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Adjusted Allocation 0.00
Remaining -328,889.00
Applicants shall respond to the prompts or questions in the areas listed below in a narrative form.

**A) APPLICATION INFORMATION - General Information, Experience and Capacity**

1. **Project Title:** Closing The Gap

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 goal of Closing the Gap is to raise student achievement. The project will use a multifaceted approach which will address the needs of all stakeholders. Professional development will be at the heart of the project and it will bring systemic change through improved instructional practices and increased technology.

302 High Street, South Point, OH 45680

4. **Lead applicant primary contact:** - Please provide the following information:

   - First Name, Last Name of contact for lead applicant: Thomas J. Howard
   - Organizational name of lead applicant: South Point Local Schools
   - Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 047951
   - Address of lead applicant: 302 High Street, South Point OH, 45680
   - Phone Number of lead applicant: 740-377-4315 ext. 6004
   - Email Address of lead applicant: thoward@southpoint.k12.oh.us

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

   - First Name, Last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Tresa Baker
   - Organizational name of secondary applicant: South Point Local Schools
   - Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 047951
   - Address of secondary applicant: 302 High Street, South Point, OH 45680
   - Phone number of secondary applicant: 740-377-4315 ext. 6002
   - Email address of secondary applicant: tbaker@southpoint.k12.oh.us

6. **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.

   [Upload Grant Application Attachment]

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.

   [Upload Grant Application Attachment]

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.

   Thomas J. Howard, am the Assistant Superintendent of South Point Local Schools. This is my fourteenth year in education. I was a classroom teacher for six years, middle school assistant principal for two years, middle school principal for five years, and this is my first year in the central office. During my time in education I have been a part of High Schools That Work/Making Middle Grades Work grants. As building principal, I was responsible for managing funds and implementing the innovations surrounding the Ten Key Practices. Some of those projects were, but are not limited to: developing an advisor/adviser program, creating a literacy team, working as an OIP facilitator, and Response to Intervention.

**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.

   The project proposal is a multifaceted approach to raise student achievement. The goal of the project is to provide the teachers in our district with the resources needed to meet the needs of all learners. The main focus of the project is to address the needs of need identified by completion of the Decision Framework. South Point Local Schools have proven to be deficient in the areas of professional development and the achievement of students with disabilities. The first piece of the project is to create a learning community in which teachers gain access to targeted professional development. The district plans to improve instruction through this professional development, which in turn will close the achievement gaps. The first phase of the project will be to purchase an agreement with PD360. This research based program will provide teachers and administrators with professional development and tools to make more efficient use of time and money. The program is stocked with countless videos on various educational topics. The professional development and tools provided within the program align perfectly to both common core and the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System. Teachers and administrators will have online access to this professional development anytime and anywhere for their scheduling convenience. Local Professional Development Committee credit will also be issued for this professional development helping teachers grow and renew licenses without missing valuable instructional time. This phase will be supplemented by the purchase of books to create a professional library which will be available to staff for ongoing professional development. The topics will include: differentiated instruction, clear learning targets, focused feedback, formative assessments and common core. The books will be housed in our school libraries and can be a valuable resource for new staff. The second phase of the project consists of purchasing licenses for the READ 180 program by Scholastic. READ 180 is a research based program that consists of whole group instruction followed by small group rotations which consist of small group instruction, individual instructional software time, and modeled independent reading. This program is designed to provide the type of differentiated instruction necessary to close the achievement gaps of our students. This program provides data driven instruction in the areas that are most critical for each individual student. The final phase of the project will be to enhance the district's technology. In order to implement the new instructional strategies and intervention program the district will purchase three hundred new IPADS, IPAD cases, and twelve carts. The IPADS will be divided among the school buildings to provide three mobile IPAD labs in each school in the district. Students will be able to access the information and content necessary from any classroom in the school building. This will provide flexibility in scheduling and will also create more opportunities for differentiation to occur. The IPADS are also PARCC compatible which will save the district money in the future while at the same time giving students the opportunity to practice completing performance based tasks online. The South Point District has been selected as a pilot district for PARCC this school year and must prepare accordingly.
The goals of this project are two-fold. First the project will increase student achievement by meeting specific needs of both teachers and students. As part of the Ohio Improvement Process, South Point was required to complete the Decision Framework and complete the needs assessment. This process led the district to identify to main weaknesses: achievement of students with disabilities and professional development. These areas of weakness are interrelated. The lack of professional development has caused inconsistent instructional practices with limited opportunities for quality intervention and feedback. The main goals of the district are to improve both reading and math achievement of student subgroups so that they may reach the Annual Measurable Objective Targets. In order to accomplish these goals, we must implement a system for High Quality professional development to give the teachers the tools and resources they need to be successful. The use of the PD 360 program along with the supplemental books will allow teachers to gain new knowledge and insights on the areas of instruction and assessment necessary to improve. The South Point Local District is making a more focused effort to provide quality intervention to students with disabilities. The READ 180 program was designed to provide the support necessary to raise the achievement levels of struggling learners. Research has proven that when implemented correctly the program does in fact increase achievement gains. The technology component of the project proposal serves multiple purposes. First is to supplement the new PARCC assessments.

### 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.

Financial impact _047951 has been uploaded. Project budget has been entered.

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

328,899.00 * 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, RTfT money, local funding, foundation support, etc.). Any new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

31,885.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

* Narrative explanation/rationale: Provide details on the items cost 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.

There are recurring costs associated with the project proposal. First, the PD360 is an annual license, meaning each year after the grant we will be required to pay $20,985 to renew. The next recurring costs will be the technical support associated with the READ 180 program. This will be cost of $8,400 a year. The only other recurring cost will be any upgrades or updates to the software programs and the IPADS and is estimated at $2,500 annually. The definite, total recurring cost will be $31,885 annually.

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

31,885.00 * Specific amount of new/recurring cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

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

The Read 180 (Intervention) Program will be substituted for the current after school intervention program resulting in an annual cost reduction. Savings will be: salaries/benefits reduced by $31,320; materials reduced by $62,595 (On-going Professional Development) will reduce the costs associated with traditional professional development. Costs of travel for PD including lodging, registration, mileage and the costs of substitutes are anticipated to save: salaries/benefits reduced by $19,625; travel/registration costs reduced by $8,650.

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.

Josing The Gap is a self-sustaining proposal. Each section of the project includes in reduced forms that show its sustainability. First the PD360 will be more cost efficient due to the reduction in expenses associated with travel for professional development. The cost of registration, lodging, meals, mileage, and substitute teachers exceed the cost of PD360. The new Ohio Teacher Evaluation system requires that a struggling teacher be assigned an improvement plan to receive targeted professional development in their areas of weakness. PD360 will allow opportunities for this with the simple pick of a button and without significant travel costs. The cost of the supplemental books is a one time item. The books will be divided among the four buildings and used for Building Leadership Team and Teacher Buy-in. The READ 180 Intervention System is an annual cost that will be covered by the grant money. The district will only be responsible to pay for annual technical support, the district will go on to discontinue the after-school intervention program that has proved largely ineffective. This will save on the cost of salaries, transportation, and snacks that were paid for by the district. Instead the students who need targeted intervention will receive it during the school day and at their convenience. The cost of the mobile IPAD labs is mainly an up front cost as well. This will enable the district to become more PARCC ready which will save future technology costs.

### 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 addition, 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.)

* Narrative explanation

The South Point Local Schools began brainstorming ideas for a project proposal in mid-September. The District Leadership Team met on September 27, 2013 and then was discussion concerning areas of need and strategies to identify and explore those areas. Research began on programs that could increase professional development for teachers and programs that could provide high quality intervention to students with disabilities. The district contacted Sarah Walsh, a PD360 representative on October 4, 2013 and scheduled a meeting and presentation for October 16, 2013 for the district administrators. The administrators were also set up with a free thirty day trial of PD360 at this time. The district consulted with Portsmouth City Schools who had recently purchased the program to gain information on its effectiveness. On October 18, 2013 South Point Local contacted Steve McBride the regional representative for READ 180 to discuss the program and a quote for pricing. The district also contacted Dawson Bryant Local Schools, a neighboring district to get input about the READ 180 program that they had implemented a few years earlier. The district also purchased half of the mobile IPAD labs needed for the project. The project was discussed with teachers, administrators, board of education members and parents. Potential barriers to the plan were buy in. These issues were addressed by using meeting times that were already in place to discuss our ideas for the proposal and by involving the stakeholders in the decision making.

Implementation _047951: 01/06/2014

* Narrative explanation

South Point Local Schools plan to purchase a one year license with PD360 beginning in January of 2014. In-service training on the program will be provided and implementation will begin for the second quarter of the school year. The district will purchase the second half of the mobile IPAD carts in February of 2014. South Point will provide in-service training in August 2014. Full implementation of the cumulative project will occur in August of 2014. The district will monitor the effectiveness of the plan by communicating regularly with the stakeholders. Student and staff surveys will be conducted to gauge the levels of implementation and effectiveness of all programs. Teachers will meet with parents of students assigned to the project to discuss student progress. The district will continue to remain in touch with our regional representatives of both PD360 and READ 180. South Point will also work to build a network of support with Dawson Bryant Local and Portsmouth City Schools to share information about potential barriers and pitfalls associated with implementation of these programs. Both of these districts are located in close proximity to our district and will be implementing these programs prior to South Point's implementation. One barrier to implementation will be a lack of proper training on how to use the full capabilities of PD360, READ 180, and the IPAD labs. To combat this South Point must rely on the training provided by the regional representatives of each.
The goal of the project is to show growth in student achievement each year over several years. The summative evaluation of this project however can be completed after the first year of implementation. The data that South Point Local Schools receive on the state report card in June will provide all of the empirical evidence necessary to evaluate the project. The district will also collect survey data from stakeholders to gauge the implementation and effectiveness of the project.

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

The main goal of this project will be to increase student achievement through improved instruction. PD360 will provide teachers with the tools and knowledge they need to differentiate lessons using a variety of strategies and assessments. Teachers will be able to provide clear learning targets to focus student attention on each lesson. The teachers will use differentiated strategies like mini-lessons, Post-Its, think-pair-share, and a scaffolding, jigsaw, and learn-like-life to relate new material to prior knowledge and real-life experiences. Finally teachers will be able to provide specific feedback that will help students improve. The supplemental books are also directly tied to improving instruction. The READ 180 will mainly be used to focus on our students with disabilities subgroup. The blended reading instruction practices will meet the needs of students with different learning styles and on different reading skill levels. The strategies and skills developed by targeted reading intervention will show cross-curricular gains in achievement. Students with disabilities often benefit from small group instruction and guided practice which are two key components of READ 180. The purchase of the mobile IPAD labs will provide another instrument for teachers to differentiate lessons to students. The IPAD labs will also enable students to become more familiar with professional-based tasks that will be prevalent on the PARCC assessment.

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.

Statistically significant advantages were identified favoring schools with PD360. The higher the quantified utilization, the greater the statistical advantage. High utilization led to performance advantages ranging from twice to 15 times the gains in proficiency rates versus district averages. Low utilization led to gains in proficiency rates from 10% to twice the district averages. In 2011, independent researcher Steven Shaha, DBA, PhD, released findings which show that students from 422 Title One schools using PD360 significantly outperformed their districts from one year to the next. Students in the Title One schools study group improved reading scores by 4.8%, whereas their peers throughout the district only improved by 0.1%. Math scores show the Title One schools using PD360 improved student scores by 7.3% and district schools declining by -5.9% creating a performance gap of 13.2%. READ 180 has more than a decade of validation through research on the effectiveness of the program. In 2009 the Columbus City Schools in Columbus, OH implemented READ 180 for 1158 struggling students based on OAA scores and other results. READ 180 students demonstrated significant improvements in performance on the OAA. Of the students who scored Basic on the OAA pretest, 43% reached the Proficient performance level or above. Of the students who scored in the Limited performance level on the OAA pretest, 92% moved up at least one performance level. The Des Moines Public School System in Iowa implemented READ 180 with 1200 special education students in 2000. After a five year study results revealed that students in READ 180 showed 1.43 years of growth while non-READ 180 students only grew 1.02 years. This empirical research shows the validity and reliability of these programs to improve student achievement and help close the achievement gap.

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

Yes

22. If so, how?

Other districts in Ohio can easily replicate the project with the proper funds. The PD360 and READ 180 programs are available to all districts. Districts may also upgrade the technology available to IPADs if the funding is available. These programs are linked together in a systemic model for change. By increasing the professional development for instructional improvement, providing targeted intervention, and supplying the appropriate technology to implement these initiatives school districts can increase their achievement gains over time. The model would be to implement the PD360 along with the IPADs first to establish a solid foundation. The READ 180 would be phased in after the technology was available and the proper training and professional development was acquired.

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

The project hopes to bring about lasting change to the instructional practices of the South Point Local District. In order to meet the needs of diverse learners, it is imperative that the district differentiate instruction and assessment. The district must at the same time monitor student progress and provide specific targeted intervention to individual struggling students. By doing so the district hopes to raise the achievement levels of all students but specifically hopes to close the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. The district also seeks to provide technology that allows for the improvement of instruction and assessment practices. The goals of implementing both the PD360 program, the supplemental books, the READ 180 program and the mobile IPAD labs are as follows: Increase Reading Achievement Levels of all students by 5% annually evidenced by OAA and OGT scores. Increase Math Achievement Levels of all students by 5% annually as evidenced by OAA and OGT scores. Increase the AMO percentage of students with disabilities in reading by 10% annually. Increase the AMO percentage of students with disabilities in math by 10% annually.

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 necessarily be benchmarked.

Student achievement goals are as follows. Raise reading achievement levels of all students by 5% annually as evidenced by OAA and OGT results. Raise math achievement levels of all students by 5% annually as evidenced by OAA and OGT results. Increase the AMO percentage of students with disabilities in reading by 10% annually as evidenced by OAA and OGT results. Increase the AMO percentage of students with disabilities in math by 10% annually as evidenced by OAA and OGT results. The district proposal is placing a greater share of resources into the classroom which in turn should also lead to these quantifiable achievement gains. Another desired effect of placing a greater share of resources in the classrooms is that the district hopes to create a professional learning community. South Point Local hopes to produce data on teacher collaboration and the impact it has on student learning.

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.

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.

Thomas J. Howard, Assistant Superintendent, South Point Local Schools, 10/24/2013