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| Adjusted Allocation | 0.00 |
| Remaining | -302,341.00 |
Application

Pymatuning Valley Local (045880) - Ashtabula County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (135)

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: Bridging the rural divide

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.

- This grant request aims to achieve an increase in overall student achievement in grades K-12 and to utilize a greater share of resources in the classroom by putting technology directly in the hands of students and teachers. We believe that we must make a break from students and teachers primarily using analog tools for learning and teaching to digital ones in order to fully partake in the kinds of learning opportunities that are only accessible through the use of these tools. Blended learning, digital student portfolios and productivity tools, new generation assessments, digital textbooks and research materials, laser focused interventions and stretch projects, and the ability for all learners (including faculty) to reflectively participate in multiple class and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Finally, we believe that a large number of students will be able to successfully matriculate in a wide-variety of dual credit course offerings while in high school using digital devices (laptops) in a blended learning setting.

3. Total Students Impacted: 1350

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

- First Name, last Name of contact for lead applicant: Michael Candela
- Organizational name of lead applicant: Pymatuning Valley Local School District
- Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 045880
- Address of lead applicant: 5571 State Route 6 West
- Phone Number of lead applicant: 4402936488
- Email Address of lead applicant: mike.candela@neomin.org

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

- First Name, last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Andrew Kuthy
- Organizational name of secondary applicant: Pymatuning Valley Middle School
- Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 064667
- Address of secondary applicant: 5545 State Route 6 West
- Phone number of secondary applicant: 4402936981
- Email address of secondary applicant: andrew.kuthy@neomin.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 (RN/Fed Tax ID), Address, Phone Number, Email Address of Contact for All Secondary Applicants in the box below.

- Pymatuning Valley Middle School Andrew Kuthy andrew.kuthy@neomin.org 5445 State Route 6 West Andover, Ohio 44003 440-293-6981 Pymatuning Valley High School Dan Jackson dan.jackson@neomin.org 5571 State Route 6 West Andover, Ohio 44003 440-293-6981 Pymatuning Valley Primary School Billie Fusco billie.fusco@neomin.org 5571 State Route 6 West Andover, Ohio 44003

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.

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.

- Implementation of this project is the responsibility of the districts leadership team. The Superintendent will lead the team and this project. The team met and developed this plan. Other members of the team include the building principals, curriculum director, special education coordinator, supervisors and teachers, and the technology coordinator. This team has been involved in the entire decision-making as it related to the stabilization of the network. Also includes are the two outside technology contractors; Suite 244 and Laketech communications. Both companies have 10 plus year of experience in network administration.

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

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

- Student achievement
- Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast
- Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

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

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

11. Describe the innovative project.

- This project is ambitious in design but its over arching goal is simple. We seek to equip our teachers and students with enough digital tools that those tools will become the primary rather than the secondary means for instruction and learning. We believe that we will not only see a significant increase in student achievement, but this increase will lead directly to increased community support for K-12 education within the district. We will also provide our students with significantly increased opportunities to access post-secondary options that will lead to a community-wide expectation that our district provide these opportunities for all students. At the primary school level we would use these tools for basic skills acquisition in reading and math that would take advantage of a wide-variety of differentiated instruction and assessment. These tools would also be used to transition students away from analog tools to digital ones as the primary means for instruction and learning. At the middle school level we would continue to use these tools for basic skills acquisition in reading and math that would also take advantage of a wide-variety of differentiated instruction and assessment but we would begin to emphasize subject matter exploration and research. These tools would also begin to replace textbooks, especially in mathematics and science. At the high school level we would continue to refine and expand upon the goals stated for the primary and middle school levels. However, we would aggressively use the technology to offer a large number of high school juniors and seniors dual credit offerings that can most easily be accessed using blended learning opportunities. It is our hope that many of our students will be able to use these credits to continue their education upon graduation from Pymatuning Valley. Final Analysis of District's Strengths: Our district is characterized as a high property, rural district. There are two significant institutions in the district; school and church. Many if not most of the after school activities that our students participate in are an extension of these institutions. One of the great strengths of the district is the community values evidenced in the people. We see in the significant numbers of people who attend our athletic contests, plays and concerts and a wide variety of other special events. In addition, we enjoy a broad based support for our schools' mission and good school behavior is the normative expectation of all stake holders. We believe that this plays a significant role in the districts' record of relatively high achievement. Analysis of District's Challenges (Problems) that the Grant Request Addresses: We see maintaining the high levels of academic achievement as students progress throughout our system and helping our high school juniors and seniors choose some kind of post-secondary option upon high school graduation as our two greatest challenges. We see a drop off of student growth as our students progress from the primary school to the secondary means for instruction and learning.
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 include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

* Proposal Timeline Dates
  Plan (MM/DD/YYYY): 03/01/2014
  Narrative explanation

With this grant, the goals of the district’s strategic plan will be implemented, the board will need to formulate new policy, the instructional staff will take part in extensive professional development and the new instructional and assessment directions that will take place need to be communicated to parents, students and staff on an ongoing and participatory basis. In addition to our district learning community we will need to work with the school districts who have agreed to be part of the proposed dual credit consortium in order to coordinate shared services and in turn the board and district leaders will be able to better communicate with all stakeholders.

Implement (MM/DD/YYYY): 04/01/2014

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.

The Straight A Financial Impact Template forecasting the expected changes to the five year forecast resulting from implementation of this project has been attached as supportive documentation.

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

302,341.00 * 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, RIT 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.).

All of the buildings in our district are on one campus and share one network. We use a thin-client environment that was layered over a dated backbone. This has created many reliability issues. As the district prepares for the new online assessments and introduces on-line learning and an on-campus post-secondary option, we must have a dependable and reliable network to effectively implement the changes. The Straight A grant budgets will allow the district to divide the current network into three sub networks; each independent of one another. It will also provide for a wireless environment so that the students can access technology from anywhere in the district. RIT will be used to purchase the devices necessary to access the upgraded network. The budget reflects $66,000 to develop layer three and wireless technology. $30,000 is necessary for layer 3 hardware, $22,000 is required for wireless hardware and $9,000 is the one time labor cost for installation. The life span on the equipment is 10-12 years.

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.

40,000.00 * 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.

The district will “set-aside” $10,000 per year from the general fund to repair and replace equipment on a rotational basis. We believe that we will be on a four year cycle of equipment replacement for the high school and a four to six year cycle of equipment replacement for the primary and middle schools. The replacement cycles are necessary for two reasons: first, laptop or net book computers will break down and second, technology will soon become obsolete. We believe that professional development will be costliest during the first equipment cycle and then will be drastically reduced for subsequent cycles because staff who have been not as comfortable or as familiar with digital tools will be trained to catch up with those who are much more adept.

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

67,000.00 * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

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

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

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.

We see this proposed project sustaining itself through local community support. It is the fostering of such support that we feel is the most innovative aspect of our request. In the proposed project, we believe that the implementation of the project will meet the goal of increased student achievement because it will allow all students to efficiently and effectively use web based interventions and blended learning on a higher level. The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

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.

The project will meet the goal of increased student achievement because it will allow all students to efficiently and effectively use web-based academic interventions and blended-learning on a higher level. This is not possible with our technology infrastructure as it currently exists and the ubiquitous student use of wireless devices would be unthinkable. In addition, all of the proposed infrastructure improvements will contribute to bringing more resources to the classroom, now and in the future. Finally, we have been forced to make piecemeal fixes and enhancements to our district’s network that have been costly overtime where we have lost valuable instructional opportunities and can never seem to keep our system current with growing technical requirements (capacity). We will save money now and in the future by doing this right the first time!

11. What challenges were encountered during the development and implementation of this project? How were these challenges overcome? If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, explain how the project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

10. What changes, if any, are expected to result from the project? If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, explain how the project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area. The Straight A Financial Impact Template forecasting the expected changes to the five year forecast resulting from implementation of this project has been attached as supportive documentation.

19. What were the biggest challenges encountered during the development and implementation of this project? How were these challenges overcome? If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, explain how the project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

20. What are the specific benefits of this project? How will these benefits be realized? If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, describe how this project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

21. How do you anticipate this project will impact community relationships? Provide examples. If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, explain how this project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.

22. How do you anticipate this project will impact the local economy? Provide examples. If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, explain how this project will address funding needs.

The anticipated cost savings will be that of a full time staff position that will not need to be replaced at the high school due to sharing services of one dual credit coordinator between our district, Grand Valley and Jefferson Area.
With this grant, the goals of the district's strategic plan will be able to be implemented; the board will need to formulate new policy, the instructional staff will take part in extensive professional development and the new instructional and assessment directions that will take place need to be communicated to parents, students and staff on an ongoing and participatory basis. In addition to our district learning community we will need to work with the school districts who have agreed to be part of the proposed dual credit consortium in order to coordinate shared services and in turn the consortium of districts will work with the matriculating college or university to share a dual credit teacher(s) for little or no cost to the participating districts. Ongoing communication and flexibility with all stake holders will be the key to successfully implementing this plan. All new hardware will be onsite and prepped for installation by April 3, 2014. Installation, testing, and debugging will occur the week of April 6th to coincide with the district spring break. This will allow for the migration to occur while classes are not in session. The contractor will be able to install and test the system without disrupting the operation of the school. The largest barrier at this stage will be ensuring that the outside contractor stays on schedule. The supply break is a "must hit" date for the district. Often outside contractors don't understand the importance of not disrupting the school day. The technology director is responsible for monitoring the progress and ensuring that we hit that date. In summary, this grant will allow students (K-12) and instructional staff to fully partake in the kinds of learning opportunities that are only accessible through the wide-spread use of digital tools (Laptops and notebooks); blended learning, digital student portfolios and productivity tools, new generation assessments, digital textbooks and research materials, laser focused interventions and stretch projects, and the ability for all learners (including faculty) to reflectively participate in multiple class and cross-curricular learning opportunities.

Summative evaluation (MM/DD/YYYY): 06/01/2014

By June 1, 2014 the project will be completed. We will have a six week period, where school is in session, to debug and test the new system while it is in full use. This will be full implementation and when the project is considered complete. In summary, this grant will allow students (K-12) and instructional staff to fully partake in the kinds of learning opportunities that are only accessible through the wide-spread use of digital tools (Laptops and notebooks); blended learning, digital student portfolios and productivity tools, new generation assessments, digital textbooks and research materials, laser focused interventions and stretch projects, and the ability for all learners (including faculty) to reflectively participate in multiple class and cross-curricular learning opportunities.

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

We expect to see a significantly increased number of students being able to use web-based assessment for formative and summative purposes by instructional staff. We expect instructional practices will change from teacher-focused to student-focused. We see our instructional staff becoming guides and coaches who can diagnose and analyze a wide array of individual and group needs for either stretch or remediation and to prescribe individual, differentiated solutions to help all of our learners reach their potential. Their and our students will now have the tools to realize this vision.

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.

We acknowledge that digital tools are ubiquitous in both business and the consumer market. People use these tools in all aspects of their lives. We believe that we must do the same in order to offer our students a 21st Century education; anything less would leave us irrelevant and our students grossly underserved.

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

Yes

22. If so, how?

The key to making this plan work for us and any other district regardless of their cultural setting is strong initial professional development and then an ongoing reflective learning community culture that can judge the effectiveness of what has taken place and make changes (large or small) as needed. In addition, board policy must accurately reflect the need to make these instructional changes and acknowledge the opportunities and challenges that are on one student to digital tool (or nearly so) will bring. In addition, ongoing communication with the district's community, especially parents and students for support and then sustainability is critical. Finally, staff needs to be encouraged and given sufficient latitude to experiment with their own praxis in order to make key instructional changes in their practice using digital tools.

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

We hope by putting a large number of digital productivity tools in the hands of our students we will exponentially increase student achievement. We see this as key to guiding and coaching our students to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners who will successfully seek out and participate in educational opportunities throughout their lives. These opportunities will be critical for their successful participation as citizens and workers.

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.

As our benchmark for determining if this project helps increase overall student achievement in grades K-12 we will use the district's growth measure and PIIs from year to year as the benchmark measurement. In addition, we will count the number of students participating in dual credit course and separately, the number of credits earned.

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 methodology we will use for measuring the outcomes mentioned in question 24 is a simple numerical comparison. We will use this district's and individual buildings' 2014 PIIs and growth measure as the benchmark year then we will compare all subsequent years to that year to determine increased achievement. In addition we will count the number of students participating in a dual credit course and separately, the number of credits earned. 2015 will be the benchmark year for this measure and we will expect at least a 10% increase in each year thereafter. We will make sure that instructional staff is meeting in teacher-based teams four times a year to reflect on what is working and what needs changed. They will report to the building-based teams who in turn will report to the district-improvement team. We believe that changes and experimentation first worked out with teacher-based teams and then sharing their successes and challenges in their individual buildings and those teams in turn sharing with the district team will ensure the highest degree of teacher participation and build a more long lasting culture for sustaining the kinds of change we hope to achieve.

By virtue of applying for the Straight A Fund, all applicants agree to participate in the overall evaluation of the Straight A Fund for the duration of the evaluation timeframe. The Governing Board of the Straight A Fund reserves the right to conduct evaluation of the plan and request additional information in the form of data, surveys, interviews, focus groups, and any other related data to the legislature, governor, and other interested parties for an overall evaluation of the Straight A Fund.

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

Accept Michael Candela, Superintendent Pymatuning Valley Local School District 10/25/2013