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Adjusted Allocation 0.00

Remaining -13,327,493.00
**A) APPLICANT INFORMATION - General Information**

1. **Project Title:**
   Ohio Blended Learning Network Middle School - Statewide

2. **Executive summary:** Please limit your responses to no more than three sentences.
   The Ohio Blended Learning Network 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 through high-quality blended learning in the grades 5-9 classrooms of 11,498 students across 35 buildings and 16 districts and schools across the state, shepherded into place by Education Elements, one of the nation’s leading providers of blended learning expertise, and a team of experienced partners. The consortium proposal also seeks to build capacity in Ohio and the will among others to make those same shifts in other schools and districts, sparking a movement in the state to personalize student learning through high-quality blended learning.

   This is an ultra-concise description of the overall project. It should not include anything other than a brief description of the project and the goals it hopes to achieve.

3. **Total Students Impacted:**
   11,498

   This is the number of students that will be directly impacted by implementation of the project. This does not include students that may be impacted if the project is replicated or scaled up in the future.

4. **Please indicate which of the following grade levels will be impacted:**

   - Pre-K Special Education
   - Kindergarten
   - 1
   - 2
   - 3
   - 4
   - 5
   - 6
   - 7
   - 8
   - 9
   - 10
   - 11
   - 12

5. **Lead applicant primary contact:** - Provide the following information:

   **First Name, last Name of contact for lead applicant**
   Matthew Miller

   **Organizational name of lead applicant**
   Mentor Public Schools

   **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

6. **Are you submitting your application as a consortium?** - Select one checkbox below

   - Yes
   - No

   If you are applying as consortium, please list all consortium members by name on the "Consortium Member" page by clicking on the link below. If an educational service center is applying as the lead applicant for a consortium, the first consortium member entered must be a client district of the educational service center.

   Add Consortium Members

7. **Are you partnering with anyone to plan, implement, or evaluate your project?** - Select one checkbox below
B) PROJECT DESCRIPTION - Overall description of project and alignment with goals

8. Describe the innovative project - Provide the following information

The response should provide a clear and concise description of the project and its major components. Later questions will address specific outcomes and the measures of success.

The current state or problem to be solved; and

Too few students in Ohio classrooms are getting an education that will make them competitive in the global workplace. Just 28% of OH graduates taking the ACT were considered college ready - a key benchmark of global competitiveness. In overall achievement, Ohio got a C+ on the Education Week Quality Counts 2014. In order to see significant improvement in student outcomes, against a backdrop of ever-higher standards and greater needs, Ohio needs to embrace innovations that disrupt the status quo and personalize learning for every child - a strategy that is strongly linked to improved student achievement. Innovator Clayton Christensen makes a persuasive argument, "Every student learns in a different way... A key step toward making school intrinsically motivating is to customize an education to match the way each child best learns. To introduce customization, schools need to move away from the monolithic instruction of batches of students toward a modular, student-centered approach using software as an important delivery vehicle." This proposal seeks to make fundamental shifts in teaching and learning to personalize education by using technology smarter in middle school classrooms of 11,498 students so that more of them become globally competitive. This proposal is also designed to build capacity and the will for others in Ohio 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 Ohio. In the typical classroom, teachers must too often teach to the middle, meaning that few students get what they need. While technology is in many classrooms, the productive use of that technology to change instruction has not occurred.

The proposed innovation and how it relates to solving the problem or improving on the current state.

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 basics 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. This proposal engages Education Elements, the nation's leading provider of PD on blended learning, which has helped more than 100 schools across the country implement high-quality blended learning, including award-winning districts like Mentor Public Schools and Reynoldsburg City Schools in Ohio. The state has acknowledged through policy changes the efficacy of blended learning, but Ohio struggles to provide high-quality demonstrations and widespread application. This proposal incorporates activities that will seed the state with high-quality innovations, support them in their development, build capacity for replications, and draw attention to these lighthouses of innovation. This proposal trains trainers in each of the schools and districts and in Educational Service Centers across the state. It also creates blended learning training centers in three regions. As the lighthouses of innovation become beacons for others, the innovation of blended learning will spread through purposeful outreach identified in this proposal. Finally, this advances the work of the Ohio Blended Learning Network, which was established to support districts, set high-quality standards, and help create an education credential for blended learning. This Network represents a total enrollment of more than 200,000 students across the state and will continue reforms after the grant period.

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

Applicants should select any and all goals the proposal aims to achieve. The description of how the goals will be met should provide the reader with a clear understanding of what the project will look like when implemented, with a clear connection between the components of the project and the stated goals of the fund. If partnerships/consortia are part of the project, this section should describe briefly how the various entities will work together in the project. More detailed descriptions of the roles and activities will be addressed in Question 16.

[ ] Student achievement (Describe the specific changes in student achievement you anticipate as a result of this innovation (include grade levels, content areas as appropriate) in the box below.)

The Ohio Blended Learning Network anticipates that the implementation of blended learning into 35 schools in 16 districts will result in a significant increase in student achievement and a significant improvement in student behavior. At the end of the first year, the Network anticipates that student behavior will improve in grades 5-9. After two years, the Network anticipates continued improvement in student behavior and also gains of at least 20% in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding passing rates on academic assessments across subjects. At the end of five years, the Network anticipates overall gains in student behavior and gains in academic achievement of at least 80%. The promise of blended learning is that technology enhances and extends the skills of teachers in a way that is more engaging for students and more satisfying for teachers. The goals will be met as teachers shift instructional practice with the support of Education Elements, one of the nation's premier providers of technical expertise in blended learning. The project will focus on the following elements: 1. Smaller Group Instruction + Blended learning models leverage technology to provide more opportunities for small group instruction. Teachers will be able to focus and differentiate among students, groups. 2. 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. 3. Integration of Digital Content + Digital content programs are layered into a teacher's lesson plan and can be used by students for instruction, practice, or creation. 4. 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. 3. 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. 4. Personalization + The ultimate focus of blended learning is to create an environment for personalized learning. Through changes in the classroom model and the instructional strategies described, students have
10. Which of the following best describes the proposed project? - (Select one)

- New - never before implemented
- Existing: Never implemented in your community school or school district but proven successful in other educational environments
- Mixed Concept: Incorporates new and existing elements
- Established: Elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school or consortium partnership

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for ongoing funding of the project, cost breakdown

11. Financial Documentation: - All applicants must enter or upload the following supporting information. The information in these documents must correspond to your responses in questions 11-14.

* Enter a project budget in CCIP (by clicking the link below)

Enter Budget

* If applicable, upload the Consortium Budget Worksheet (by clicking the link below)

* Upload the Financial Impact Table (by clicking the link below)
11. Will there be any anticipated savings as a result of implementing the project?

Responses should provide rationale and evidence for each of the budget items and associated costs outlined in the project budget. In no case should the total projected expenses in the budget narrative exceed the total projected costs in the budget grid.

13,327,493.00 State the total project cost.

* Provide a brief narrative explanation of the overall budget.

PERSONAL SERVICES – $215,400 Instruction $140,400 - Provides stipends to each district and school staff of the consortium members to be coordinators for consortium grant project, which includes $2,000 per building coordinator and $4,400 for district-level staff. Governance/Administration $75,000 - Provides $75,000 to Mentor Public Schools to offset the administrative costs of serving as the lead applicant and fiscal agent. PURCHASED SERVICES - $7,363,093 Instruction $1,022,645 - Provides an 18-month package to the members of the consortium to pay for the Education Elements platform at $35 per student and $7,500 per building set up fee. Governance/Administration $193,791 - Provides support to the University of Cincinnati Economics Center for evaluation of the Ohio Blended Learning Network Consortium grant-funded project. $977,124 - Provides support to Smarter Schools, for grants and project management and oversight. Includes overhead for Smarter Schools. Provides for staff time to conduct monthly site visits for grant compliance. Provides for writers in three districts to write reform for a report. Provides support to implement civic outreach plan to build support among local stakeholders. Provides $5 per student per year for two years) to support the Ohio Blended Learning Network. Amounts cover all travel and expenses for contractors Professional Development $5,169,534 - Provides funds to applicants to pay for technical assistance and coaching from Education Elements. Includes consulting time for a readiness assessment, on-site planning and design support, regional convenings, and on-line technical assistance. Amount covers all travel and expenses for the contractor. $296,825 - Provides support to Educational Service Centers on a $25 per pupil basis to provide staff member to participate in 100 hours of blended learning training. $600,000 – Provides $300,000 to the Mayerson Academy and $150,000 each to Mentor Public Schools Reynoldsburg City School to develop blended learning training centers. $80,000 - Provides $80,000 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 - $2,874,500 Instruction $2,874,500 - Provides support to each of the consortium members to purchase digital content, calculated at a rate of $225 per pupil. CAPITAL OUTLAY - $2,874,500 Instruction $2,874,500 - Provides support to each of the 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 $100 per student for other technology devices (carts, homeworks, and equipment to increase bandwidth of Internet access.) TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: $13,327,493

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

13. Will there be any costs incurred as a result of maintaining and sustaining the project after June 30th of your grant year?

Sustainability costs include any ongoing spending related to the grant project after June 30th of your grant year. Examples of sustainability costs include annual professional development, equipment maintenance, and software license agreements. To every extent possible, rationale for the specific amounts given should be outlined. The costs outlined in the narrative section should be consistent and verified by the financial documentation submitted and explained in the Financial Impact Table. If the project does not have sustainability costs, applicants should explain why.

Yes - If yes, provide a narrative explanation of your sustainability costs as detailed in the Financial Impact Table in the box below.

No - If no, please explain why (i.e. maintenance plan included in purchase price of equipment) in the box below.

We have developed this as a turn-key project with staff being trained to be trainers so that districts could expand and maintain the project within their existing resources. We have included in the two-year package provisions to cover the short-term costs that may arise going forward.

14. Will there be any expected savings as a result of implementing the project?

Yes
Applicants with sustainability costs in question 13 or seeking to achieve significant advancement in spending reductions in the five-year forecast must address this response. Expected savings should match the information provided by the applicant in the Financial Impact Table. All spending reductions must be verifiable, permanent, and credible. Applicants may only respond "No" if the project will not incur any increased costs as a result of maintaining and sustaining the project after June 30th of your grant year. The Governing Board will use the cost savings as a tiebreaker between applications with similar scores during its final selection process. Cost savings will be calculated as the amount of expected cost savings less sustainability costs relative to the project budget.

0.00 If yes, specify the amount of annual expected savings. If no, enter 0.

If yes, provide details on the expected savings (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.). If no, please explain.

We believe ultimately that schools and districts will save money over the long haul with blended learning. But the best bet for this consortium was to see how blended learning can improve achievement and productivity and wait to see how the costs work out.

15. Provide a brief explanation of how the project is self-sustaining.

All Straight A Fund grant projects must be expenditure neutral. For applications with increased ongoing spending as documented in question 11-14, this spending must be offset by expected savings or reallocation of existing resources. These spending reductions must be verifiable, permanent, and credible. This information must match the information provided in your Financial Impact Table. Projected additional income may not be used to offset increased ongoing spending because additional income is not allowed by statute. Please consider inflationary costs like salaries and maintenance fees when considering whether increased ongoing spending has been offset for at least five years after June 30th of your grant year. For applications without increased ongoing spending as documented in questions 11-14, please demonstrate how you can sustain the project without incurring any increased ongoing costs.

For educational service centers and county boards of developmental disabilities that are members of a consortium, any increased ongoing spending at the educational service center or county board of developmental disabilities may also be offset with the verifiable, permanent, and credible spending reductions of other members of the consortium. This increased ongoing spending must be less than or equal to the sum of the spending reductions for the entire consortium.

Explain in detail how this project will sustain itself for at least five years after June 30th of your grant year.

We have delivered a professional development model in which existing staff is trained to train others in blended learning. The heavy lift for blended learning -- PD, devices and content -- are supported by the grant in the short term.

D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, scope of work and contingency planning

16. Please provide a brief description of the team or individuals responsible for the implementation of this project, including other consortium members and/or partners.

This response should include a list of qualifications for the applicant and others associated with the grant. If the application is for a consortium or a partnership, the lead should provide information on its ability to manage the grant in an effective and efficient manner. Include the partner/consortium members’ qualifications, skills and experience with innovative project implementation and projects of similar scope.

Enter Implementation Team information by clicking the link below:

Add Implementation Team

For Questions 17-19 please describe each phase of your project, including its timeline, scope of work, and anticipated barriers to success.

A complete response to these questions will demonstrate specific awareness of the context in which the project will be implemented, the major barriers that need to be overcome and the time it will take to implement the project with fidelity. A strong plan for implementing, communicating and coordinating the project should be outlined, including coordination and communication in and amongst members of the consortium or partnership (if applicable). It is recognized that specific action steps may not be included, but the outline of the major implementation steps should demonstrate a thoughtful plan for achieving the goals of the project. The time line should reflect significant and important milestones in an appropriate and reasonable time frame.

17. Planning - Activities prior to the grant implementation

* Date Range August 2013 - August 2014

* List of scope of work (activities and/or events including project evaluation discussions, communication and coordination among entities).

Important Milestones August 2013: Smarter Schools forms partnership with Education Elements to implement high-quality blended learning in Ohio. October 2013: Ohio Blended Learning consortium formed and submits Straight A Fund grant outlining plans to seed the state with high-quality blended learning that will personalize learning for 13,000 students across the state and build capacity to deliver the innovation to thousands more. January 2014: The Ohio Blended Learning Network is established and Matt Miller, Superintendent of Mentor Public Schools, is named chair. February 2014: The Network conducts a webinar for interested applicants to join in the consortium grants for middle school, elementary school and career centers, and the Network connects with education stakeholders at a dinner reception in Columbus. April 2014: The Ohio Blended Learning Network submits five Straight A Fund consortium grants for districts and schools across the state that represent a total enrollment of more than 200,000 students. The Network represents a diverse membership from a small charter school in Cleveland to the state’s largest school district, Columbus City Schools. May 2014: The Network meets with education stakeholders on possible partnerships, developing educator credentials, and working with legislators on blended learning credentials. July 2014: Project team leads meet to establish final process design for project roll out, including timelines and roles and responsibilities. August 2014: Education Elements leads Foundations Workshops in Columbus and Cincinnati to introduce applicants, partners and project team members to personalized learning, experience a personalized learning simulation, and rethink classroom design. Readiness assessment survey is
18. Implementation - Process to achieve project goals

* Date Range September 2014 - May 2016

* List of scope of work (activities and/or events, including deliverables, project milestones, interim measurements, communication, and coordination).

This period covers the delivery of PD. Education Elements will stagger the implementation among two cohorts split along grade levels. The barriers anticipated in this period include (1) overcoming the complexity of the project, (2) addressing the varying degrees of readiness among participants, and (3) ensuring that the press of daily workloads does not compete with time needed for the project. The project team will take the following actions to address the barriers: 1. Education Elements and Smarter Schools have designed a governance structure to manage the project. The groups include (a) consortium steering committee, consisting of district leaders, partners and project leads, to provide oversight and final approvals; (b) consortium working group, consisting of district leads, coaching leads, regional coordinators, and other support (i.e. IT) leads, to manage the project to key milestones and deadlines and be the main point of contact for PD; (c) consortium, consisting of all superintendents and district personalized learning leaders, (d) regional cohort coordinators, to be the main point of contact, outside of EE, with schools and districts, and (e) school leadership, consisting of principals and school leads. Each level of the governance structure has regular check-in calls. The project manager will rely on staff to make site visits to determine progress towards goals and troubleshoot any problems. 2. To address degrees of readiness, Education Elements will create a readiness assessment survey to determine needs for each of the sites. 3. Project team staff will monitor, track and benchmark participation of teachers and district staff to ensure they are spending the time anticipated, and project manager could make grant payments contingent on full participation of teachers and staff in order to ensure success.

19. Summative Evaluation - Plans to analyze the results of the project

* Date Range April 2014 - September 2016

* List of scope of work (activities and/or events, including quantitative and qualitative benchmarks and other project milestones).

This period covers the evaluation of the evaluator, the design of the evaluation plan through the completion of the final evaluation. The project selected an experienced third-party evaluator, the University of Cincinnati Economics Center, in order to get the most benefit from an evaluation that is being conducted while the project is in process. The project leaders and the Straight A Fund. The Economics Center offered its two-year evaluation package, which allows for more time to see the results take place in a second year after implementation. We see this innovation project as both an education reform demonstration but also as an innovative pilot that has many participants, the danger of having poor results due to uneven progress is great. To address this, we will have the evaluator report both consortium wide results and participant level results. In addition, we will know routinely throughout the project whether participants are on track to showing adequate progress.
20. Describe the expected changes to the instructional and/or organizational practices in your institution.

The response should illustrate the critical instructional and/or organizational changes that will result from implementation of the grant and the impact of these changes. These changes can include permanent changes to current district processes, new processes that will be incorporated or the removal of redundant or duplicative processes. The response may also outline the expected change in behaviors of individuals (changes to classroom practice, collaboration across district boundaries, changes to a typical work day for specific staff members, etc.). The expected changes should be realistic and significant in moving the institution forward.

Please enter your response below:

Blended learning allows teachers 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 lead to significant improvement in academic achievement. These were outlined in Q9 but are worth repeating here. Overview: Teacher instructional practice shifts dramatically in blended learning model. In particular, blended learning implemented at these schools will focus on the following four elements: 1. Smaller Group Instruction + Blended learning leverages 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. 2. Integration of Digital Content + 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. 3. 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. 4. 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. The implementation of blended learning models will be supported by stakeholder actions at each level that will result in institutional changes at the district and school level as teachers change practice at the classroom level. For example, at the district and school level, administrators and leaders will participate in setting a vision and culture for the project that focuses on the steps to get to personalization for each student. Teachers, parents and students will be engaged in the project, causing a greater understanding and awareness that personalization can be achieved through smarter use of technology. Through civic outreach, the project will reinforce the progress and benefits in the school and larger communities, creating champions for the work. Second, because the promise of blended learning is to provide personalization at the same or lower cost, this project (basically funding the one-time costs in PD and technology to allow for the first shift from traditional learning to blended learning) is expected to cause administrators to see the value to students and also the value for their dollar, prompting them to sustain and expand blended learning in their districts. Because the project trained staff to be able to train others, the relative cost of spreading the transformation will be less expensive than the original shift. Finally, the Ohio Blended Learning Network, with its focus on policy change and shared service support for best practice, PD and purchasing power, is expected to help usher in more practices in shared services as the districts see the benefit of sharing through a flexible network of like-minded schools.

E) SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT AND LASTING VALUE - Impact, evaluation and replication

The responses in this section are focused on the ability to design a method for evaluating the project's capacity for long-term sustainable results. Therefore, the questions focus on the method of defining the problem(s) the project hopes to solve and the measures that will determine if the problem(s) have been solved.

21. 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.

The response should provide a concise explanation of items which provide rationale that will support the probability of successfully achieving the goals of the project. Answers may differ based on the various levels of development that are possible. If the proposal is for a new, never before implemented project, the response should provide logical, coherent explanations of the anticipated results based on some past experience or rationale. For projects that have been implemented on a smaller scale or successfully in other organizations, the response should provide the quantifiable results of the other projects. If available, relevant research in support of this particular proposal should also be included.

Please enter your response below.

Although blended learning is a new educational model, early results show it 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. Likewise, blended learning has shown reductions in spending across districts and shared service shows promise in reducing costs. Impact on achievement A Kaplan study concluded that blended learning examples show that they are 1) Personalized and adaptive to meet individual learning needs, 2) Supportive of high levels of cognitive engagement in meeting learning objectives, and 3) Balancing computer- or teacher-led guidance with learner control. The study identifies the advantage it has to increase personalization, improve cognitive engagement and balance the control of student vs. instructor. A US Department of Education study found evidence that blended learning is more effective than either face-to-face learning or on-line learning. The 2009 report, entitled "Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning," is the
22. Describe the overall plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used in the project.

This plan should include the methodology for measuring all of the project outcomes. Applicants should make sure to outline quantitative approaches to assess progress and measure the overall impact of the project proposal. The response should provide a clear outline of the methods, process, timelines and data requirements for the final analysis of the project's progress, success or failure. The applicant should provide information on how the lessons learned from the project can and will be shared with other education providers in Ohio.

* Include the name and contact information of the person who will be responsible for conducting the evaluation and whether this will be an internal or external evaluation.

This will be an external evaluation conducted by the University of Cincinnati Economics Center. Below is the lead evaluator: Michael Jones, Ph.D. Director of Research University of Cincinnati Economics Center EIN: 31-0898481 225 Calhoun St., Suite 370 Cincinnati, OH 45219-0223 513.556.2491 m.jones@uc.edu

* 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 project's progress).

The data for long-term objectives will come from report cards provided by the Ohio Department of Education. We will obtain building data for the 2014-15 and 2015-16 academic years for all the schools and districts. We will compare the change in the academic and behavioral measures in those academic years to 2013-14. We will begin our evaluation using an interrupted time series methodology, in which an intervention occurs at a specific point in time and the time series data is broken up by the introduction of the intervention. If the blended 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. However, because there may be additional changes other than blended learning, we will supplement the analysis with a difference-in-difference methodology. In this case, we will include a "control" building to our time series data. The control building is a building that has similar characteristics to one of the blended learning buildings, but it did not receive an intervention. The underlying assumption is that in the absence of the blended learning intervention, the building outcomes would have followed the same trajectory as the control building. The determination of the control building will be based on demographic, fiscal, and student characteristics.

* Include the method, process and/or procedure by which the project will modify or change the project plan if measured progress is insufficient to meet project objectives.

For the short-term objectives identified in the surveys, we will provide a statistical report on how student achievement and behavior has changed as a result of blended learning, e.g., the survey will reveal if students are increasing their learning of new material at a faster pace. By asking teachers about ways to improve the program, there will be opportunities to provide modifications to the program before the start of the 2015-16 academic year. (The project team will review these results, combine them with other project data, and determine what changes, if any, need to be made in the project plan.) The Center will produce an interim evaluation report by September 2015 on results for the first year and a final report on or before September 2016. The evaluation reports will be sent to participating schools and districts, consortium partners, and Straight A Fund. They are part of a larger public dissemination by the Ohio Blended Learning Network of results from the project, which includes extensive outreach, learning exchanges and storytelling. The Ohio Blended Learning Network, 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. In doing so, it willower expenses through the smarter use of technology and sharing services through the established network of like-minded schools and districts supported by each of the member institutions.

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

The response should provide specific quantitative measures of the grant outcomes and how the project will lead to successful attainment of the project goals. Applicants should describe how the program or project will continue after the grant period has expired.

Please enter your response below.

The Ohio Blended Learning Network, 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. In doing so, it will lower expenses through the smarter use of technology and sharing services through the established network of like-minded schools and districts supported by each of the member institutions. Blended Learning leads to significant increases in student achievement. 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. At the end of the first year, we expect to see improvements in student discipline measures as students are more engaged and receiving more individual attention. At the end of the second year (this is a two-year implementation due to a two-year professional development package) we expect to see at least a 20% improvement in the percentage of students reading at grade level and a corresponding increase in measures for other
24. Describe the specific benchmarks, by goal as answered in question 9, which 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.

The applicant should provide details on the quantifiable measures of short- and long-term objectives that will be tracked and the source of benchmark comparative data points. Responses should include specified measurement periods and preliminary success points that will be used to validate successful implementation of the project. If a similar project has been successfully implemented in other districts or schools, identification of these comparable benchmarks should be included.

* Student Achievement

After five years, we aim to achieve two goals around achievement: improvements in student academic performance, and improvements in student behavior. (The specific goals were delineated in Question 9.) Short-term Objectives (Project Fidelity) + The Economics Center will evaluate student academic outcomes during the 2014-2015 academic year relative to the previous academic year. 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 school). + By the start of the 2015-2016 academic year, every school district will have implemented blended learning as described in this application. The Center will provide confirmation of the implementation by surveying the point of contact for each school district. + During the survey, each school district’s point of contact, the Center will ask open-ended questions about their experience with the blended learning program and to compare expectations to that experience. + The Center will also ask for disciplinary reports from each building for the 2014-2015 and compare them to the previous years’ reports. These disciplinary reports will include the number of in-school suspensions, in-school alternative discipline actions, and out of school. They will also provide discipline reason (e.g., fighting, disruptive behavior, truancy, etc.) + Finally, the Center will distribute a survey to the teachers in the blended learning classrooms during the spring of 2015. The survey will ask teachers questions about their experience with blended learning and whether they believe their students are working at a higher level by test grade and subject for school.

Long-term Objectives (Project Success Measures) + Student Achievement Benchmarks: at the building level + Test results

* Spending Reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast

* Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

* Implementation of a shared services delivery model

To gauge the use of the shared service potential of the Ohio Blended Learning Network, the Center at the end of 2014-15 will survey members on the practices to purchase computers and other hardware and services and whether the Network was used or considered for a bulk purchase and the reasons for their decision. Another measure, in the post-grant period, beginning in FY 17, is the willingness of the members to follow through with the plan to use their funds to pay membership fees - as outlined in the Financial Impact Table - which will help to cement the shared services model as the members demonstrate "skin in the game."

* Other Anticipated Outcomes

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

Yes

No

If the applicant selects "Yes" to the first part of the question, the response should provide an explanation of the time and effort it would take to implement the project in another district, as well as any plans to share lessons learned with other districts. To every extent possible, applicants should outline how this project can become part of a model so that other districts across the state can take advantage of the learnings from the proposed innovative project. If there is a plan to increase the scale and scope of the project within the district or consortium, it should be included here.

* Explain your response

This proposal is designed foster the spread of high-quality blended learning in classrooms across the state. The Ohio Blended Learning Network 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 This proposal uses the expertise of Education Elements, the Silicon Valley firm that provides technical assistance to 75% of the schools in the country undertaking blended learning, to build capacity across the state by training trainers in each participating school or district and within the Educational Service Centers in that region. Thus, 16 schools and districts serving 11,498 students and Educational Service Centers in Northeast, Central and Southwest Ohio will receive 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 in Northeast Ohio, one at Reynoldsburg City Schools in Central Ohio, and one at the Mayerson Academy in Southwest Ohio - would be established to provide additional capacity. That will lower the cost for districts to expand or new districts to adopt blended learning. Past practice has shown that individual districts and schools can shift to blended learning through their own resources - Mentor Public Schools, Reynoldsburg City Schools and Stepstone Academy in Cleveland have all undertaken high-quality blended learning prior to this proposal. The addition of the Network and local training capacity will enhance that ability even further. Finally, the proposal anticipates the Ohio Blended Learning Network will encourage and support the replication of the work here to create other blended learning classrooms. The network will continue the work to build capacity and blended learning classrooms through the state after the grant period is over. 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 the Network are making the change and sharing the results they are getting with the change. Through "learning exchanges," the Network 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 learning exchanges during the project, which includes resources for partners and the applicants 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 The Ohio Blended Learning Network has already begun work in earnest to developing a blended learning credential for educators. 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 can play a role with higher education in developing and providing for training to earn a certificate or endorsement. The Network will also work with stakeholders to develop a framework for high-quality blended learning and advocate for supportive policies on the state and local level to advance applications of th
## Consortium Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Organization Name</th>
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### Partnerships

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<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
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<td>Title</td>
<td>Responsibilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>Director of Research, University of Cincinnati Economics Center</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Jones oversees and conducts the quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the blended learning implementation project and will prepare the evaluation report.</td>
<td>Michael Jones became the Director of Research for the University of Cincinnati Economics Center in 2012. He is a Research Assistant Professor of Economics at UC, specializing in labor economics, public economics and economics of education. He earned his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Notre Dame in 2012, a Master's in Economics from Notre Dame, and an MBA in Management and International Business from the University of Cincinnati.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>Benson</td>
<td>Executive Director, Smarter Schools</td>
<td>Andrew Benson serves as grants administrator, project manager and oversees outreach and advocacy for the project.</td>
<td>Mr. Benson started the Smarter Schools non-profit last year to help schools be more efficient and effective. He was for the previous 10 years vice president of KnowledgeWorks Foundation, an education philanthropy and social enterprise that has created Early College High Schools, small school transformation, project-based learning schools, and community collaboratives in hundreds of sites across the country. He holds a master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, a master's degree in Journalism from the Ohio State University, and a bachelor's degree in Journalism from Ohio University. Mr. Benson was responsible for KnowledgeWorks communications and outreach and oversaw its Ohio education reform and policy work, including managing staff, consultants, and grant funds of more than $10 million. He was a journalist for 14 years. He currently serves as project manager, grants administrator and outreach coordinator for an FY14 consortium project of the Straight A Fund in Milford and Cincinnati schools. Reviewers from the Ohio Department of Education, at their mid-project review in April, said they were &quot;impressed&quot; by the operation of the grant and progress toward goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>Kim</td>
<td>CEO and Founder, Education Elements</td>
<td>Education Elements is providing professional development and technical assistance to grant applicant schools and districts. Anthony Kim, CEO and Founder of Education Elements, leads the California-based organization.</td>
<td>Anthony Kim founded Education Elements in 2010 to help schools rethink the structure of schooling and the way technology could strengthen instruction and streamline operations. He was the New Schools Venture Fund 2012 Entrepreneur of the Year. Prior to founding Education Elements, he served as an Executive Vice President of Online of Edison Learning Inc. He holds a BA from Cornell University. Working with charter school management developers, foundations and technology developers, Education Elements has pioneered new approaches to blended learning. Today, the firm is involved in 75% of the blended learning schools in the country, or more than 100 schools, including, Mentor Public Schools, Reynoldsburg City Schools, and Stepstone Academy in Ohio.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
<td>Miller</td>
<td>Superintendent, Mentor Public Schools</td>
<td>Mentor Public Schools is the lead applicant and fiscal agent for the project. The lead applicant oversees the grant process and</td>
<td>Mentor Public Schools is led by Matthew Miller, who was named superintendent in 2012. Mr. Miller, who is pursuing a doctorate in educational technology, is leading his district transformation with technology and blended learning at the center. At the 2014 Ohio Educational Technology Conference, Mentor won four</td>
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implementation, including delivering and tracking grant funds, and is the primary contact the Straight A Fund.

#BestEdTech awards for the district’s work to provide personalization for students through blended learning. In 2014, Mentor was named to the prestigious Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools. Mr. Miller holds master's and bachelor's degrees from the University of Cincinnati. 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.