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Adjusted Allocation: 0.00

Remaining: -925,000.00
Otsego Local School District is seeking funding to implement propane powered school buses & associated refueling infrastructure to significantly reduce operating costs over a five year fiscal timeframe (currently propane is priced at more than 50% less than diesel per gallon) & support all-day, everyday kindergarten with the annual fuel & maintenance savings. Implementing propane as the fuel of choice for Otsego's buses will offer immediate fuel cost savings from the first day of implementation & continue through the lifetime of each vehicle as well as allow the district the ability to continue to purchase more cost-effective propane powered vehicles over the long-term. Finally, in addition to offering significant operational cost savings, propane is a domestic fuel sourced as a by-product from natural gas production & its use as a transportation fuel results in significantly lower bus emissions providing for a healthier environment in the passenger cabin for students as well as for the communities in which the vehicles travel.

**B) PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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 unique identifiers for all secondary applicants in the box below.

**Otsego Local School District**
- **Mr. Rick Haskins** serves the district as our Transportation Director. He has 25 yrs experience in O&M and has researched propane bus projects & initiated the purchase of 5 new propane fueled buses as outlined below. He was the lead in the new bus route software that has already saved our district $75,000 by reducing the number of miles driven. However, Mr. Haskins’ passion lies with offering Otsego’s students the best possible education. He understands that a full-time kindergarten program is a proven & effective means to help students achieve earlier & reduce interventions & remediation. Similarly, he is an effective collaborator & embraced the DIP. He previously served on Otsego’s RIT & now leads our DLT. Mr. Koch will provide leadership on all components of the proposed project ensuring collaboration & communication. He will also lead community & parent communication plans & will serve on the progress monitoring & evaluation teams. He & Mrs. Rea will develop a data dashboard for use to monitor progress & evaluate annually. He will be the liaison between district personnel & the Board of Education.
- **Lori Rea,** Curriculum Director at Otsego Local comes to our district with a strong background in teaching & learning. Prior to entering education, she served a local engineering firm as a lead Project Manager. She directed multi-million dollar projects throughout the United States & Canada with a staff of 30. This project management experience serves our district well. Lori previously worked for Toledo Public Schools as a teacher, a data coordinator & as an administrator in the Curriculum Dept. She oversaw School Improvement Grants, served on RIT & the DLT & supported teacher training sections/data collection from stakeholder groups. Most importantly, Lori helped establish clear progress monitoring & program evaluation guidelines for a variety of programming in FPS. Lori will be instrumental in organizing the implementation of Otsego’s FT kindergarten program & establishing clear progress monitoring & evaluation systems. Betsey Murry, Principal comes to our district with 16 yrs experience in education. Betsey previously served Toledo Public Schools as Director of Compensatory Programs including Title I, AVID, RIT & SIG. She served on the DLT & the RIT teams. She supervised all of the federal & state grants; has extensive experience with CCPI planning & funding tools; directed professional development activities; data based decisions as part of collaborative teams to move TPS school to Excellent rating; & provides resources & supports to teachers to improve educational achievement for all. She will serve as the facilitator for the elementary school to communicate the new program availability to parents & the community at large; develop & provide new teacher training as needed; provide resources & curricular materials for new classrooms; act as a liaison for parents, teachers, & district administrative team; work with teachers to collect data systematically; & provide input for progress monitoring & program evaluation. Mr. Rick Haskins serves the district as our Transportation Director. He has 25 yrs experience in O&M & Transportation Management. This experience allows Otsego to operate our current fleet in the most cost effective methods. He will lead training drivers & maintenance personnel. Training will occur in February’14 w/the district purchase of the first 5 buses. When the remaining fleet is acquired, all district transportation personnel will have completed all training on buses & refueling stations. Additionally, Mr. Haskins will provide scheduled data updates on the new buses, miles driven, mpg, & maintenance expenditures.

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

- **Existing and researched-based - never implemented in your district or community school but proven successful in other educational environments**
- **Mixed Concept - incorporates new and existing elements**
- **Enhancing/Scale Up - elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school, or consortium partnership**

11. Describe the innovative project.

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.

This project is aligned with Otsego’s strategic planning and designed to result in significant operational cost savings through our 5 year fiscal timeframe and offer substantial sustainable operational cost savings over a long term timeframe. The benefits of the new goals of the kindergartners will be more significant, impacting the health of our children now and into their future. According to these organizations, propane powered buses: reduce greenhouse gas emissions; produce 80% fewer particulate emissions than diesel; and do not expose children to harmful particulate matter which may escalate breathing related effects such as asthma, and are not subject to anti-idling restrictions. This grant impacts our children’s community’s health in positive ways immediately & longitudinally. Project Solution: Deploying propane buses & building propane refueling stations can solve the stated problems: 1. Propane School Buses are commercially available & offer significant net savings over the life of the vehicle-freeing up money for timelier vehicle replacements as well as reducing the overall operational budget. Otsego, E. F. (2013). Full Day Kindergarten Versus Half-Day Kindergarten: Which Has More Advantages for Children With Disabilities? (Doctoral dissertation).

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

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cost Description</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
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<tr>
<td>Total Project Cost</td>
<td>$925,000</td>
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15. What are the new/recurring costs of your innovative project will continue once the grant has expired? If there are no new/recurring costs, please explain why.

0.00 **  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 costs and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.) if there are no new/recurring costs, please explain why.

There will be a narrative to purchase the 9 buses as outlined in the budget narrative as part of the grant. This initial cost will offer substantial savings in both future capital outlay & annual fuel & maintenance savings. However, after the initial outlay from grant funds no new costs are associated with the project. Execution of this project will not require any recurring bus costs. Otsego will realize immediate savings & will maintain the fleet at reduced cost compared to current maintenance costs. We will also realize substantial annual fuel savings. Otsego will appropriate funds to begin purchasing additional buses on a rotating schedule. Otsego will continue to purchase fuel, perform O&M on fueling stations as is conducted on our diesel fleet. To implement the all-day, everyday kindergarten program, there will be no direct costs reflected. - No Personnel or Fringe Benefits for the Kindergarten Teachers to staff the full time kindergarten program are paid for from this grant. The $119,070 to staff will come from Otsego's general fund. Otsego will use the savings to directly impact students and still retain a net savings. Total Project Cost: $925,000. This additional project cost reflects the addition of all cost categories above.

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

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

Otsego's propane bus project will result in significant and sustainable annual savings. Otsego Local traverses more than 100 square miles and its buses travel more than 330,000 miles each year. As described in Question 13 above and in the Financial Impact Tables, the total cost of implementing the Otsego Propane Bus Partnership project is $925,000. This cost includes propane buses and refueling stations. Additionally, it is expected that the total cost to implement a full time kindergarten program would be $85,000. This includes capital outlay for the fleet of 9 buses and annual maintenance and operation ($30,000 per bus for operation and $55,000 for capital outlay). School Bus Costs are based on a district bus specifications for standard and handicap equipped buses. These specifications were considered to be Cardinal Bus Specifications and price quotes were generated to provide the various costs for this current project. Currently, Bluebird is the only provider of factory manufactured propane powered school buses. These quotes were generated into the total cost reflected in the description. The total cost for these capital costs was $70,000. Station construction cost estimates were collected by assembling data on the number of propane buses and total gallons consumed. These data points were provided to Ferrellgas, Amerigas, and Alliance Autogas and used as basic assumptions to provide individually tailored cost quotes for district fueling infrastructure. These quotes were aggregated into the total cost reflected in the description. The total savings from the implementation of this project are derived from the data points were provided to Ferrellgas, Amerigas, and Alliance Autogas and used as basic assumptions to provide individually tailored cost quotes for district fueling infrastructure. These quotes were aggregated into the total cost reflected in the description. These cost categories were used to project the total cost of the project. The total cost for implementing the innovative project is $925,000.
since they will be realizing a savings of $2.12 per propane gallon compared to diesel. In addition to the more significant savings already realized by current propane school buses, there is broad consensus among market analysts that diesel prices will continue to rise over the five year fiscal timeframe, leading to additional savings realizations for each district.

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.

Our project expects zero new/recurring savings not expenditures. As stated above, this project is self-sustaining due to the dramatic savings associated with the project. Once up-front costs are accounted for, our savings will be realized through a new, less expensive propane fueled bus fleet. In addition, we will invest savings in new propane buses in the future-saving more money for their long term operations. The annual savings equal to $2.5 teachers for the full-year, everyday kindergarten program. This fuel savings will provide enough funding to fully pay for the 2.5 teachers needed to bring our current kindergarten program from part-time to full-time. Our infrastructure is in place to support these teachers. No additional funding will be needed. The proposal is fully self-sustaining. Finally, Otsego’s community has a history of rewarding positive results. Another benefit of this grant will be our community’s support for future levy requests due to the great value they perceive has been added by both the propane bus fleet project implementation & execution of all-day, everyday kindergarten. This future support & goodwill is highly valued by the administration team & Board of Education & cannot be overstated as a self-sustaining outcome.

D) IMPLEMENTATION

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 include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

* Proposal Timeline Dates

Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 12/18/2013

Narrative explanation

Planning Propose Bus 1) Propane School Bus Purchases: School districts awarded Straight A Funding for propane school buses will, upon receiving appropriate approvals from ODE, enter into a contract for the purchase of non-propane buses from the applicable bus dealers. Otsego has requested bus specifications for the first five that we’ve purchased and will use the same specs for all purchases. No significant changes are expected other than the propane engine and fuel systems. From the date the any propane bus order is placed, Cardinal Bus Sales and Service can guarantee delivery within 150 days. The buses are ready for immediate service. Otsego orders place by January 3 would be available by the end of June 2014. 2) Station Design and Construction: Once Otsego is awarded Straight A Funding for our permanent propane fuel station will, upon receiving appropriate approvals from ODE, enter into a contract for the design, construction, and purchase of new propane filling stations. Station packages are pre-designed, with specifications tailored to individual needs for tank capacity, number of fuel dispensers, and specific needs by station. Otsego’s engineers estimate a 45-60 day timeframe for station completion including permitting and construction. 3) Secure Propane Fuel Supply Contract: Otsego will, upon receiving appropriate approvals from ODE, enter into a contract for the purchase of propane fuel from applicable distributors. Total annual fuel volumes needed by each district have been projected for this application. Based on these amounts, Otsego will release competitive bid requests to local and national fuel suppliers for a 3-year period. Districts will easily be able to request these bid forms to advise them of the latest fuel prices. The contract for finished and purchased propane bus orders are delivered. Planning Kindergarten Project 1) Communication Otsego will, upon receiving appropriate approvals from ODE, make formal announcements regarding plans to implement all-day, everyday kindergarten. Otsego will, through its ODE, complete strategic planning for implementation. Otsego will communicate to our public through media and established community leaders. Final letters of notification to all families in our district. 2) Personnel Otsego will, upon receiving appropriate approvals from ODE, post first internally and then externally if necessary. The new kindergarten teaching positions. Job descriptions are in place for these positions. Posting will occur immediately to make sure a strong pool of applicants. Board approval of new hires will occur on or before the June BOE meeting. New personnel will be offered teacher training sessions in August and June 2014 on school systems. Resident Educators will be assigned a Resident Mentor. 3) Infrastructure/Resources/Curriculum Otsego’s campus was built to accommodate all-day, everyday kindergarten. Upon receiving approvals from ODE, Otsego’s Elementary Principal, Mrs. Murry, will begin planning stages to full equip all classrooms. She will also work on scheduling projects. All scheduling and classroom assignments will be complete by June 1. Curriculum resources and materials will be ordered and in place by August 1 as well. Possible barriers may include a surge in propane bus orders. Since Otsego has initiated places for propane buses, we are aware of turnaround timeframes for bus orders. Since grant announcements are made in December 2013 and all buses will be placed into service prior to the beginning of the 2014 yr.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 03/01/2014

Narrative explanation

Implementation Propose Bus As stated previously, implementation of the propane bus project is easily adaptable to our current operations. Buses are received, and once received, are immediately placed into service. Since Otsego has already purchased and will receive five buses, all personnel training will have been completed. Implementation Kindergarten Project Otsego’s kindergarten project is also easily adaptable. Kindergarten staff, infrastructure and resources will be in place prior to the end of the current school year. New teacher training and support will be identified and if applicable, Resident Mentors will be assigned. A major component to implementation is communication. Our public, including Otsego families, will be notified in a variety of methods 100% understand that the new program will go into effect in August 2014. Informational sessions will be planned by the elementary administrative team in conjunction with district administrators. Otsego’s Special Education Director will also be involved in implementation to ensure all students are served according to state and federal laws in the least restrictive environment. Barriers are previously outlined and include back ordering of propane buses. Otsego believes that the lead time is sufficient and has assurances from suppliers that all deadlines will be met. Additionally, Otsego qualify all contract language to assure time lines are met.

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/14/2014

Narrative explanation

Summative Evaluation Propose Bus As with any project, progress monitoring and program evaluation are important to determine if benchmarks and goals were met. Our savings as outlined within this grant and project will use baseline budgeting. We have data going back to 1986. The district fuel budget has been reduced 22% over the past 10 years. Otsego plans to purchase one propane bus each year, miles per gallon usage per bus and per fleet, actual maintenance/operation costs. The team identified in Section II will be charged with data collection and review. Additionally, if data indicates that it is not on course, the team will develop plans to reach the goal. Baseline savings, mid course adjustments will be determined and implemented to meet goals. At the end of each year, data will be compiled and compared to baseline data. The report of savings will be presented to three groups. It will be presented to the District Leadership Team, The Otsego District Advisory Council and to the Board of Education. Otsego will submit all reports and paperwork through normal procedures to the State of the Ohio Department of Education. Otsego will submit appropriate reports through CCPIC. Summative Evaluation Kindergarten Project Otsego currently has 84 students enrolled in kindergarten and 110 enrolled in first grade. Traditionally, 20% of Otsego’s students begin formal education in first grade. In part, this is based on parent perceptions of part-time versus full-time programming benefits. Our first summative evaluation will be the number of students enrolled in all-day, everyday kindergarten compared to historical numbers. We will be able to review this singular data point in September 2014 and during October/November. Longitudinal enrollment data over a period of four years will provide a consistent analysis of the success of implementing the kindergarten program. Otsego’s plan is to significantly impact student achievement. To determine the success of the full time program on student achievement, a number of data points will need to be collected and analyzed. Otsego will use Thinkgate IIIS to collect quantitative data on its students. Data will include, baseline reading and math assessments; benchmark assessments in reading and math; end of year assessments in reading and math. Otsego currently uses STAR Early Literacy and STAR Reading Assessments and Ohio Diagnostics in Math. Additional math assessments are available to our teachers and all running records. Teachers also work in teacher-based teams to identify interventions for all students. This work will continue. Teacher based team agendas and minutes will be collected as artifacts and analyzed as part of a holistic evaluation. One of the most important and often overlooked document data are perceptions in the program. District administrators in conjunction with teachers and building administrators will develop a survey to measure perceptions and interventions. A baseline survey will be completed in Spring 2014. Annual surveys will be conducted and will be used to measure change in attitudes.三是 perceptions. The survey will be created using a Likert scale and will include one data validation questions and demographic data. The goal to reduce students "not on track" as defined in the Third grade Reading Guarantee) from 19% to less than 5% - All summative project evaluation data will be made available to ODE and will be reported annually to Otsego’s Board of Education. Team members involved in the evaluation project will be responsible for preparing the annual report and presenting to appropriate parties. Otsego has successfully completed summative evaluations and its team will ensure that all data is collected accurately and in a timely manner and that reports are completed. Paperwork will be submitted according to designated due dates.

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

Otsego will perform the same operational fleet functions, the only difference will be the fuel type (i.e. propane instead of diesel). Additional health, environmental, & energy security savings possible with the execution of the full project as outlined in this grant. Addition of two & half Kindergarten teachers will support Otsego’s work to ensure that our students are on track in reading & math. Kindergarten Readiness Assessment - Literacy (KRA-L) data for Otsego’s incoming kindergarten indicates student 42% of those students scored in the 24-29 range & are ready for "enriched instruction." However, by May last year more than 20% are placed on a Reading Improvement & Monitoring Plan. We believe that providing all-day, everyday kindergarten will provide the time & resources to keep our children on track and on par with their classmates. Within this grant application, studies indicate that all-day, everyday kindergarten has significant impact on student achievement. Each of our students would receive an additional 90 days of instructional time including core reading & math curriculum. As Otsego, & the State of the Ohio, work to actively engage our students & as we fully implement the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (TGG) program, Otsego has 19% of our students in grades K-3 on Reading Improvement & Monitoring Plans (RIMP). Our goal is to dramatically reduce the number of students who are not on track for reading & math. This will include the instructional time for targeted reading & math interventions. To support the new classrooms, Otsego will implement a new schedule which supports research-based, best practices for tiered instruction. We will use the Response to Intervention model. Tier I includes whole group differentiated instruction which identifies at risk students. Tier II students are identified as not making significant progress toward reading & math goals in core instruction. Support is provided to students matched to their specific needs. Tier III students receive, individual, intensive interventions that focus on skill acquisition. Participation is provided to prepare for more severe learning gaps. In unison, this program will support all of our students to improve achievement levels. Providing additional learning time with our kindergarten student will provide our district with the time to fully implement the program ensuring that students learn to read & are prepared for first grade. As stated in the monitoring & evaluation section of this grant, we will continue to monitor & track each cohort through graduation using Thinkgate IIIs data management system. Nineteen percent of our students in grades K-3 are reported as not on track. However, only 8.5% of our kindergarteners are not on track. This downward trend in reading skills is nearly 12 points. It needs to be extinguished. Our goal is to see significant
20. Describe the rationale, research or past success that supports the innovative project and its impact on student achievement, spending reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast or utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom.

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

22. If so, how?

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

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 measured.

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

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As described throughout this application, the Otsego Local Propane Bus Project is straightforward, quantifiable, replicable, and sustainable. The project will result in substantial value and lasting impact in the following ways:

1) Immediate operational cost savings from propane vs. diesel fuel over the five year fiscal timeframe (see question 16 for details). 2) Result: Lifetime cost savings per bus with fewer repairs, the cost savings from the increased lifespan of propane vs. diesel. 3) Operating costs of propane are stable, reducing the volatility of fuel prices. 4) Result: The project will provide cost savings to Otsego and that savings will then be passed on to the students. 5) Result: Otsego will provide a cleaner burning fuel option for the district. Otsego will experience greater price stability with propane vs. diesel fuel. 6) Result: Otsego will reduce the carbon footprint of the school district and improve air quality for the community.

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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 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 ASSESSMENTS: I agree, on behalf of this applicant agency and all other identified parties to abide by all assurances outlined in the Assurance section of the CICP. In the box below, enter "I Accept" and indicate your name, title, agency/organization and today's date.