paper, copying and printing. The Reynoldsburg City School District found last year that paper costs were reduced by 50% to 75% and copying and printing costs were reduced by one-third when blended learning was implemented due to the shift from paper to digital resources. Likewise, in some cases, schools and districts have experienced savings in staffing due to the ability of teachers to handle larger class sizes because they have let technology extend their reach. However, while savings are expected and will be explored for some districts in the Financial Impact Table, it is too soon in the project to quantify and count on expected savings. It is clear that after the initial outlay for professional development and hardware upgrades, blended learning is no more expensive than traditional approaches in the classroom, and in reality, it will likely result in lower costs over time. More data is needed to discover how much savings and over what time period they would be realized. It should be noted that the consortium has realized savings from its technical assistance provider, Education Elements, due to economies of scale. The consortium received discount pricing of 12% on professional development and 25% on access to its hybrid platform, resulting in savings of more than \$976,000 to the consortium if members had purchase services on their own.

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.

This project is self-sustaining. The recurring costs are described in Question 15 and shown in detail for each member of the consortium on the Financial Impact Tables for each district and school. The recurring costs are addressed through a combination of estimated savings (a discussion of expected savings is in Question 16) and reductions in spending from a variety of means, described in detail in the Financial Impact Tables of each member of the consortium. In no case is there a consortium member school or district that is spending more in total following the grant period because of new and recurring costs. Total spending across all schools and districts in the consortium will return to the baseline year after the grant period (FY14) is ended. In many cases, the extra cost of purchasing digital content is offset by the reduced costs and savings in purchasing textbooks, paper, copying and printing. In some cases, districts are foregoing some of the recurring costs by creating their own content. The promise of blended learning is that teachers, schools and district can do more with less by using technology to extend the skills of teachers to more students. Over time, we expect that productivity will increase, outcomes will improve but costs can and will be reduced, stay the same, or grow at a rate slower than the rate for traditional district. It should be noted that nine Educational Service Centers are partners in the consortium to provide staff who will be trained as blended learning trainers. The grant provides a stipend to help offset the costs of making staff available, at a rate of \$25 per student served. ESCs are not hiring new staff or adding on additional costs during the grant, thus they do not have recurring costs in the post-grant period.

D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning

18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for the successful implementation of this project. In each explanation, be sure to briefly describe the largest barriers that could derail your concept or timeline for implementation and your plan to proactively mitigate such barriers. In addition, the narrative should list the stakeholders that will be engaged during that stage of the project and describe the communication that occurred as the application was developed.

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

* Proposal Timeline Dates

Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 08/01/2013

* Narrative explanation

08/01/2013 Smarter Schools and Education Elements discuss possible collaboration on a blended learning consortium that would apply for a Straight A Fund grant. Mentor Public Schools and Reynoldsburg express interest and offer to take the lead in the project, with Mentor serving as lead applicant. Principals of organizations map out roles and opportunities for consortium grant. Planning for consortium is underway. Meetings attended with Ohio Department of Education staff responsible for Straight A Fund to learn more about intent, parameters and limitations of the fund. Barriers and contingency: Questions of working relationships, continued interest in Ohio implementations, how to pay for costs of planning could derail potential collaboration. Goals of consortium may not align with Straight A Fund guidelines. Principals of participating organizations committed to finding ways to work together for mutual benefit and benefit to Ohio students. Plans were developed with flexibility to accommodate expected fund guidelines. Plan: 09/01/2013 Ideal districts were identified and targeted for the consortium. Consortium design created with attention to sustainability, replication, scalability. Middle school grades to be focus of consortium. Straight A Fund guidelines examined on line and at ODE webinars on the fund. Clarifying questions were asked and answered by Straight A Fund staff through Linked In group, FAQs, and email inquiries. Targeted districts invited to 9/24 webinar conducted by Education Elements and Smarter Schools, which was recorded and posted to Smarter Schools web site. Continuous outreach conducted to reach more districts to create a pool from which to select consortium members. Barriers and contingency: No guarantee districts would be interested in joining the consortium or be serious about blended learning if they did apply for the consortium. Continuous outreach and connections to potential candidates created considerable interest in the opportunity. Plan: 10/01/2013 Districts invited to Oct. 1 in-person meeting in Columbus to experience Personal Learning Tour on blended learning and learn more about plans for consortium. Meeting attended by 20 educators representing 10 school districts. Breakfast meeting scheduled before BASA conference and evening reception hosted by Mentor offered to reach out to more districts. Deadline of Oct. 4 set for completing an Expression of Interest document to be considered for consortium. Eleven school districts and two community schools selected for Ohio Blended Learning Consortium, representing schools in Northeast Ohio, Central Ohio, and Southwest Ohio. Regional meetings held Oct. 16-17 in Mentor, Hilliard and Northwest Local to engage building-level staff on Straight A Fund goals, consortium plans, and the benefits of blended learning. Meetings attended by 43 teachers, principals, superintendents, central office personnel, and Education Service Center representatives. Webinar held Oct. 18 for further outreach was attended by another 11 representatives. Grant application prepared and reviewed. Consortium members engaged on budget, implementation and Financial Impact Table. Grant application to be submitted by Oct. 25. Barriers and contingency: Compressed time frame to prepare grant application could hurt quality of proposal. Consortium leaders divided up sections and duties in order to produce a high-quality application in a short time frame. Also, short grant period presents a challenge to show academic achievement results. Working with evaluation consultant, created "differentiated evaluation" approach that allows for evaluating consortium members from varying starting points: Expecting academic outcomes from those that have already started blended learning; expecting process outcomes and attitudes as results. In addition, long-term results will be evaluated in June 2015.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 01/01/2014

* Narrative explanation

Implement: 01/01/2014 Kickoff meeting with superintendents and principals. Project manager reviews timeline and site coordinators are identified. Districts and schools that are already doing blended learning (advanced) will identify digital content to purchase. Connect storytellers to district staff in three sites. Education reform facilitators conduct site visits and prepare monthly report on project status. Monthly project managers update call to check on grant progress and assess needs. Grant funds released. Outreach begins with development of materials and identification of key local stakeholders and venues for updates and presentations. Civic outreach plans are developed. Design of learning exchanges is underway and identification of nearby districts to engage has begun. Consortium members identify hardware needs and make purchases of computer devices and other needed technology. Barriers and contingency: This is a fairly aggressive timeline and consortium members can easily fall behind. Project management, using monthly site visits, reports and conference calls with site managers will set an appropriate expectation and momentum to get project started at the right pace. Implement: 02/01/2014 Education Elements holds two events with consortium members and groups of stakeholders to introduce blended learning to district leadership through a simulation and classroom design workshop and then to guide district leadership as it conducts a similar event for school leaders (principals and site leaders). Advanced school teams will work with Education Elements to further refine their existing plans. Pilot classrooms will be formed within each members, as interest is shown, to take an accelerated approach to experience blended learning earlier in their classrooms. First round of key local stakeholders are engaged in meetings and through materials. Planning for first of two learning exchanges in March is underway and outreach to nearby districts has begun. Education reform facilitators conduct site visits and prepare monthly report on project status. Monthly project managers update call to check on grant progress and assess needs. Grant funds released. Storytellers join monthly update call to report progress and observations from three sites. Barriers and contingency: The press of regular daily instruction and management could begin to overwhelm consortium members as the time spent on the project increases. Careful monitoring of progress and frequent check-ins can help address this. While there are lots of moving parts inside and outside of the classroom, project oversight can help alleviate any coordination issues (Similar entires for March - May: Professional development occurs, designs of blended learning created, grants oversight and project managers keep things moving. 06/01/2014 Consortium members attend a 2-day regional conference to prepare school leaders to launch blended learning effectively, including access to a toolkit of resources. Advanced school teams reflect on progress as a group, and pilot classrooms wrap up their demonstrations. Education reform facilitators conduct site visits and prepare monthly report on project status. Monthly project managers update call to check on grant progress and assess needs. Grant funds released. Storytellers join monthly update call to report progress and observations from three sites. Civic outreach continues with key local stakeholders. University of Cincinnati Economics Center will create and deploy an on-line survey instrument for advanced consortium members teachers and students who have deployed blended learning in the classroom. The center will also begin to collect academic outcome data on those schools. Coordination and planning continues with the Ohio Blended Learning Network, the creation of three training sites, and blended learning credential planned.

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 08/01/2014

* Narrative explanation

08/01/2014 Education Elements starts technical database for consortium members. Writing and editing of storytelling drafts continues. Storytellers begin observations in buildings and classrooms again. University of Cincinnati Economics Center continues work on evaluation report for grant period. Monthly update calls of site coordinators begin again in advance of fall launch of blended learning in the classroom. Barriers and contingency: Focus on the next year's implementation will occur in earnest as teams prepare for continued implementation or full launch. Project management needs to shift forward to support that work while also wrapping up any loose ends for the grant project. Summative Evaluation: 09/01/2014 Consortium members have access to Education Elements support line during fall launch of blended learning. The Platform goes live for consortium members. University of Cincinnati Economics Center completes evaluation report. Consortium members participate in monthly update calls. Storytellers continue observations and reporting in buildings and classrooms. Barriers and contingency: The implementation of blended learning, despite considerable planning and design, will challenge even accomplished teachers. Managing expectations of all parties will be important in the early phases of classroom implementation. Post-Grant Period Activities: In the second year of the two-year professional development package, consortium members will receive onsite visits in the fall and will attend a convening in November 2014 on effective practices in blended learning classrooms and virtual conferences in January 2015. The Ohio Blended Learning Network will continue to provide support to consortium members on collaboration, outreach and policy development and will continue the development of regional training centers, a blended learning credential, and a definition of high-quality

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

Blended learning allows teachers to teach - to teach at the level they dreamed of before the all too common reality of too little time and too much to do. The fundamental shift in teaching and learning has been documented in numerous examples across the country, and the research on blended learning is catching up with the "buzz" created when teachers become inspired by the freedom to teach. First, consider the changes in the classroom and the focus on instructional practices that led to significant improvement in academic achievement. Overview: Teacher instructional practice shifts dramatically in a blended learning model. In particular, blended learning models implemented at these schools will focus on the following four elements: ? Smaller Group Instruction ? Blended learning models leverage technology in order to provide more opportunities for small group instruction. Teachers will be able to focus and differentiate among students, groups. ? A core instructional strategy is an increase in frequent regrouping of students. Teachers can use data to regroup students weekly, even daily, based on the material that they want to cover in a given day. ? Integration of Digital Content ? A second core element is the integration of digital and offline curriculum. Digital content programs are layered into a teacher's lesson plan and can be used by students for instruction, practice, or creation. ? The use of digital content will be supported through the EE Platform, which will provide ease of access and a feedback loop for student engagement. ? Data driven instruction: ? The use of digital content will provide a rich new source of performance data, which teachers will use in turn to drive their own instruction. Teachers can engage with their peers in focused data discussions, using results from digital content and other quantitative and qualitative sources. ? Personalization: ? The ultimate focus of the blended learning model is to create an environment for personalized learning. Through changes in the classroom model and the instructional strategies described, students have an even greater opportunity to receive the support they need, at the moment they need it. Second consider the changing roles at the district, building and classroom levels. Overview: The implementation of blended learning models will be supported by stakeholder actions at each level: ? District: ? Management of the overall program and fiscal sustainability ? Creating a scalable technology infrastructure ? Recruiting school leaders and overseeing PD ? School: ? Setting the vision and culture at sites ? Engagement of teachers, parents and students ? Professional learning ? Leadership of model design and digital content portfolio management ? Teachers: [Instructional practices referenced above] Now, consider the passion unleashed with the potential blended learning can bring. Henry Rauhaus, a 24 year-veteran 5th grade teacher, is at Ridgewood Elementary School in the Hilliard City School District. He and others at Ridgewood began this year making changes toward blended learning. "I can honestly say that this is the most excited I have ever been in the classroom! Through blended learning, it was immediately clear that for the first time in twenty-four years, I was provided a medium in which I could personalize learning experiences so that each and every student would have their own specific path to learning. Through blended learning, I can access meaningful individual student data instantly, which helps me make informed decisions about what each student needs in order to be academically successful. "Blended learning gives a voice to those struggling students who would usually remain silent in a traditional classroom setting."

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.

Although blended learning is a new educational model, early results show that use of a successfully implemented blended learning model is likely to increase engagement among students, produce better student outcomes, increase teacher satisfaction and provide more time for students to develop higher-order thinking skills. Evidence for blended learning Research: Blended learning, as a school-wide model, is only a few years old - which means that there are no long-term academic studies yet on its effectiveness. However, the reports below look at the benefits of combining online and offline instruction, albeit in more isolated scenarios. RAND Corporation conducted a national two-year randomized trial to determine whether a blended learning curriculum developed by Carnegie Learning, Inc. had a positive effect on middle and high school algebra students. The report, released in August 2013, found that the curriculum, which included both instruction time on computers and in-person, improved high school performance by 8 percentile points. <http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2013/08/rand-study-shows-blended-learning-works/> A Kaplan white paper concluded that effective examples of online and blended learning show that they are 1) Personalized and adaptive to meet individual learning needs, 2) Supportive of high levels of cognitive engagement in meeting learning objective, and 3) Balancing computer- or teacher-led guidance with learner control. The author of the study, Marcella Bullmaster-Day, Ed.D. Associate Director of the Lander Center for Educational Research at Touro College, identifies the advantage blended learning has in the classroom to increase personalization, improve cognitive engagement, and balance the control of student versus the instructor. <http://gettingsmart.com/2011/12/blended-learning-what-research-says/> Pioneers of blended learning: The following charter schools have been implementing blended learning models for a few years now, and their early data results show increased student achievement. KIPP LA Empower: The school increased achievement from 39% of kindergarteners performing at grade-level or above in fall of 2011-2012 to 91% by the end of the year using a blended learning model developed in partnership with Education Elements. Now the school is one of the top 10 performing elementary schools in the state of California as measured by the state tests. In addition, the school saved \$1,000 per student in the first year, and the teacher satisfaction is No. 2 in the 107 KIPP school network. Rocketship: On the 2012-13 California state testing results. Rocketship continued to be in the top 5% of school networks serving low-income students. For Rocketship, 77% of students scored Proficient or Advanced on the California Standards Test, compared to 86% of high-income districts in the state. The Rocketship schools increased growth on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment in English language arts - 60% more than the average student across the country. Alliance College-Ready Public Schools (BLAST) Website and SY12-13 Results Alliance schools outperformed neighboring traditional public schools by more than 100 points. Four Alliance high schools earned API scores above 800 and ranked in the top 10% of Los Angeles Unified School District high schools. All 21 Alliance schools achieved API scores higher than their neighborhood average. http://www.laalliance.org/apps/news/show_news.jsp?REC_ID=323498&id=2 Pennsylvania Hybrid Learning Initiative PA HLI Press Release Pennsylvania piloted blended learning, called hybrid learning, in 15 schools in the 2012-13 with positive results. Among the pilot schools, 88 percent achieved higher academic performance in hybrid classes compared to traditional classes in the same district or compared to statewide benchmarks, 75 percent reported better academic achievement, all of them met or exceeded academic growth.

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

Yes

No

22. If so, how?

This proposal is designed foster the spread of high-quality blended learning in classrooms across the state. The Ohio Blended Learning Consortium proposal 1) Increases the capacity for blended learning to be adopted by schools and districts in every corner of the state, 2) Creates the interest and will for schools and districts to make the shift to blended learning, and 3) Establishes a model and infrastructure to ensure high-quality blended learning approaches are adopted. Building Capacity The consortium proposal uses the expertise of Education Elements, the Silicon Valley firm that provides technical assistance to 75% of the schools in the country undertaking the blended learning approach, to build capacity in three regions of the state by training trainers in each consortium member's school or district and also within the Educational Service Centers in that region. Thus, 12 schools and districts serving 71,000 students and eight Educational Service Centers in Northeast, Central and Southwest Ohio will have received training in blended learning to be trainers of others implementing blended learning as a result of this proposal. In addition, three training centers for blended learning - one at Mentor Public Schools, one at Reynoldsburg City Schools, and one in Southwest Ohio - would be established to provide additional capacity for training. Finally, the proposal establishes the Ohio Blended Learning Network of stakeholders interested in developing high-quality blended learning classrooms. The network would continue the work to build capacity and blended learning classrooms through the state after the grant period is over. The network, as proposed, would be partially funded by a \$5 per student fee assessed to the network member districts. Creating Will Many districts and schools are moving to blended learning because they have heard or seen the results and understand the potential it brings to improving teaching and learning in their classrooms. This proposal advances the natural "buzz" about blended learning by showing how schools and districts in this consortium are making the change and sharing the results they are getting with the change. Through "learning exchanges," the consortium and its partners will purposefully share with other schools and districts in their area how the project is progressing as they are undergoing the changes. The proposal includes support for two learning exchanges during the duration of the project, which includes resources for partners and the consortium members to reach out to other districts, to plan for productive learning sessions, and to conduct the meetings. Through the project, the consortium members will also be sharing their work with local stakeholders in order to build champions among them. This speaks to sustainability. Our experience in education reform tells us that building community support can help sustain a successful reform when changes occur in leadership or budgets. Establishing a model With the establishment of the Ohio Blended Learning Network, the consortium will begin work in earnest with the Ohio Department of Education and member districts and schools on developing a blended learning credential for educators who are in a position to train or be trained in blended learning. The credential will create expectations around high-quality blended learning and help with replications that are faithful to those expectations. The training centers and Educational Service Centers, as appropriate, can play a role in developing and providing for training to earn the credential. The Network will also work with consortium members and partners to develop a framework for high-quality blended learning and advocate for supportive policies on the state and local level to advance applications of that framework.

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

The Ohio Blended Learning Consortium, through this proposal, seeks to significantly improve student academic achievement in its classrooms through the creation and implementation of high-quality blended learning instruction. In addition, it seeks to encourage others to pursue blended learning in their classrooms and build the capacity in the state so that others can do so. The promise of blended learning, as demonstrated by research and best practices, is that technology enhances and extends the skills of teachers in a way that is more engaging for students and more satisfying for teachers. Simply put, teachers teach better, and students are more engaged and learn better. Case in point, consider this from Dagan Groenstein, a 7th grade student at Ridge Middle School in Mentor: "I am really enjoying learning this way. It is a simpler way to learn, and I can learn more because I can get a lot of information from one place instead of looking through separate textbooks." What we expect to see in the classrooms serving 13,400 Ohio students, we expect to see student academic gains at the end of the grant period (FY14) in the four districts and schools already undertaking blended learning and student academic gains at the end of FY15 in the nine districts and schools that are just starting out with blended learning. In the consortium member classrooms, we expect to see increased student engagement and increased teacher satisfaction and confidence with the use of technology. Outside of the classroom, we expect to see increased awareness, understanding and support for blended learning in communities where the schools and districts are implementing blended learning. Across the state, we expect to see increased capacity in Ohio to deliver high-quality blended learning, especially in the communities and counties surrounding the consortium members. In short, we expect to see a significant and increased presence of blended learning in Ohio in 2014 as a result of this grant. How we will get there The steps leading up these outcomes are clearly defined. n Schools and districts in the consortium will plan, design and implement blended learning strategies in classrooms serving 13,400 students across 34 schools in 11 schools and districts. Their work will be guided by Education Elements, a technical assistance provider that is the leading provider of blended learning expertise in the country. n Smarter Schools will conduct outreach that draws attention to the work in the communities surrounding the consortium members in order to gain greater awareness, understanding and support among stakeholders. n Education Elements will train trainers in each school and district and among the nine Educational Service Centers that are consortium partners. n The University of Cincinnati Economics Center will design and implement surveys and analyze student data to evaluate the outcomes of the proposal and prepare a report to help the consortium and others understand how the activities led to those outcomes. n Smarter Schools will work with Mentor Public Schools, the lead applicant, to provide grant oversight to make sure all of the partners and consortium members are making adequate progress toward goals and to ensure resources are directed appropriately to partners and members. n The Ohio Blended Learning Network will work with partners to create training centers and a blended learning credential for educators. The network will become an advocate and supporter of blended learning in the state, ushering in a movement for expansion of high-quality blended learning. The network, funded through fees to the schools and districts, will continue to work with stakeholders to advance blended learning beyond the grant period. Districts and schools in the consortium have adjusted their budgets to sustain the reforms over the next five years. As savings emerge, they, will have even greater capacity and means to expand the effort

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.

After five years, we broadly aim to achieve two goals: significant improvements in student academic performance and significant improvements in student behavior. Short-term Objectives (Project Fidelity) ? For a subset of 4 schools and districts that have already implemented a form of blended learning, the University of Cincinnati Economics Center will evaluate student academic outcomes during the 2013-14 academic year, relative to the previous academic year. These districts will have a full year of data on student academic performance. The results will provide an indicator for the 2014-15 results for the entire set of school districts. The outcomes to be measured include the test results by student demographic attributes for each school building, e.g. percentage of students in each proficiency level by test grade and subject for a school. ? By the start of the 2014-15 academic year, every school district will have implemented the blending learning project. ? During the survey with each school district's point of

contact, the Center will ask the following open-ended questions - 1) Did your understanding of blended learning change over the course of the grant? How so? 2) If the program was not implemented according to the Straight A Fund application's specifications, what elements did you leave out? What, if any, modifications did you make to the program? 3) What difficulties did you encounter in the program implementation? ? The Center will also ask for disciplinary reports from each school building for the 2013-2014 academic year and compare them to the previous years' reports. These reports will include data on the number of in-school suspensions, in-school alternative discipline actions, and emergency removals by district personnel. These reports will also provide the discipline reason (e.g. fighting, disruptive behavior, truancy, etc.) ? Finally, the Center will distribute a survey to the teachers in the blended learning classrooms. The data will be collected during the summer of 2014. The survey will ask teachers the following questions - 1) Overall, how has the blended learning program affected the ability of your students to learn new material? a) Students are learning new material at a faster pace b) Students are learning new material at a slower pace c) There is no change in the pace of students as they learn new material 2) Overall, how has the blended learning program affected the behavior of your students in the classroom? a) Students are less disruptive b) Students are more disruptive c) There is no change in the non-academic behavior of students 3) Overall, how has the blended learning program affected students' enthusiasm for learning? a) Students are more enthusiastic about learning b) Students are less enthusiastic about learning c) There is no change in students' enthusiasm 4) Overall, how has the blended learning program affected students' ability to retain or remember new material? a) Students are more likely to retain or remember new material b) Students are less likely to retain or remember new material c) There is no change in students' ability to retain or remember new material 5) Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the blended learning program? 6) Would you recommend a blended learning program for other classrooms? 7) Please provide an explanation for your answer to question 6. Long-term Objectives (Project Success Measures) ? Student Achievement Benchmarks (at the building level) 1) Test results by student demographic attributes, e.g. percentage of students in each proficiency level by test grade and subject for a school ? Student Behavior Benchmarks (at the building level) 1) Discipline incident counts by type and reasons 2) Student attendance and mobility rates

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).

* 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.

The data for the long-term objectives will come from the Report Cards provided on the Ohio Department of Education's School Report Cards website. Because the project will be implemented at the building level by the end of the 2014 school year, we will obtain school building data for the 2014-15 academic year for the entire set of school districts. We will compare the change in the academic and behavioral measures in the 2014-15 academic year to the 2012-13 academic year. We will compare to the 2012-13 academic year, because the project will only be partially implemented during the 2013-14 school year. Methodologically, we will begin our program evaluation using an interrupted time series methodology. With the interrupted time series methodology, an intervention occurs at a point in time and the time series data is broken up by the introduction of the intervention. If the blending learning intervention has a causal impact, the values of the post-intervention time series will have a statistically significant different value than the pre-intervention time series.[1] However, because there may be additional changes in the schooling environment other than the blended learning program, we will supplement the analysis with a difference-in-difference methodology. In this case, we will include a "control" school building to our time series data. The control school building is a school building that has similar characteristics to one of the blended learning school buildings, but it did not receive an intervention. The underlying assumption is that in the absence of the blending learning intervention, the school building outcomes would have followed the same trajectory as the control school building. The determination of the control school building will be based on demographic, fiscal, and student characteristics. Methodologically, the interrupted time series equation can be represented as $- \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Year} + \beta_2 \text{Intervention} + \beta_3 X_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$ Where β_0 is the outcome of interest (e.g. student proficiency levels, number of disciplinary incidents, etc.) for school building i at time t , and X is a vector of demographic, fiscal, and student characteristics in the school grade and building. β_2 is the coefficient of interest and captures the effect of the blending learning intervention on the improvement in student behavior and academic performance. The difference in difference methodology can be represented as $- \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Intervention} + \beta_2 \text{After} + \beta_3 \text{InterventionAfter} + \beta_4 X_{it} + \epsilon_{it}$ Where β_0 is the outcome of interest and β_3 is the coefficient of interest. This captures the effect of the blending learning intervention on the improvement in student behavior and academic performance. For the short-term objectives identified in the surveys, the Center will provide a statistical report on how student achievement and behavior has changed as a result of the blending learning program, e.g. the survey will reveal if students are increasing their learning of new material at a faster pace. By asking teachers on ways to improve the program, there will be opportunities to provide modifications to the program before the start of the 2014-15 academic year. Evaluation results will be shared with the Ohio Department of Education and the Straight A Fund and also internally with the Ohio Blended Learning Consortium members and partners, and other education stakeholders. The evaluation results will be the basis of more broadly disseminated communication of the Ohio Blended Learning Network. [1] The post-intervention time series may also have a different slope; however, because we will only have one year's worth of data post-intervention, we can only estimate a change in levels.

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 Matthew Miller Superintendent Mentor Public Schools 10/25/2013