

ONLINE SURVEY ANALYSIS

**2015 Staff Survey
Straight A Fund
April 27, 2015
Conducted by C H Smith & Associates, LLC**

PROCESS

The staff level survey of FY2014 Straight A Fund projects was deployed from February 27, 2015 through April 19, 2015 using Survey Monkey. The survey was based on the project manager survey completed at the end of 2015. Project managers were informed about the coming staff level survey at the October 22, 2014 technical training event and asked to forward the survey announcement email to staff members who have been involved with the grant implementation. A series of follow-up emails were also sent to the project managers to forward to staff to increase response numbers. The survey captured 308 responses although not every participant answered every question.

Questions ranged across a variety of topics, from stage of implementation to training support provided to benefits of the project to date. One key area of study was an evaluation of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors associated with the change adoption process. The change adoption steps studied are:

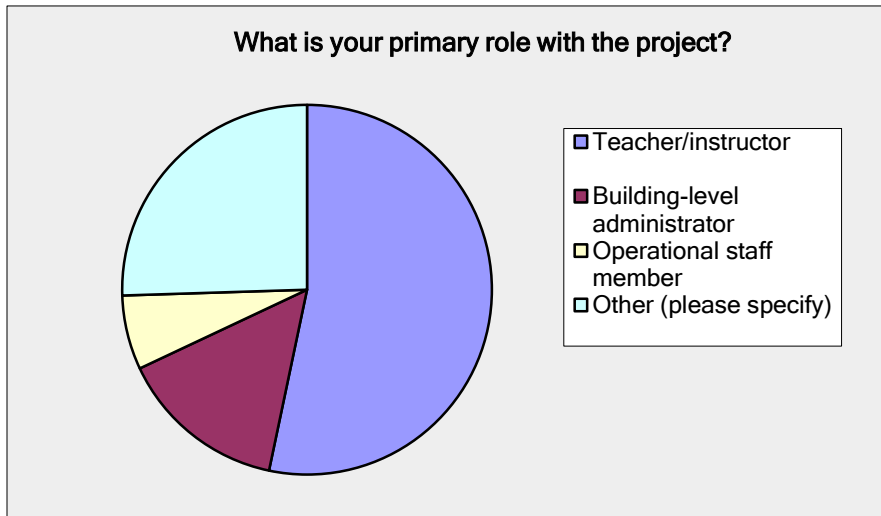
- Awareness of the need to change
 - Problem recognition, internal or external
- Desire to change
 - Motivation: Desire plus goals
 - Affective, cognitive and conation
 - Attraction or avoidance
- Resources to change
- Skills, knowledge, time and money for the change
- Tracking Systems
 - Dashboards, objective measures, method to capture lessons learned
- Cultural Support
 - Leadership and peer support
- Reinforcement
 - Making the change the “Normal”; sustainability

This section was added based on the very nature of the Straight A Fund grant selection process which included a focus on advancing innovations with promise for increased student success, sustainability, and potential for replication. The goal of the change measurement phase of the evaluation process is to understand how the organization is progressing through a normal change process, how deeply the change is being embedded within the “normal” operations of the schools, and the lessons learned for others interested in similar implementation efforts.

Background of Survey Participants

The majority of survey participants were teachers (53%) and 21.2% were building level administration or operational staff members. Also, 73.5% of the survey respondents have been involved with the project for the more than two thirds of the project with approximately 60% having been involved from the start of the project.

The respondents in the “other” category included leadership positions and external participants such as superintendent, curriculum coordinator and project support consultants based on the open-ended follow-up question to Q1. A majority of participants have been part of the Straight A Fund project from the very beginning (58.8%) or near the beginning (14.7%) while only 6.2% joined the project recently.



Q1: What is your primary role with the project?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Teacher/instructor	53.3%	163
Building-level administrator	14.7%	45
Operational staff member	6.5%	20
Other (please specify)	25.5%	78
answered question		306

Q2: How long have you been involved in the project sponsored by the Straight A Fund?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
From the beginning	58.8%	180
Most of the time (roughly more than 2/3 of the project implementation time to date but not from beginning)	14.7%	45
About half way through the project (roughly 1/3-2/3 of the way through the project implementation time to date)	5.9%	18
Just recently (roughly less than 1/3 of the way through the project implementation time to date)	6.2%	19
Not really involved in the project	2.9%	9
Unsure	11.4%	35
answered question		306

Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the key findings from the survey organized by topic. As one reads through the responses, keep in mind that the responses come from a variety of projects and roles within the project and reflect a snapshot of opinions near the end of the first year of project implementation. The questions will be used as a benchmark to track change over time with minor modifications for clarification purposes.

Awareness of Need to Change

An essential starting and sustaining point in the change process is for the people who will be implementing the change over time to have an awareness of the need for change and a belief that the change will be a valuable improvement. Based on the survey, we find that 67% of respondents believe the changes they are making needed to be made regardless of the source of funding. Importantly, 83.6% of respondents agree this change was very important for the future of their students and 48.5% “strongly agree” the change is very important. This is clear evidence of the belief in the need for the change intervention.

10.9% of participants seem to believe that the change would not have needed to be implemented at this time without this funding source, while only 1.5% of respondents don’t believe this type of change is important to the future of their students regardless of funding source. This means that 85.7% of people who disagreed with need to implement this type of change regardless of funding source do believe that the change is important to the future of their students to a degree and this type of funding source made the work possible. This skepticism is almost all attributed to teachers. Zero building level administrators disagreed with the statement while 13.3% of teachers disagreed with the statement which is statistically significant.

When looking at others involved with implementing the project, the mean rating score of 3.76 says that a majority of survey respondents agree that other people involved with implementation view this as important. The middle score of 3 would be neutral and 4 would be agreement with the statement. This indicates some natural skepticism of the commitment of everyone to the project. This will be a measure we will focus on longitudinally to see if this belief expands in a positive direction.

Finally, 70.2% of respondents report that staff members involved with implementation were selected based upon their desire to participate. This is also a good indicator that project leadership valued the personal motivation to change in setting up their project implementation work groups. Teachers were statistically more likely to strongly agree than building level administration with the statement that involvement in the effort was based on the desire to participate.

There was no statistical difference between teachers and building level administration staff on the view of importance to the future of students.

Q32: We needed to implement this type of change regardless of funding source.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	2	26	38	130	45	18	3.79	259

Q26: I believe this change was very important for the future of our students.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	0	4	34	90	128	8	4.34	264

Q34: Today, everyone involved with implementation believes in the need for this type of change to happen.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	23	46	129	47	10	3.76	260

Q33: Teachers and/or operational staff involved with the project were selected for involvement based on their desire to participate and not randomly selected or required to participate.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	6	20	33	106	76	18	3.94	259

Leadership Support & Visibility

A factor in the success of implementation of innovative projects is sustained and visible leadership support to reinforce the need for change and foster an organizational attitude supportive of the change. From the survey, we find that 48.7% of respondents report active or very active leadership support while 6.2% report limited sponsor involvement. Teachers are statistically less likely to see sponsors as visible and active and statistically more likely to see sponsors as supportive and somewhat visible than building level administration.

59.9% agree that the leadership team has kept in constant contact during implementation while 17.0% disagree and 6.5% are “unsure.” Below this number is a statistically significant difference of opinion. Interestingly, teachers were statistically less likely to view leadership as actively supportive compared to building level administration. About 74% of building level administrators believes leadership has kept in touch and helped solve problems compared to only 50% of teachers. Both groups disagree with the statement at about the same level (approximately 21%). The statistically significant difference is generated from the “neutral” category (teachers 23% compared to building level administrators 8%).

Q14: How well did sponsors (people such as superintendents who authorized the grant submission and have the authority to command action) visibly show their support throughout the project?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Sponsors show limited support	6.2%	17
Sponsors are supportive, but not very visible	17.8%	49
Sponsors are supportive and somewhat visible	21.4%	59
Sponsors are actively supporting the change	28.3%	78
Sponsors are very visible and also have a high level of accountability for others.	19.9%	55
Unsure	6.5%	18
answered question		276

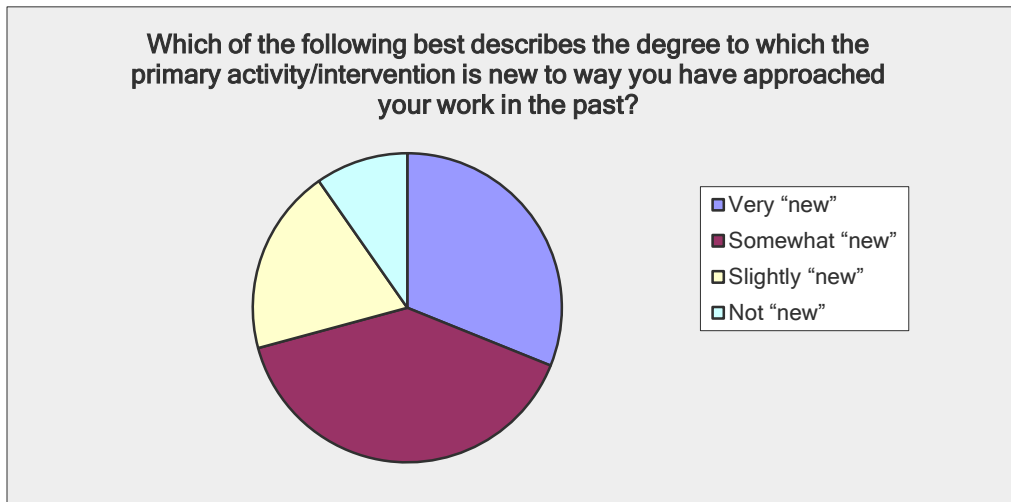
Q55: The leadership team kept in constant contact with the people implementing the change to help overcome challenges and gather lessons learned.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	9	34	47	104	47	11	3.61	252

Level of Innovation

From survey responses it is clear that a significant majority of the participants believe that the project they have launched is either “very new” or “somewhat new” (70.8%). Only 9.7% believe that the project is “not new.” There was no statistical difference in opinion between job categories for views on newness of the project.

Interestingly, 40% of the participants believe their project was planned as a result of the creation of the Straight A Fund program while only 17% believe their project was planned prior to finding out about the Straight A Fund. Building level administrators were statistically more likely to believe the project planning began before the creation of the Straight A Fund.



Q13: Which of the following best describes the degree to which the primary activity/intervention is new to way you have approached your work in the past?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very "new"	31.1%	83
Somewhat "new"	39.7%	106
Slightly "new"	19.5%	52
Not "new"	9.7%	26
answered question		267

Q31: We planned the project prior to finding out about the Straight A Fund program.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	25	77	58	35	7	57	2.61	259

Magnitude of Change

True innovation generates new ways for people to perform the work they do and how they work with other people to get the work done. The next set of questions looks at the magnitude of the disruption in work processes and interactions associated with the project. As a working hypothesis, the greater the degree of disruptive innovation, the greater the degree of newness and relationship shifting is.

A significant majority of survey participants (65.7%) believe those directly involved will need to make significant changes to be successful with implementation and 70.9% of respondents believe the project will change their role “somewhat” or “significantly.” 9.8% disagreed with the statement that people involved would need to make significant changes and 7.6% believe that their project will not change how they personally perform their job or perform their role.

Teachers (8.5%) are statistically more likely to answer “not at all” compared to building level administrators. Operational staff was also more likely to answer “not at all” (22.2%) but there was insufficient sample for this group to test significance of group differences.

Q20: Those directly involved with the project needed to make significant changes to successfully implement the program.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	3	23	54	126	48	11	3.76	265

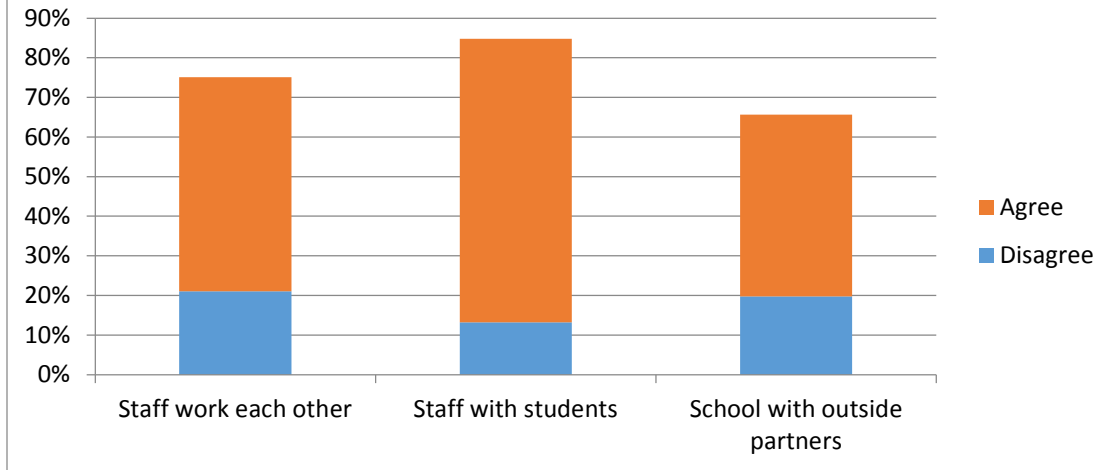
Q15: To what degree has this project changed how you do your job or perform your role?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Significantly	27.6%	76
Somewhat	43.6%	120
Slightly	15.6%	43
Not at all	7.6%	21
Unsure	5.5%	15
answered question		275

In looking at the effect of change on how people work together, we find that significant majorities of participants believe the project has significantly changed the way peers work together, the way staff works with students and the way the schools work with outside partners.

At the same time participants are split on whether or not their project team has conducted extensive outreach to parents. 38.3% disagree that they have done extensive outreach while 28.4% agree they have done extensive outreach. There was no significant difference in the opinions of teachers and school level administrators.

Significant change in how:



Q17: Our program required a significant amount of change in how staff or project members work with each other.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	6	48	63	111	28	13	3.42	269

Q18: Our program required a significant amount of change in how staff and team members work with students.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	29	42	127	57	10	3.78	270

Q19: Our program required a significant amount of change in how the school works with outside partners such as businesses, community leaders or other educational institutions.

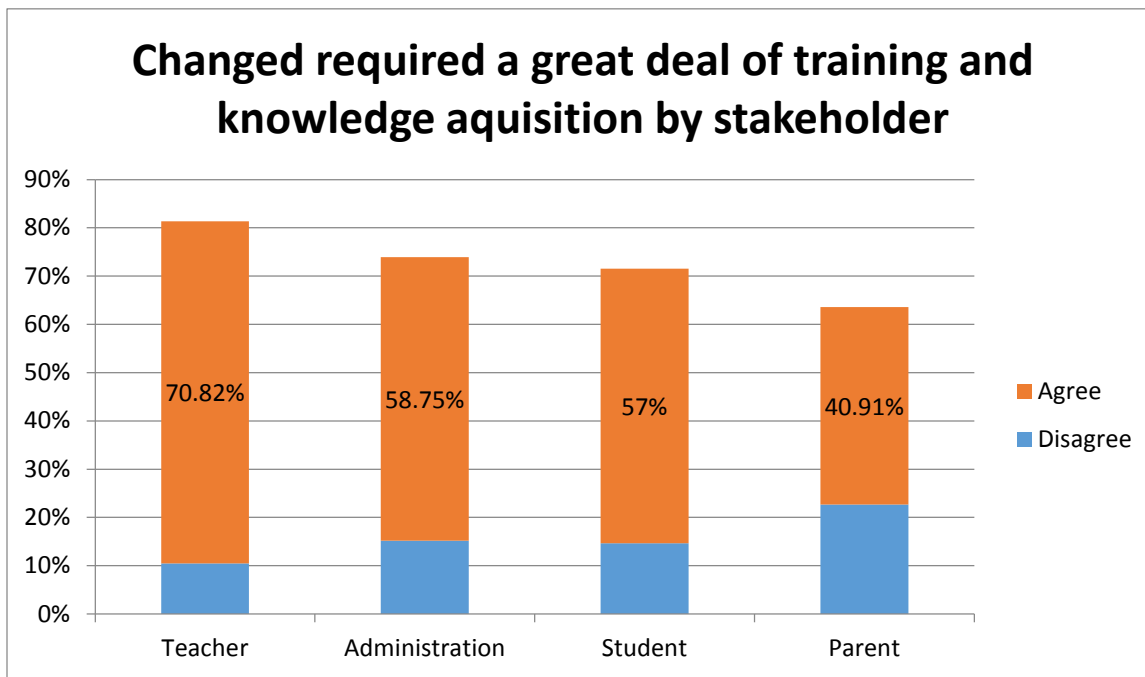
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	11	39	82	83	33	19	3.35	267

Q22: We have conducted extensive parent outreach to include them as collaborators in the execution of the program.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	33	68	70	59	16	18	2.83	264

Magnitude of Change on Stakeholders

Another indicator of the magnitude of change is the amount of training and knowledge that is believed to be needed to successfully implement the change. Later in the document we will look at whether or not staff members believe they have been provided with sufficient levels of training and knowledge to make the change. More respondents agreed that the project required teachers, compared to other stakeholder groups, to require a great deal of training and knowledge acquisition. Administration and students followed respectively with the percentage of respondents agreeing that a great deal of training and knowledge acquisition was needed for the group.



Q39: The change required a great deal of TEACHER training and knowledge acquisition.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	1	26	38	117	65	10	3.89	257

Q40: The change required a great deal of ADMINISTRATIVE training and knowledge acquisition.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	4	35	51	114	37	16	3.60	257

Q41: The change required a great deal of STUDENT training and knowledge acquisition.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	32	56	105	39	16	3.59	253

Q42: The change required a great deal of PARENT training and knowledge acquisition.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	14	44	78	74	16	30	3.15	256

Change Resources

To be able to implement change, personnel need the resources, skill building and knowledge necessary to prepare them to successfully implement the changes and then operate within the new systems.

In looking at professional development, we find that 46.6% believe they received about the right amount of time needed and adequate quality. 17.5% believe the professional development was “inadequate in quality,” 23.3% believe “not enough time” was provided and 9.6% felt too much time was provided. Opinions vary slightly by job category, but most opinion differences are not statistically significant.

The range of opinions actually matches what might be expected as the innovative projects venture into new territory. Over time we would expect that individual projects will adapt their professional development offering to find the right amount of time and improve the overall quality of the training.

As far as time provided for professional development, 36.4% report more than 33 hours and 36.7% report less than 8 hours.

Most professional support and development is provided through informal support techniques: 85% of respondents report informal peer-to-peer support teams which is the highest overall percentage. 43% of all respondents report informal coaching. Formal peer-to-peer support teams are reported by 39% of respondents, formal coaching by 26% of respondents and 31% utilized virtual professional development resources.

Interestingly, building level administrators participated in all techniques without a significant difference in utilization any individual technique. In fact the range of responses was from 16% to 21.8% as a percentage of overall option participation across all options.

This was not the case for teachers. Teachers utilized informal peer-to-peer support teams at a significantly higher rate (55.8% of three job categories) than formal peer-to-peer support teams (37.4% of three job categories) or virtual professional development resources (37.3% of three job categories). District level administrative personnel found in the “other” category showed a significantly higher use of formal peer-to-peer support teams and virtual professional development resources (35.8%) than informal peer-to-peer support teams (22.1%).

Q9: Do you believe the amount of time and the quality for professional development related to this project was: (check the statement that most closely matches your opinion)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Too much time, but adequate quality	6.2%	18
Too much time, inadequate quality	3.4%	10
Right amount of time, adequate quality	46.6%	136
Right amount of time, but inadequate quality	6.2%	18
Not enough time, but adequate quality	15.4%	45
Not enough time, inadequate quality	7.9%	23
Didn't need professional development, regardless of time and quality	2.1%	6
Not applicable	12.3%	36
answered question		292

Q8: Approximately how many hours of professional development training did you receive as part of this project?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Zero hours/ No professional development training	12.2%	36
1-4 hours	12.6%	37
5-8 hours	11.6%	34
9-16 hours	11.9%	35
17-24 hours	6.5%	19
24-32 hours	8.8%	26
33-40 hours	10.5%	31
More than 40 hours	25.9%	76
answered question		294

Q10: What forms of ongoing professional support and development outside of training sessions do you receive to support the implementation of this change:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Formal Peer-to-Peer Support Teams	29.1%	83
Informal Peer-to-Peer Support	63.2%	180
Formal coaching/ mentoring	19.3%	55
Informal coaching/mentoring	32.3%	92
Virtual professional development resources	23.5%	67
Not applicable	18.9%	54
Other (please describe)		14
answered question		285

Having the resources necessary to successfully execute the implementation of the innovation is the next area of inquiry. A strong majority (73.7%) of survey participants “agree” or “strongly agree” that the resources including technology, materials, physical amenities and the like were adequate to implement the change. 9.4% of survey respondents “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed.” No statistical differences exist based on job classification.

A second type of valuable resource for change is time. While survey participants generally agreed that they received extra time to execute the project (44.9% for “agree” and “strongly agree”) the gap between agree and disagree was much narrower with 26.6% “disagree” and “strongly disagree.” Again there was no statistical difference in opinion based on job category.

Q43: The resources (technology, materials, physical amenities, etc.) that I received for this project were adequate.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	7	17	32	123	65	11	3.91	255

Q46: The implementation team (e.g. teachers or operational staff) was provided with extra time to execute the project.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	18	50	56	100	15	17	3.18	256

Change Adoption - Sustainability

The ultimate measure of change implementation success is the “adoption” of the new processes and practices generated from an introduced innovation. Since not all projects are fully implemented, the research hypothesis would be that the overall adoption will increase over time. At this point in time, the survey finds that 54.8% of respondents “agree” or “strongly agree” that the changes they have made have been rapidly adopted while 16.5% “disagree” and 24% are “neutral.” Building level administration is statistically more likely to agree (53.8%) that the change was rapidly adopted than were teachers (35% agree). 26.1% of teachers “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that the changes were rapidly adopted compared to 14.2% of building level administration, but this doesn’t reach the threshold for statistical significance.

74.5% of survey participants believe the change is continuing to be executed as intended compared to only 3.2% who “disagree” or “strongly disagree” with the statement.

Another indicator of adoption is the internal desire by staff and students who were not directly involved in the change expressing an interest in replicating the changes they have heard about. According to the survey, 44.0% of respondents report interest among fellow staff and stakeholders in duplicating the change in their environments and 50.9% of respondents report other student interest in participating in future similar opportunities. There is no significant difference in opinion based on job category for staff interest, but the building level administration is significantly more likely to agree that other students are interested in participating in this type of program in the future (56.4% agree) compared to teachers who only agree at a 30.4% level.

Q23: Overall, the changes we made were rapidly adopted by those who could be most impacted by the changes.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	7	37	64	121	25	12	3.47	266

Q58: Overall, the people who implemented the change are continuing to execute the change as it was intended to be used.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	2	6	34	165	32	12	3.92	251

Q35: Staff or stakeholders who did not participate in this project have been asking about the possibility of duplicating the change in their environments (e.g. classroom or operational settings).

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	7	34	71	90	24	33	3.40	259

Q36: Students who did not participate in this project are interested in the possibility of participating in future, similar opportunities.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	12	56	94	38	54	3.72	259

Moving forward there is internal concern about the project team’s ability to keep the work on this project going for the next 3-5 years with 33.4% “agreeing” or “strongly agreeing” compared to 45.3% who disagree with the statement. Teachers are slightly more skeptical than the building level administration. Building level administration is significantly more likely to “strongly disagree” (15%) with sustainability concerns than teachers (5.43% “strongly disagree”) which could be due to a sense of control over the budgeting process or greater understanding of the funding/sustainability plans.

Looking forward, there is strong agreement that people involved with implementation will not be seen as “rebels” (68.8%) and will be expected to support the adoption process in areas not currently affected by the innovation (78%).

Q59: I am concerned about the ability to keep the work of this project going for the next 3-5 years.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	22	93	45	56	29	9	2.91	254

Q24: Overall, the change created by the implementation of the project is now a familiar part of the way we operate.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	8	29	74	115	30	11	3.51	267

Q57: Teachers who continue to implement the change over the next two years will be seen as “rebels” by other teachers.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	46	128	33	20	7	19	2.21	253

Q56: Teachers and staff who continue to implement the change over the next two years will be expected to support others in adopting the same type of change.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	0	5	32	153	45	19	4.01	254

Impacts on Teachers and Staff Members

The next set of questions looks at how “smoothly” implementation has gone and the sense of empowerment of staff members to make changes or adapt to new information. Innovation usually follows a general implementation plan but adjustments are made to capture greater benefits and discard ideas that sounded great in the planning stage, but don’t work as planned once implemented.

The first questions looks at how smoothly implementation has gone compared to your original expectations. “Slightly better” or “significantly better” received 25.5% of the responses while “more challenging” and “significantly more challenging” received 27.7% of responses. This gives an almost perfect bell shaped histogram and captures the range of experiences. If we had measured the smoothness of implementation of the addition of a new hamburger menu item at a fast food restaurant, we would expect most answers to be at the middle point and to the right toward “smoother than expected” since we have a great deal of history with this type of change.

Interestingly, there was no significant difference in opinion based on job category. Again, this is evidence of the challenge of implementation for innovation for entire systems.

A parallel question looks at where the change was relatively “easy” compared to a standard where change is never easy. 48.6% of participants agreed that the change was relatively easy given change is never easy while 24.3% disagreed.

In looking at teacher and staff members’ sense of empowerment, the survey finds strong majorities felt a sense the program enabled teachers and staff overall to increase their effectiveness in the classroom (70.2%) and their personal effectiveness in their roles (54.7%). Disagreement with the sense of empowerment was less than 7.2% for both questions. There is no significant difference between responses by job category.

Q12: Overall, how smoothly has the implementation of your project gone compared to your original expectations?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Significantly better than expected	9.7%	27
Slightly better than expected	15.8%	44
About what we expected	46.8%	130
More challenging than expected	23.7%	66
Significantly more challenging than expected	4.0%	11
answered question		278

Q37: Considering change is never easy, this was a relatively easy change.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	8	55	62	109	17	8	3.29	259

Q27: Overall teachers or staff members within the program have been empowered to increase their effectiveness in the classroom.

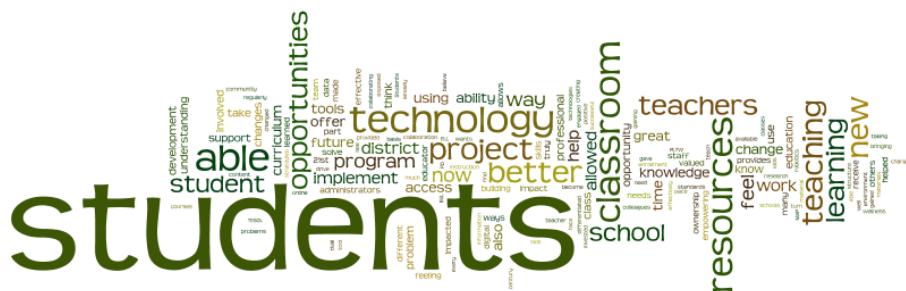
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	3	15	50	124	62	11	3.89	265

Q28: Overall I believe I have been personally empowered to increase my effectiveness in the classroom as a teacher or in my operational role as a staff member.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	3	16	63	86	59	38	3.80	265

Q28 Follow up: If you agree or strongly agree, what was it about the project that generated a personal feeling of empowerment?

The following is a “word cloud,” an illustration of common themes that highlights frequency by size of the word, produced on Wordle.net created from the open-ended question (Q28) that asked people that “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with the sense of empowerment. The key words that stand out are: students, able, technology, classroom, resources, opportunities and learning.



Below are some typical quotes to help the reader understand what program participants are experiencing:

- “Ability to develop understanding of language and learn basic skills in some of the languages my students speak at home”
- “A feeling of inclusive cohesion as a member of a team actively working to implement new instructional strategies; I felt a part of something that has already proven itself as successful in creating effective teaching strategies.”
- “The collaboration with teachers from other districts, the exposure to new technologies, and the standards-based structure provided by the e-unit my group created”
- “This project enables us to think outside of the box and to offer opportunities for all students that did not exist in the past.”
- “The curriculum empowers the students to be connected and interested. Their drive, in turn, drives me to be better every day.”
- “Revolutionizing my classroom from paper/pencil/textbook to online digital resources.”
- “I am better prepared to integrate technology in my teaching. I can tailor those electronic resources to the needs of my students.”

Effect on Sense of Belonging

Our first question related to sense of belonging looked to capture whether or not their sense of belonging to their school community had changed as a result of the project implementation experience. We found 41% agreed that the project changed their sense of belonging while 24.6% disagreed.

Using Q29 and Q30 (Table 1) we are able to look at the change in sense of belonging from before the project compared to their current sense of belonging. The following chart shows the number of people answering Q29 which is sense of belonging before the project (rows) with the numbers of people responding to Q30 which is sense of belonging since implementation (columns).

The gray boxes show where answers for each question match up – very weak to very weak and so on. The numbers to the left of the diagonal row of gray boxes are numbers of people indicating a decrease in sense of belonging since the project implementation and the numbers to the right indicate an increase in the sense of belonging. In all, eight (8) respondents showed a decrease in sense of belonging compared to 63 people who showed a higher sense of belonging since implementation.

Interestingly, building level administration showed very little movement in sense of belonging between the two questions, but teachers showed a great deal of movement toward a stronger sense of belonging. The number of teachers reporting a “very strong” sense of belonging increased from 26 before to 46 after implementation for a 77% increase in this answer category.

Q25: This change affected my sense of belonging to my school as a professional.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	13	51	72	79	31	22	3.26	268

Table 1 – Q29 & A30 Answer Comparison

	Q30: After Very Weak	Q30: Weak	Q30: Neutral	Q30: Strong	Q30: Very Strong
Q29; Before Very Weak	0	1	0	0	0
Q29: Weak	0	3	0	6	3
Q29: Neutral	0	3	26	22	5
Q29: Strong	1	1	1	83	26
Q29: Very Strong	1	0	0	2	63

Q29: Before the project began, my sense of belonging to my organization was

Answer Options	Very Weak	Weak	Neutral	Strong	Very Strong	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	1	12	55	112	67	21	3.94	268

Q30: Since the implementation of the Straight A fund grant, my sense of belonging to my organization now is

Answer Options	Very Weak	Weak	Neutral	Strong	Very Strong	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	2	8	28	113	100	17	4.20	268

Perceived Change Benefits

74% of respondents believe that the changes created by the project have been “positive” or “very positive in general. Only 3% (8 survey participants) believe the changes have been negative. No significant difference in opinion based on job category.

Opinions split about whether or not the project benefits were limited to the people directly involved with the project. 43.3% agree that only those administrators, teachers, staff and students directly involved with the project were impacted by the specific project. 36.2% disagreed with the limited impact.

In a follow-up question it was asked whether or not the changes from the project have had additional benefits in other areas of the work they do. The instrument finds that 71.2% of participants agree with this statement and only 3.8% disagree. So while respondents are not sure that the benefits are

expanding to non-project areas of the school, they are finding additional personal benefits from the project.

30% report a belief that the project reduced costs or expenses related to the work that they personally do. 24.4% disagreed that the project reduced costs. Not surprisingly, building level administration was significantly more likely to believe the project has produced cost savings compared to 15% for teachers. These data points should also be considered in the context that not all projects had cost reduction as a stated goal, and that actual cost reductions may be visible at the district administration level and not the classroom level.

Q16: Overall, has this change been positive, neither positive nor negative, or negative?								
Answer Options	Very Negative	Negative	Neither Positive or Negative	Positive	Very Positive	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	3	5	51	97	109	11	4.15	276

Q21: Only those administrators, teachers, staff, and students directly involved with our program were impacted by the specifics of the project.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	12	85	45	94	22	10	3.11	268

Q38: The change required for the program has been very beneficial in other areas of the work we do.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	3	7	53	136	49	12	3.89	260

Q44: The change has reduced the cost or expenses associated with the work I do.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	14	48	88	56	19	31	3.08	256

Efficiency and Effectiveness

In the next two questions, participants were asked to look at gains on two important dimensions. The first is “efficiency” – are you able to do things quicker or with less effort? The second looks at “effectiveness” – are you having more impact as a result of the change. In short, it was found that effectiveness gains were the most consistent and represents a widely held belief. In the survey, 47.3% of respondents report an increase in effectiveness compared to 13.3% who disagree. The majority of the effectiveness gains are in the classroom with instruction and assessment.

The efficiency gains are less consistent although there are several overriding themes explored below.

What has been the greatest efficiency gain you have seen as a result of the change?

We asked an open-ended question to capture what survey participants believe are the greatest “efficiency” gains so far in the project. Many of the responses center around the use of technology which has expanded the amount of information, increased flexibility of learning plans, expanded communication with students, and reduced the curriculum planning time. The other theme that emerges is one related to the increased number of advanced course offerings within their schools. This positively motivates some students and directly reduces their post-high school educational costs according to participants.

Another theme was it’s too soon to tell if we gained efficiencies. Most of the comments have a sense of it being “too early to tell” versus it being a “forgone conclusion.”

The other significant theme has to do with “collaboration” in a general sense of the word. Some are specific about the increased collaboration with peers, but there are a sizable number of respondents that talk about increased collaboration with students within the learning process. Whether it is better knowledge acquisition measurement, intervention support, flexibility in use of the class time, or greater levels of communication, the thrust of these comments seems to be that students are much more “owners” of their own education.

Representative responses to the question include:

- “Collaboration with peers cuts down on the individual time and resources needed to create units and lessons products.”
- “My ability to find, manipulate, and implement online resources in my classroom.”
- “Reduction in need for textbooks.”
- “Without a doubt, the move to a "paperless" classroom has saved a great deal of money for the school district.”
- “Educational opportunities have greatly expanded as students seek college / career options.”
- “Our students have the opportunity to take college classes in our building.”
- “The students are able to earn college credit for classes taken at the high school.”
- “More individual time on task because students can work at their own pace.”
- “Student engagement in individualized instruction.”
- “Students are more in charge of their learning.”
- “Shared resources of teaching staff from multiple districts and universities.”
- “Students in credit recovery courses have been able to quickly get back on track to graduate on pace when they put in time and effort.”
- “More learning is occurring during the time spent in the classroom.”
- “Having more teachers implementing good teaching strategies that are research based.”
- “Improved communication between students and teachers concerning academics.”

Q48: The change has increased collaboration within our school among our staff members.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	5	27	63	110	32	15	3.58	252

Q49: The change has increased collaboration within teachers and staff in other school districts.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	4	28	56	94	51	19	3.69	252

Q53: The change has increased the amount of collaboration that I personally experience.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	2	21	59	113	46	12	3.75	253

Classroom Change

Finally, we look at survey participant views on the impact of change within the classroom with students.

In looking at how the change has affected the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of interactions with students, there is strong support that each of these has increased as a result of the change. The approximate agreement rating for each of these concepts was 46.9% and disagreement was less than 10.9% or less for each measurement.

When the perspective of teachers is isolated within each of these questions, the results find even higher agreement with positive increases in each of these three aspects of the teaching relationship with students:

- 65% agree the change increased the **efficiency** of interactions with students
 - 12.8% disagree
- 63.2% agree the change increased the **quality** of interactions with students
 - 12% disagree
- 66.7% agree the change increased the **effectiveness** of interactions with students
 - 12% disagree

The last question in this series looks at the effect of the change on time available to work directly with students on their learning objectives. Again we find strong teacher agreement that the innovative grants have generated an increase in the amount of time available to work directly with students on their learning objectives. 69.5% of teachers agree with this positive effect of change while 18.6% disagree.

Since the teacher- student relationship is one of the most critical factors in student success it is fair to conclude that the teachers involved with the 2014 Straight A Fund projects are expressing positive findings related to improvements in the teaching process. The ultimate outcome measurement of academic improvement will be a key linkage of these process improvements with the ultimate goals of enhanced academic success for students.

Q50: The change has increased the efficiency of my interactions with students.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
All	3	20	61	99	28	3.61	211
Teachers	2	13	26	60	16		117

Q51: The change has increased the quality of my interactions with students.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
All	3	17	63	89	37	3.67	211
Teachers	3	11	29	55	19		117

Q52: The change has increased the effectiveness of my educational interactions with students.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
All	4	14	59	94	36	3.70	207
Teachers	3	11	25	58	20		117

Q54: The change has increased the amount of time I have to work directly with students on their learning objectives.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
All	6	38	72	55	27	3.30	198
Teachers	1	21	42	35	19		118

Final Thoughts

The last scaled question looks to the future. Do the people involved with the Straight A Fund projects believe the changes they are making will have long lasting positive impact for many years to come after the grant program life cycle has ended? The overwhelming belief of the survey participants is yes the

positive impacts will last for many years past the end of the grant (77.5% agree). Only 8 survey respondents disagreed with the statement or 3.2% of all survey respondents to this question. 6 of these 8 are teachers, but there was no statistical significance in the general opinion based on job category.

Q60: The changes we are making will have positive impacts for our school or school district for many years past the end of the grant.								
Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
	1	7	39	113	83	10	4.11	253

If agree or strongly agree, in what ways will the change have a positive impact?

Specific responses to the above question help us understand the nature and specifics of the perceived positive impacts. As one reads through the quotes below from the survey, remember the great diversity of projects contained in the 2014 Straight A Fund portfolio. This will help in understanding why there is such diversity in the specific answers.

- “Helping students to see college as an option”
- “Online curriculum can only continue to develop and grow. This is just the beginning and if the project is supported - this project can continue to grow and change as the face of technology changes.”
- “The 21st century requires that students and teachers use digital tools to augment teaching and learning. This project will continue this work.”
- “Our school will be one- to -one within the next 2 years. This project will help us meet the needs of the students.”
- “Students will be using 21st century resources and tools for a 21st century world.”
- “The project is pushing student learning toward its inevitable future. School will not return to textbooks and chalk. Computer learning is here to stay.”
- “The idea that multiple districts in a region of Ohio can collaborate on topics of their content is amazing. These are connections that we have made for our careers.”
- “Implementation of a paperless curriculum is the future. To get started now.... is pragmatic”
- “This program has [taught] me to make my classroom less teacher-centered and more student-centered. Instruction doesn't have to "come from me." I guide and help organize the instruction.”
- “It is opening doors for people to take risks and implement change when they might have been apprehensive to do so before.”
- “The change has forced a conversation in the district. While it has put many on the defensive, that is the inevitable consequence of progress. Patting ourselves on the back for our successes, without honest dialogue about opportunities for improvements was pattern prior to this change.”

- “Students are being pushed more, and experiencing higher expectations and many of them are rising to the challenge. They are learning to push themselves and seeing real ways in which their learning can be helpful and useful for them outside of the classroom.”
- “This has opened up opportunities students have never had before. There is an excitement about being at the school and the positive challenges the new curriculum/courses offer students. They feel there are courses now being offered which will help them in their career path whether to a college or job requiring more specialized skills. This grant combined with other district initiative is beginning to change the entire district's culture and outlook on education for the community. I only worry about losing the progress we have made due to the inability to sustain the initiative.”
- “I feel teachers have a better understanding of quality teaching strategies and will continue to implement them throughout their teaching careers.”
- “This is a very innovative way to help provide students with much needed intervention or enrichment based tailored to them specifically.”
- “It will help us continue on a trend of improvement rather than stagnation.”
- “Our students are being offered the opportunity to gain college credit without setting foot outside our building. This program allows our students to be one step ahead of their peers when entering college and being prepared for the coursework.”
- “Providing support for the ESL population. This demographic has often been ignored in the past.”
- “Teachers learned a process that does not require additional funds. This will help children for years to come.”

With the diversity in projects, the variations in the responses can stand alone as insights to the project. However, if there is an interest in looking at the responses according to themes, three themes can be considered. One theme is that technology transforms the classroom experience for everyone especially teachers and students. The second theme is that students are getting a much more robust and richer learning experience than before grant implementation. The third theme would be that the reality outside the classroom is technology-assisted living, so it is logical to see the rapid process gains in the first year of the grant related to the integration of this technology-assisted living into the classroom.

Q63: What was the biggest surprise you personally experienced through your participation in this project?

Participants offered a variety of insights in answering this question. For visualization, a word cloud for the data shows “students” at the center of responses along with “amount” and “time.”

- “The amount of interest of other teachers that were not part of the grant writing process.”
- “The change in instructional strategies within the classroom.”
- “My biggest surprise was how many school districts were unaware of their ability to track their Medicaid revenue through the MITS Portal”
- “The amount of knowledge gained by collaborating with teachers in the same content area but from different districts”
- “How this project has reinvigorated me as an educator.”
- “The amount of work that it took to get it set-up successfully.”
- “All of the educational tools that I have been missing out on that have been available to me for quite some time.”
- “I was surprised by the students’ initial hesitation towards making change.”
- “How much can be done on-line.”
- “That I could actually put together a decent lesson/unit using the new technology. It was dicey for a while.”

The comments contained a variety of positive and negative surprises with most being positive.

The most common negative statements had to do with problems experienced during implementation: lack of communication, time involved, resistance from peers or students or time frames.

As you read through all the comments for the question, you pick up a clear feeling of “excitement” and “discovery.” **Collaboration** is a consistent theme whether it is with parents, community partners, peers (with in district and between districts) or vendors. The second theme would be excited about new **student opportunities and engagement**: interactions with outside professionals, technology resources, more individualized support and more flexibility to pursue interests. Third theme would be significant jumps in the ability to deliver **quality curriculum**: access to better resources, better instructional strategies, technology leverage evaluation and delivery, and learning from others.

The comment that best summarized the open-ended comments and captures the nature of positive change was offered by a teacher: “...This project has reinvigorated me as an educator.”

Appendix A: Demographics

Below are the charts of detailed demographics for the survey:

Q1: What is your primary role with the project?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Teacher/instructor	53.3%	163
Building-level administrator	14.7%	45
Operational staff member	6.5%	20
Other (please specify)	25.5%	78
answered question		306

Q11: Specifically related to your own involvement with the grant, what stage of program implementation is your project currently in?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Planning	2.4%	7
Early implementation (Less than 1/3 through implementation)	22.6%	65
Middle of implementation (1/3- 2/3 through implementation)	30.3%	87
Toward the end of implementation (more than 2/3 complete with implementation)	14.3%	41
Sustainability/ Grant implementation complete	10.1%	29
Completing Summative Evaluation Assessment	1.4%	4
Unsure	18.8%	54
answered question		287

Q2: How long have you been involved in the project sponsored by the Straight A Fund?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
From the beginning	58.8%	180
Most of the time (roughly more than 2/3 of the project implementation time to date but not from beginning)	14.7%	45
About half way through the project (roughly 1/3-2/3 of the way through the project implementation time to date)	5.9%	18
Just recently (roughly less than 1/3 of the way through the project implementation time to date)	6.2%	19
Not really involved in the project	2.9%	9
Unsure	11.4%	35
answered question		306

Q3: Which of the following best describes the community where your district is located?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Rural	42.2%	129
Small Town	6.5%	20
Suburban	28.4%	87
Urban	21.6%	66
Island/Other	1.3%	4
answered question		306

Q4: What is the approximate size of your school district?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Small (under 2000 students)	49.0%	148
Medium (between 2001 and 5000 students)	22.2%	67
Large (over 5000 students)	28.8%	87
answered question		302

Q5: What is the specific project in which you are involved that is sponsored by a first round, FY14 Straight A Fund grant? (Projects are listed by project title followed by the name of the lead applicant.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Personalized Learning Roadmap for Every Student Grade 6-12 - Math The Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT)	1.8%	6
Beyond the Classroom (Paulding Exempted Village Schools)	6.2%	21
Building an Educational Foundation for the Future with a Sustainable Peer to Peer Curriculum Focus (Springfield-Clark CTC)	0.0%	0
Campus of Excellence (James A. Garfield Local Schools)	0.0%	0
Case based STEM learning project (Milford EVSD)	3.5%	12
DEAMFISA (Portsmouth City Schools)	2.4%	8
Sparking Innovation: Individualizing Learning with a Customized 21st Century Educational Platform (Beavercreek City Schools)	3.5%	12
Early College 2.0 (Dayton Early College Academy (DECA))	4.4%	15
Early Literacy Initiative: Closing the Reading Gap in the Painesville City Local Schools (Painesville City Local Schools)	0.0%	0

ELLIS I. (Groveport-Madison)	0.0%	0
Every Child a Cabinet of Wonders: Becoming Curators of Learning (East Holmes)	0.0%	0
Future CLASS for Diverse Learners (Cincinnati City Schools)	9.7%	33
Marysville Early College High School and Union County Innovation Center (Marysville EVSD)	1.2%	4
NWOi3 Digital Curriculum (Otsego Local)	13.3%	45
OAC Personalized Learning Network (Northern Local School District)	20.1%	68
Optimizing Medicaid in Ohio Schools (TRECA Digital Academy)	0.6%	2
Pathways to Prosperity (Reynoldsburg)	11.5%	39
Providing Opportunities with Extraordinary Results POWER (Carrollton Exempted Village School District)	0.3%	1
Quality Student Growth Measure Development and Statewide Dissemination (Oregon City Schools)	0.0%	0
Rural Schools Partnering in Expanded Education Opportunities (Fayette Local Schools)	6.8%	23
SOIL (Kelley's Island Local School District)	2.9%	10
Strategic Human Capital Systems Focused on Educator Quality and Continuous Organizational Improvement (South Central LSD)	1.2%	4
The Mind Body Connection (Trumbull Career and Technical Center)	2.7%	9
Viking21: Real Life Learning for the 21st Century (North Canton City Schools)	1.2%	4
Unsure (please describe your project)		23
answered question		306

Note: allowed for more than one answer. Column total is 339.

Grade Levels Served by Grant Recipients Percentage of Total Grants

