

OHIO APPALACHIAN COLLABORATIVE PERSONALIZED LEARNING NETWORK IS AWARDED STATE FUNDS TO PERSONALIZE EDUCATION STRAIGHT A FUNDS WILL SUPPORT COLLABORATIVE OF APPALACHIAN DISTRICTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF EVERY STUDENT

**News Release
For Immediate Release**

December 20, 2013

Zanesville, Ohio—The Ohio Appalachian Collaborative Personalized Learning Network (OACPLN) received one of 24 state grants from the Ohio Department of Education Straight A Fund competition to support personalized learning and help more students be successful in technical, two- and/or four-year postsecondary education. These Straight A grants were approved by the Ohio Controlling Board on Monday, Dec. 16, 2013.

The \$15 million grant will help 26 Appalachian Ohio districts and one district-sponsored community school develop a personalized learning network that will increase student access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a 6-12 grade blended learning and dual enrollment system. In total, this work will impact more than 48,000 students in the region.

“The Straight A investment not only changes the prospects of a more prosperous life for our students, it changes the destiny of Appalachian Ohio,” said Northern Local School District Superintendent Tom Perkins. “This offers a real chance to level the playing field for rural students, schools and communities.”

The substantial and lasting value of this initiative is to:

- Overcome the rural opportunity gap by increasing student postsecondary aspiration and preparedness, and decrease higher education costs through college credit earned in high school. Once the project is fully operational, it is estimated there will be an annual savings of \$3.6 million in college costs to students and their families.
- Contribute to rural economic development by preparing more qualified workers to attract businesses to the region.
- Establish a sustainable rural education collaborative that can grow to include other districts in the steady advancement of more personalized and cost-effective learning opportunities and options.

Through the OACPLN and its focus on personalized learning, students in participating districts will have supports to help determine their interests and strengths, tools to develop skills in all areas, and flexibility to learn anywhere and anytime. Greater student broadband access, “bring-your-own-device” policies, and more flexible scheduling are some of the policies that will be promoted across the OACPLN.

The work of the OACPLN will be accomplished through unprecedented collaboration between school districts, communities, school boards, higher education institutions, educational service centers, and regional economic groups. The nine institutions of higher education that have supported this proposal will work with the OACPLN to create opportunities for high school students to take college level courses and earn postsecondary credit while still in high school.

OAC Personalized Learning Network Members:

- Barnesville Local Schools, Belmont County
- Batavia Local, Clermont County
- Bellefontaine City Schools, Logan County
- Belpre City Schools, Washington County
- Bethel Tate Local Schools, Clermont County
- Bloom-Vernon Local Schools, Scioto County
- Coshocton City Schools, Coshocton County
- Crooksville EVSD, Perry County
- East Guernsey Local Schools, Guernsey County
- East Muskingum Local, Muskingum County
- Fort Frye Local Schools, Washington County
- Foxfire Schools, Muskingum County
- Franklin Local Schools, Muskingum County
- Georgetown EVSD, Brown County
- Indian Valley Local Schools, Tuscarawas County
- Maysville Local Schools, Muskingum County
- Morgan Local Schools, Morgan County
- New Lexington City Schools, Perry County
- Noble Local Schools, Noble County
- Northern Local Schools, Perry County
- River View Local Schools, Coshocton County
- Rolling Hills Local Schools, Guernsey County
- Switzerland of Ohio Local Schools, Monroe County
- Tri-Valley Local Schools, Muskingum County
- Warren Local Schools, Washington County
- West Muskingum Local Schools, Muskingum County
- Wolf Creek Local Schools, Washington County

OACPLN Higher Education and ESC Partners:

- Central Ohio Technical College
- Hocking College
- Muskingum University
- Muskingum Valley Education Service Center
- Ohio Dominican University
- Ohio University
- Ohio University-Zanesville
- Ohio Valley Education Service Center
- Shawnee State University
- Washington State Community College
- Zane State College



About the OAC

The OACPLN leverages the existing work of the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative (OAC), a proven rural collaborative of 21 Appalachian Ohio school districts, established in 2009 with Battelle for Kids as a supporting not-for-profit partner. The OAC received funding from Ohio's Race to the Top grant, and the work has focused on strengthening teacher effectiveness to improve college and career readiness in rural Ohio. The impact of the OAC on participating districts includes:

- strengthened and focused local professional development;
- shared resources to provide learning opportunities such as dual enrollment; and
- structures to collaborate and support the work.

To learn more about the OAC and the impact on participating districts, visit www.BattelleforKids.org/ohio/OAC.

About Ohio's Straight A Fund

The Straight A Fund is a \$250 million program from the Ohio Department of Education that promotes innovative local ideas and programs to help transform and modernize Ohio's education system. Straight A Fund grants provide seed money for the most creative and forward-thinking ideas coming from educators and their partners in the public and private sectors. The fund allows local educators to pursue three goals:

- Significant advancement in raising student achievement;
- Significant advancement in reducing spending; and
- Significant advancement in targeting more resources to the classroom.

To learn more, visit www.education.ohio.gov.

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