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Executive Summary

The goal of the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative Personalized Learning Network (OAC PLN) Straight A project is to accelerate student achievement by increasing access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a networked 6-12 grade, high-quality blended learning and dual enrollment (DE) system. Northern Local School District is the lead applicant and fiscal agent for the 27-district Collaborative. Battelle for Kids, which serves as the project management organization for the Collaborative, subcontracted with Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to conduct a multi-year external evaluation. The comprehensive mixed-method evaluation will track and document both implementation and outcomes of this multi-year initiative.

Primary Evaluation Findings To-Date

- For a majority of the districts, there has been substantial progress made toward several of the outcome metrics, including student receipt of dual credit and percent of high school students scoring remediation-free on the ACT. Further, ten districts have shown improvement since baseline on five or six of the seven reported secondary data outcome metrics.

- The goal of 105 teachers credentialed to teach dual enrollment courses was achieved.

- Teachers report implementing in their classrooms what they learned in professional development, especially formative instructional practices (FIP).

- As in prior years, students perceive the dual enrollment courses as more rigorous than other courses and note that access to the dual enrollment courses motivates them to do well academically.

- Student access to and enrollment in shared dual enrollment courses is increasing. It is challenging, however, for school districts to align schedules in order to offer inter-district dual enrollment courses.

- Teacher ratings of DE courses show improved alignment with nationally recognized dual enrollment standards.

- Student enrollment in career pathways continues to increase.

- There are some concerns about sustainability of the current OAC PLN efforts.
Introduction
Northern Local School District, on behalf of the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative, submitted a successful Straight A Fund proposal to the Ohio Department of Education and was awarded funding for a five-year initiative that began in FY 2014. The funded initiative, titled the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative Personalized Learning Network (OAC PLN), involves 27 school districts in Eastern/Southern Ohio. The goal of the OAC PLN Straight A project is to accelerate student achievement by increasing access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a networked 6-12 grade, high-quality blended learning and dual enrollment system. Battelle for Kids, which serves as the project management organization for the Collaborative, subcontracted with Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs to conduct a multi-year external evaluation of the Straight A-funded initiative.

The first year of the project (2013-14) focused on infrastructure development and implementation planning at both the district and entire Collaborative levels. Ohio University’s evaluation began on August 1, 2014 (Implementation Year 1) and will continue through August 31, 2019.

The external evaluation team comprises the following applied faculty and senior project managers at Ohio University’s Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs:

Marsha Lewis, PhD – Project manager; quantitative data collection and analysis; report writing
Margaret Hutzel, MPA – Qualitative data collection and analysis; report writing
Anirudh V. S. Ruhil, PhD – Quantitative data analysis
Daniel Kloepfer, MPP – Qualitative and quantitative analysis

Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation
The comprehensive evaluation tracks and documents both implementation and outcomes of this multi-year initiative. All Straight A Fund applicants were required to specify one or more project goals among the three goals for FY14 applicants, as specified by the Ohio Department of Education. The OAC PLN Straight A Project selected *Increase Student Achievement* as the overall project goal. As stated in the proposal, the goal of the project is to improve academic achievement among participating students in grades 6-12 by increasing access to advanced learning and blended learning.

Student Achievement Goal Metrics
The OAC PLN proposal specified that progress toward the student achievement goal will be measured by using the following benchmark categories: graduation rates; earned credits;
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ACT scores; college credit earned in high school; college enrollment and remediation; and student attainment of industry credentials.

**Graduation Rate:** The project will track graduation rates by district and across the Collaborative as a whole. Graduation rate data is the four-year longitudinal graduation rate. The source is the Ohio Department of Education’s Local Report Card data. These data are collected and reported annually. Graduation rate data lags one year; a preliminary baseline was established in September 2014. The true baseline for the project was established with the release of the 2014-2015 Report Card. These data will be tracked for the duration of the project.

**ACT Scores:** The project will track the number and percentage of students achieving college-ready scores on the ACT college entrance exam. Data are collected through the Local Report and the ACT LEA profile reports generated by ACT. Data are collected annually. A baseline was established in 2014 by using 2013-2014 data.

**College Credit Earned in High School:** The project is tracking the number and percentage of students earning credit in high school and the amount of credit earned. Data on college credit earned in high school are accessed via the Ohio Department of Education and district data and will be collected annually.

**College Enrollment:** The project will track college enrollment. Data on college going are accessed through the Ohio Education Research Center. Data are collected annually. A baseline was established in 2014 by using 2013-2014 data.

**College Remediation:** The project will track the number and percentage of students enrolling in developmental math and/or English in college. Data on college remediation will be accessed through the Ohio Education Research Center. Data are collected annually. A baseline was established in 2014 by using 2013-2014 data.

**Industry Credentials:** The project will track the number and percentage of students obtaining Ohio Department of Education’s Industry-Recognized Credentials upon graduation. The current general fields for which the ODE identifies credentials include Agriculture, Arts and Communications, Business and Finance, Construction, Education and Training, Engineering, Health, Hospitality and Tourism, Human Services, Information Technology, Law and Public Safety, Manufacturing and Transportation.

**Core Evaluation Questions**

Evaluators are collecting and analyzing data across this multi-year project in order to address both formative and summative evaluation questions. The formative evaluation will provide evidence and recommendations to the Implementation Team for ongoing project
improvement. The summative evaluation will provide data annually, tracking progress toward student achievement goals specified in the funded proposal.

Formative Evaluation Questions

1. Is the Consortium able to engage LEAs in sustainability planning and collaboration across districts?
2. Does the Consortium implement the management system, utilize the communication strategies and tools, secure the needed technological infrastructure and implement a performance management system across all participating LEAs?
3. Does the Consortium recruit, select and credential 105 teachers to design and provide post-secondary courses, across the four curriculum/career pathways?
4. Are dual enrollment courses across the four curriculum/career pathways developed, implemented and offered throughout the Consortium over the next five years?
5. Do students enroll in and complete dual enrollment courses across the four pathways over the next five years?
6. Do students have access to dual enrollment courses across the four pathways from multiple LEAs within the Consortium?
7. Are 6-12th grade teachers across the Consortium engaged in formative instructional practice, assessment literacy and student growth mindsets?
8. Are 6-12th grade teachers engaged in new personalized learning technologies through online professional development over the next five years?
9. Do the dual enrollment courses designed meet the National Concurrent Enrollment Partnership standards?

Summative Evaluation Questions

1. How many new courses are offered as dual enrollment courses between September 2014 and May 2019 (from baseline year 2013-2014) as a result of the program?
2. Are courses offered across all four curriculum/career pathways and accessible to any eligible student within the participating LEAs?
3. How many students are enrolled in new dual enrollment courses between September 2014 and May 2019?
4. How many students complete and receive both high school and college credit?
5. How many students complete one of the four curriculum/career pathways by graduation?
6. Is there an increase in the number of students who earn industry credentials upon graduation?
7. Is there a 1% annual increase in the percentage of OAC students enrolling in postsecondary education?
8. Did the project raise four-year graduation rates by 1% per year over the five years of the project, and is this achieved for low SES students as well?

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9. Did LEAs see an increase in the number and percentage of students achieving college-ready scores on the ACT college entrance exam, measured from the baseline year 2013-14?

Evaluation Stakeholders

The primary stakeholders of the evaluation data that will be collected for this project through 2019 will be the Ohio Department of Education, Battelle for Kids, and the 27 participating school districts/communities. Because of the scale (27 rural schools that serve a total of 48,000 students—50% of them in poverty) and complexity of this initiative, coupled with innovations such as sharing dual enrollment courses and career pathway development across multiple districts, the outcomes and lessons learned will be of interest beyond the primary stakeholders. Ohio policymakers, the U.S. Department of Education and other education policy and practice entities focused on both education reform and rural development will be interested in the trajectory and impact of the initiative. The evaluation team is cognizant of the multiple stakeholders for this evaluation and prepares reports and presentations that meet the needs of various audiences.

Reporting Requirements

- Interim evaluation reports are provided annually (September 15 of each year in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).
- Evaluation briefs will be provided each spring (2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018) highlighting specific formative evaluation findings, progress toward student achievement outcomes, and recommendations that are actionable by the partners. These briefs will be formatted for distribution to a broad array of stakeholders. Presentation slide decks for various stakeholder groups will be provided annually or upon request.
- A final evaluation report will be completed by August 2019.

Methodology

Researchers are deploying a mixed-methods evaluation to address the formative and summative evaluation questions.\(^2\) The formative evaluation questions are addressed primarily through focus groups/interviews, district site visits (five), observations of Collaborative meetings and document/artifact reviews. The OAC PLN Straight A Fund project is unique in that it involves 27 rural school districts geographically disbursed across approximately one-third of the state. Inter-district collaboration, joint professional development and information sharing (i.e., best practices, course development, lessons

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learned) are necessary for successful implementation of the OAC PLN, but it is impossible for all the work to occur face-to-face. Battelle for Kids has deployed web-based platforms to facilitate much of the work of the Collaborative.

The summative evaluation questions are addressed by acquiring and analyzing the student achievement data indicated in the successful proposal. The design is an interrupted time-series\(^3\) utilizing baseline academic year 2013-14 and analyzing the district-level student achievement goal metrics through the 2018-19 academic year.

**Implementation Year 3 Evaluation Activities**

- Analysis of student achievement data
- Analysis of responses to a Battelle for Kids district level survey
- Analysis of responses to an evaluation team survey of faculty and district staff
- Site visits to five participating districts
- Focus groups with District Implementation Teams, DE teachers, non-DE teachers, and students
- Discussions with Battelle for Kids staff

**Formative Evaluation**

**Sustainability and Collaboration**

*Is the Consortium able to engage LEAs in sustainability planning and collaboration across districts?*

In regards to sustainability planning, District Implementation Teams (DITs) were engaged in discussions about sustainability planning via consortium meetings as indicated on agendas. Further, as noted in Straight A Update email messages, the focus of the Battelle site visits planned for March 2018 will be largely on sustainability.

Additionally, an online survey administered by the evaluation team included 20 sustainability-related questions for Superintendents (see Appendix 8). All of the mean responses to the scaled items fall between three and five, or the middle range of the seven-point scale with one equaling “to a little or no extent” and seven equaling “to a very great extent.” In general, the results could indicate a need for more action to increase the likelihood of sustaining the efforts of the OAC PLN.

**Collaboration**

Various groups discussed collaboration during district site visits, and there is clear indication that the time spent meeting with other districts/groups to share ideas is highly

valued. Further, via the online survey, data is available from about half of the participating districts regarding collaboration, and it is very positive. Of the respondents indicating they are principals, half stated that inter-district collaboration currently exists. Further, 12 of the 14 responding superintendents cited the OAC PLN as helpful and positive toward collaboration. As one superintendent noted, “The biggest asset of the PLN is the connection with 27 other like districts that are available for ideas and innovations.” It is unclear how the remaining districts’ administrators may have responded, but those who did were quite positive.

In terms of needs for continued success, principals and superintendents report on the online survey that funding, collaboration opportunities, and general support/communication are their biggest needs. Some teachers also commented in the open response portion of the survey that they had concerns about the future as well. “The Straight A grant has been a huge benefit to our district. I am very concerned that at the end of the grant period that our district has no plan in place to continue the efforts or how to continue the efforts. If there are plans, those plans have not been communicated to the teacher level.” These responses suggest that additional support may be needed for the current success to continue.

**Consortium Infrastructure**

*Does the Consortium implement the management system, utilize the communication strategies and tools, secure the needed technological infrastructure and implement a performance management system across all participating LEAs?*

The Consortium has addressed the necessary infrastructure, purchased the technological resources and has continued communication across the 27 districts. However, not all districts have purchased distance learning poly com systems, nor are they all participating at the same level, which is not at all surprising. What is clear, is that the collection of participating districts has benefited substantially by being involved in the initiative. Along with the resources and support of a broad network of other often-similar districts, their participation came with resources and funding to purchase technology and to support teachers in becoming credentialed for DE. Some district representatives have stated it has changed the way they provide education. “We jumped in on this with the grant and I think this thing has really changed significantly what we are doing here in education. Everything, including poly-coms that we were allowed to buy which is something that helps us get kids better and easier opportunities for CCP.”
Dual Enrollment Teacher Credentialing

*Does the Consortium recruit, select and credential 105 teachers to design and provide post-secondary courses, across the four curriculum/career pathways?*

Many teachers received grant-covered master's degree tuition in order to acquire credentials necessary for teaching DE courses. Teachers have often reported they would not have acquired the credentials without the support. The ability to take master’s courses in a variety of ways such as online, as a cohort or as a combination of online and in-person is also valued. Survey results indicated 187 teachers across 27 districts are credentialed to teach dual enrollment courses (see Figure 1). Nearly three-fourths of the teachers who responded to the online survey report they are compensated financially for teaching DE courses. Some concerns were expressed by teachers who are not compensated, “There are few ways to increase a teacher's pay in Ohio. I will soon be qualified to offer 15 hours of college credit within the building, but make the exact same money as every other teacher in the district. I knew that going into the process, but if there were more financial advantages for the teacher they may take the course work to become content area experts as well, deepening the high school experience. That is simply an observation, and I am more than satisfied with having little to no debt for another degree.” Many teachers appreciate the opportunity to obtain credentials to teach DE courses through the grant.

*Figure 1. Number of Credentialed Teachers*
DE teachers also commented in focus groups that it was challenging to find the right program that did not include substantial hidden fees and that met their needs as working professionals. They also noted time management was critical to their success in gaining their DE credentials while still teaching.

**Developing Career Pathways**

Are dual enrollment courses across the four curriculum/career pathways developed, implemented and offered throughout the Consortium over the next five years?

Career pathways are being developed, implemented and offered throughout the Consortium. Students, teachers and implementation team members provided inconsistent reviews of pathways, however. Many students were unaware of what pathways were. Some students who were aware of pathways reported feeling pathways were too narrow for those students who had not yet decided what career they wanted. Other students found pathways helpful in expanding their opportunities. The Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) pathway is offered in the most districts and has the highest enrollment. The district-level survey also reveals a variety of methods used to determine student enrollment in a career pathway. The most common methods used by districts were course completion (11 districts) and course sequence (10 districts). Five districts reported students actively declare a pathway. It is important to note that four districts reported students enrolled in pathways are unaware of their participation in a pathway.

A winter 2017 survey also queried about the career pathways. Over half of principal respondents stated that their understanding is that the pathways are progressing positively, with few respondents reporting negative experiences. Citing positive progress, one respondent shares, "I believe the Pathways are progressing very well in our district. The
implementation of College Credit Plus courses in our district has been well received by faculty, students, and parents, which ultimately results in effectively transitioning students into their chosen pathway.” The two most common responses from school counselor respondents were that the ability to add courses is increasing and that the pathways are incrementally progressing, either slowly overall or by a specific plan. For example, one respondent comments, “We will be adding a third pathway this winter as more teachers get credentialed,” meaning that the pathways and related courses are continuing, but alongside other requirement processes.

According to many survey respondents, students learn about these pathways mainly through informational or advising appointments with counselors. Other information-sharing methods include personal online investigation, course materials or career programs, but none of these options has many supporting answers. One counselor states, “Students are presented with the pathways as an option...in creating their schedules and doing future planning,” which reflects the advising theme in the majority of responses. This indicates that counselors are a vital part of communicating available opportunities to students.

**Student Enrollment in Pathways**

*Do students enroll in and complete dual enrollment courses across the four pathways over the next five years?*

In spring 2017, 15 districts reported offering at least one pathway, seven of which reported offering four pathways (see Figure 2). Further, the student enrollment in pathways is increasing. From 2016 to 2017, 680 more students enrolled in a career pathway. Pathway enrollment was 1,026 in 2016 and 1,706 in 2017. According to the online course catalog, most districts are offering Dual Enrollment courses in at least one of the Career Pathways (Arts & Communications, Business & Entrepreneurship, Health & Human Services, STEM) as of the 2015-16 reporting. Additional data are needed in order to assess student completion of DE courses within pathways.
There is indication that participation in the OAC PLN has affected how districts approach planning for educational outcomes among students, as evidenced by the following from a district administrator, “What this grant has done for us with personalized learning...we understand that every kid is different. Every kid has a goal and a pathway. And we have to find out what’s right for them and we have to offer multiple opportunities to get there and be cognizant of what is your [the student’s] future.”
Student Access to Dual Enrollment across the Consortium

**Do students have access to dual enrollment courses across the four pathways from multiple LEAs within the consortium?**

Student access to dual enrollment courses offered from other districts has been slowly growing. Seven districts report students take dual enrollment courses in another OAC PLN district, with 34 students enrolled in such courses collaborative-wide. This is an increase from 10 students enrolled in courses shared from other districts in 2015-2016 (Figure 3). Districts report challenges in regards to aligning schedules from one district to another in order to offer inter-district DE courses.

In focus groups, students taking courses in other districts reported difficulty with consistent or timely communication, technology glitches and unfamiliarity. In general, many students reported they preferred to have traditional classes, in person, with teachers they know. However, some of the students’ perceptions related to promptness of teacher responses via email were somewhat unrealistic. For example, a response via email the same evening or next day was viewed by some students as too long of a delay. These email communication experiences with instructors may help prepare them for similar experiences at the post-secondary level.

“It has been beneficial, but continued financial support is a concern. Rural districts are still struggling to coordinate sharing efforts with other districts. Many of our concerns center around the partnerships with institutions of higher learning. Again, we are still in a much better place now than four years ago.”

~ High School Principal
Figure 3. Map of Inter-District Enrollment

Interdistrict Enrollment

- Districts with DE Students Enrolled in Another District
- Districts with DE Students Enrolled in Another District AND Sharing DE Courses with Other Districts
- Districts Sharing DE Courses with Other Districts
- All Other Districts

Numbers indicate total number of students attending a shared DE course between districts.
Teacher Participation in Personalized Online Learning

Are 6-12th grade teachers engaged in new personalized learning technologies through online professional development over the next five years?

In focus groups when discussing the credentialing process, teachers often note they have access to a variety of means of accessing courses, including online courses. Another means of online, personalized learning for teachers was through the use of Schoology, a platform for collaboration and professional development including full courses. Though there was fairly high awareness of Schoology offering courses, fewer report accessing it and far fewer report enrolling in a course (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Teacher Use of Schoology

Schoology awareness and usage by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness and Usage</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aware of courses offered through Schoology (n=378)</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have accessed Schoology (n=375)</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently enrolled in a Schoology course (n=195)</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher Engagement in Desired Instructional Practices

Are 6-12th grade teachers across the consortium engaged in formative instructional practice, assessment literacy and student growth mindsets?

In order to implement the strategies noted above, teachers need training on them. Districts reported 478 teachers received training or professional development, as a result of this project during the 2016-2017 school year.

Teachers were asked about their participation in professional development over the past two years (see Figure 5). The most common professional development teachers reported was Formative Instructional Practice/Assessment Literacy (311 teachers) followed by New Learning Technologies (170 teachers). About the value of FIP, one administrator noted the following: “I think students know where they are in their learning. I mean I think that the
huge piece that FIP brings to the table is we have students not just doing something for the sake of doing it, but they know the end goal, they know the success criteria, and they're more aware of what's happening within their own abilities.”

Figure 5. Teacher Professional Development Participation

More teachers report participating in professional development on Formative Instructional Practices than other trainings.

Teachers who participated in each type of professional development rated how valuable they found it to be (Figure 6). The most common response for every type of professional development was somewhat valuable. New Learning Technologies was rated as very valuable by the highest percentage of teachers, with 38% of the 171 teachers. Additionally, teachers reported whether or not they were implementing what they learned from each professional development in their classrooms.
Most important about the teaching strategies is implementation in the classroom. Teachers reported whether or not they were implementing what they learned from each professional development in their classrooms (Figure 7). The highest percentage of teachers reported implementing Formative Instructional Practice/Assessment Literacy in their classrooms with 93% (253 out of 272).
Each professional development activity had a group of survey participants that identified and explained any challenges they experienced while trying to implement the given activity in their classrooms. All of the activities had less than one in five of their overall participants cite any challenges with implementation. Those particular challenges are described below.

**Formative Instructional Practice**
- 31 of 54 participants cited challenges with time limitations.
- 12 of 54 participants cited challenges in working within administration expectations and regulations.

**Project-Based Learning and Dual Enrollment**
- Restricted by the length of a given class
- Scheduling issues

**Student Motivation**
- Combination of environmental and classroom factors
- Overcoming the effects of a student’s surroundings
- Needing new ideas or incentives for students

**New Learning Technologies**
- Cost of technology
- Student access to technology

The challenges cited by respondents suggest that there may be a gap in communicating expectations for implementing the practices between administrations and teaching faculty groups; this includes communicating various timelines so practices are prioritized for implementation.

**Dual Enrollment Course Standards**

*Do the dual enrollment courses designed meet the National Concurrent Enrollment Partnership standards?*

Dual Enrollment teacher responses show improved alignment of DE courses with the National Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Standards (Figure 8). Specifically, from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 there was an improvement in teacher perceptions on DE course activities regarding alignment with the *National Concurrent Enrollment Partnership Standards.*

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In addition to the DE teacher survey responses on alignment, student perceptions on the rigor of the DE courses indicate they believe the courses are more rigorous than their general education courses. They also perceive the courses as motivating and believe the courses are preparing them for the transition to college.

- “I think they’re more rigorous but at the same time I feel more motivated in them. Because I know the value in the end and how much time and money it could save me and prepare me for my future.”

- “And more specialized towards what you want. So I feel like I learn a lot more in them because I care about what I’m learning versus just trying to get the letter grade that I want.”

- “Definitely trying harder I think. Because there’s a possibility that more classes through colleges are going to be offered next year and I don’t know what the requirements are going to be. So I gotta’ make sure all my grades are good enough for them to like allow me to take them. And I do have good grades so it wasn’t really a major concern but this year it’s just been a lot more pushing cause the classes are different.”
Further, teachers report in the online survey that the students in the DE courses have better course engagement and skill building, partially due to the higher expectations.

Of the survey participants that teach DE/CCP courses and responded, 80% of them stated that these courses helped prepare students for post-high-school experiences. They all cited some form of skill development in students, although the number of students and combination of skills they received vary.

The following skills are the ways in which these courses help students:

- Research
- Writing
- Technology
- Time management
- Critical thinking

This type of response indicates that students enrolled in DE/CCP benefit in multiple ways from taking such courses that they can apply to outside classroom experiences. Teachers change how they operate in a DE/CCP classroom in order to have these skills emerge from their students. The most common responses among the DE teachers were that DE/CCP courses differ in structure, work standards, and student independence. Other responses include citing DE/CCP courses as being fast paced, having more content, and operating independently of standardized testing. DE/CCP courses, therefore, adequately prepare students for post-high-school experiences with inclusion of the classroom differences set by the instructors.

Additionally, these changes made by teachers require adjustments to their existing schedules. Teachers were also asked if they were compensated for teaching such courses or if they have any concerns about teaching them. The majority state that they receive a fixed amount of funds for teaching DE/CCP courses. Similarly, the majority of principal respondents reported changes in compensation

TEACHERS COMMENT ON DE COURSES

“They prepare students for what they may experience in a college classroom. As far as writing, students learn to work more independently on research and adjust their writing style to what is expected. They also learn to work under stricter deadlines than they do in high school.”

“I treat my DE students like the college students they are. I feel the discussions in my DE courses can be more mature than those in my traditional high school classes. I allow students more independent time to work on assignments (specifically essays), and I take advantage of in-class lab (work) time.”

– DE/CCP Course Teachers

“I am concerned about the planning and requirements of the college, as well as the high school. It is a lot of work and the texts change frequently, as does the contact at the college. It is hard to manage my time and also teach my regular high school classes.”

– High School Teacher
for teachers in their master contracts. However, the fixed amount that these teachers receive varies according to the institution or other requirements. For example, one respondent states, “I receive a stipend at the end of the year for $2,000,” while another respondent claims only “$500 a semester if we do not miss more than 8 days of school.” This indicates that while teachers are receiving compensation, the requirements for them are not uniform across institutions. This may imply that some are not compensated enough or have the potential to be placed in situations that require them to prioritize teaching over health or other commitments. This also applies to the credentialing process for teachers. One respondent states, “Some aspects of the program were very frustrating in the fact that some professors, particularly the education professors at UT, were unclear on expectations... [But] aside from three of the classes, the program was very helpful and I learned quite a bit of information.” This shows that the credentialing process may be different for other teachers depending on their instructor or course and is both positive and negative.

A variety of responses emerged in terms of concerns about teaching DE/CCP courses, such as scheduling, ensuring college-level coursework, finances, student readiness and lack of support. However, superintendents express concerns about the cost of DE courses. “We need to fight for zero dollar agreements with IHE’s. In order for districts to offer as many CCP classes as possible to our students we need zero dollar agreements. IHE’s still make money off of CCP and have to do little to earn this money. Any agreement above zero is criminal.”

**Summative Evaluation**

Throughout this section, secondary data metrics are available for 26 of the 27 schools, as data from one community school is not available.

**New Dual Enrollment Courses**

*How many new courses are offered as dual enrollment courses between September 2014 and May 2019 (from baseline year 2013-2014) as a result of the program?*

The number of DE courses offered throughout the consortium of OAC PLN districts is increasing dramatically. In September 2016, there were 134 unique dual enrollment courses listed in the OAC PLN Online Course Catalog as available in the 2016-17 academic year. The Online Course Catalog lists 320 DE courses in Fall 2017. The courses represent a wide variety of subjects including: Art/Music/Theater, Business, English Language Arts K-8, Health/Nutrition, History/Social Science, Languages, Mathematics, Other, Science & Engineering, and Technology.
Are courses offered across all four curriculum/career pathways and accessible to any eligible student within the participating LEAs?

Courses do appear to be offered across the four pathways as previously noted. One additional measure of accessibility is enrollment in DE courses among students who are not necessarily in the top 20% of their class. Teachers were asked about this in the online survey. The more common response was that the students in DE courses are in the top 20% of their class. That said, 18 of the 66 responding teachers indicated the students were in the top 40% of their class, and an additional four indicated the students in DE courses were in the top 60% of their class.

Student Enrollment in Dual Enrollment Courses

How many students are enrolled in new dual enrollment courses between September 2014 and May 2019?

The total student enrollment in DE courses declined somewhat in the 2016-2017 academic year; however, the data were incomplete, as one district did not respond to the survey (see Figure 9). Thus it is likely that the true number is higher.

Figure 9. Student Enrollment in DE Courses

Student enrollment in dual enrollment courses dropped in SY ’16/’17

Student Completion of Pathways

How many students complete one of the four curriculum/career pathways by graduation?

This evaluation report does not address student completion of pathways by graduation, but future reporting will do so.
Student Receipt of Dual Credit

*How many students complete and receive both high school and college credit?*

A comparison of district-level data from Ohio Department of Education School District Report Cards shows a marked increase in student receipt of dual credits while in high school. Specifically, 20 out of 26 districts have an increased percentage of students earning three or more dual enrollment credits from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017 (see Figure 1 in the Appendix). Of the 20, ten districts had an increase of 10 or more percentage points from baseline, one of which had an increase of over 50 percentage points. The remaining six districts had decreases or slight decreases (less than one percentage point change) from 2014-2015 to 2016-2017.

Student Receipt of Industry Credentials

*Is there an increase in the number of students who earn industry credentials upon graduation?*

Rather than reporting the number of students gaining industry credentials, we are reporting the percentage. There is some improvement in the percentage of students earning industry credentials by graduation though results are mixed. Sixteen districts have an increased percentage of students earning industry credentials, while 10 had a decrease or very slight decrease (see Figure 2 in the Appendix).

Post-secondary Enrollment

*Is there a 1% annual increase in the percentage of OAC students enrolling in post-secondary education?*

This evaluation metric will be considered somewhat differently than an annual increase. Looking across districts, from baseline (2014-2015) to 2017, 13 districts have an increase in the percentage of students enrolling in post-secondary education within two years of graduation. The remaining districts saw a decrease or very slight decrease (see Figure 3 in the Appendix).

Graduation Rates

*Did the project raise four-year graduation rates by 1% per year over the five years of the project, and is this achieved for low socioeconomic status (SES) students as well?*

There is an increase in the four-year graduation rate among 15 of the 26 districts from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017, but only five increased by three percentage points or more over the three years since baseline (see Figure 4 in the Appendix). Additionally, 16 districts had an increase in the four-year graduation rate among low SES students, and some of the increases are substantial – three have increases of 13.5%, 18.5% and 24.2%, respectively (see Figure 5 in the Appendix). It is important to note that five districts had high graduation rates among low SES students at baseline and the rates did not change. The remaining districts had a decrease in four-year graduation rates among low SES students.
ACT Scores

*Did LEAs see an increase in the percentage of students taking the ACT college entrance exam, measured from the baseline year 2013-14?*

Fifteen of the 26 districts showed improvement in the percentage of high school graduates participating in the ACT college entrance exam. The districts that had decreasing rates between 2014 and 2016 had only a slight decrease with the exception of one district that had a substantial decrease (see Figure 6 in the Appendix).

*Did LEAs see an increase in the number and percentage of students achieving college-ready scores on the ACT college entrance exam, measured from the baseline year 2013-14?*

There is improvement in the percentage of students achieving a college-ready score on the ACT. Specifically, from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017, a total of 19 districts saw an increased percentage of students scoring remediation free on the ACT, five districts saw a slight decrease (less than one percentage point lower), and two districts saw a decrease (see Figure 7 in the Appendix).
Conclusion

As noted in the Straight A Grant Proposal, the OAC PLN set out to “accelerate student achievement by increasing access to advanced learning and effective instruction through a networked 6-12 grade blended learning and dual enrollment system.” This evaluation of the work to-date toward this goal reveals substantial progress. The OAC PLN is providing improved and expanded educational opportunities that assist rural students in achieving their full potential. There are more teachers credentialed to offer DE courses, more and better DE course offerings, and more career pathways offered. These efforts are positively affecting the secondary data outcome metrics selected for the evaluation. The majority of districts have seen improvements since baseline in many of the metrics (see Table 10). Another way to explore this is to consider that ten districts had gains in five or six of the seven secondary data outcome metrics. This is a substantial achievement and deserves recognition.

Figure 10. Table of Outcome Metrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome metric</th>
<th>Number of districts with gains from baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of high school graduates earning three or more dual enrollment credits while in high school</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of high school graduates scoring remediation free on ACT College Entrance Exam</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of high school graduates earning industry-recognized credentials</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year graduation rate – Economically Disadvantaged students</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-year graduation rate</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLN percentage of high school graduates participating in ACT College Entrance Exam</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of four-year graduation cohort enrolled in college within two years of high school</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evaluation team will continue to track the outcome metrics through 2019 and hopes to identify a pool of comparison districts that did not receive a grant for addressing student achievement via access to blended dual enrollment.
Appendix
Figure 1: Percentage of Students Earning 3+ Dual Enrollment Credits while in High School
OHIO APPALACHIAN COLLABORATIVE PERSONALIZED LEARNING NETWORK EVALUATION

Figure 2: Percentage of Students Earning Industry-recognized Credentials
Figure 3: Percentage of Four-Year Graduation Cohort Enrolled in College within 2 Years of High School
Figure 4: Four-Year Graduation Rate
Figure 6: Percent of high school graduates participating in ACT College Entrance Exam
OHIO APPALACHIAN COLLABORATIVE PERSONALIZED LEARNING NETWORK EVALUATION

Figure 7: Percent of high school graduates scoring remediation free on ACT College Entrance Exam

- Barnesville Exempted Village
- Batavia Local
- Belleville City
- Belpre City
- Bethel-Tate Local
- Bloem-Vernon Local
- Coshocton City
- Crooksville Exempted Village
- East Guernsey Local
- East Muskingum Local
- Fort Frye Local
- Franklin Local
- Georgetown Exempted Village
- Indian Valley Local
- Maysville Local
- Morgan Local
- New Lexington City
- Noble Local
- Northern Local
- River View Local
- Rolling Hills Local
- Switzerland of Ohio Local
- Tri-Valley Local
- Warren Local
- West Muskingum Local
- Wolf Creek Local
Table 8
OAC PLN Superintendent Sustainability Responses
Fourteen superintendents responded to these questions. Some superintendents responded that they were unable to answer so they are excluded from the mean analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean responses*</th>
<th>std. deviation</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has strong champions with the ability to garner resources</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has leadership support from external sources</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has strong public support</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN exists in a supportive state economic climate</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN implements policies to help ensure sustained funding</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN is funded through a variety of sources</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has a combination of stable and flexible funding</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse community organizations are invested in the success of The OAC PLN</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN communicates with community leaders</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community leaders are involved with The OAC PLN</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN is well integrated into the operations of the organization</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational systems are in place to support the various program needs</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership effectively articulates the vision of The OAC PLN to external partners</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN provides strong evidence to the public that The OAC PLN works</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN adapts strategies as needed</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN proactively adapts to changes in the environment</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has communication strategies to secure and maintain public support</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN demonstrates its value to the public</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN plans for future resource needs</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The OAC PLN has a sustainability plan</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Scale of 1-7. 1 = to a little or no extent, 7 = to a very great extent, 8 = unable to answer
Appendix 9 District Case Study

Case Study

During this April 2017 site visit, the Ohio University evaluation team met with four target groups: Dual Enrollment (DE) teachers, DE students, non-DE students, and the District Implementation Team. During the site visit, the evaluation team conducted four focus groups. The Implementation Team comprised the high school principal and the Director of Curriculum and Instruction.

Dual Enrollment

The progress and development of the DE courses for students is going well overall. All of the groups interviewed had an overall positive view on the impact of dual enrollment in the district. Scheduling difficulties were identified as being the biggest challenge for implementing dual enrollment across the board.

Respondents from all groups said that preparing students for college was a significant benefit of dual enrollment courses. DE students said that the learning they are expected to do in their dual enrollment courses is more self-driven than in traditional classes, requiring students to figure out how to complete a task independently and conduct their own background research. DE students believed that this was helpful for preparing them for the learning environment they would encounter in college.

- “It prepares you better. Even though you’re still in high school it still like prepares you better for college classes than just taking regular high school classes. A lot more. Cause it’s faster paced.”
- “We are trying to give the kids that take CCP classes the same benefits that those who go off campus do.”

DE teachers indicated that they thought that it was helpful for their dual enrollment students to learn some of the time management skills that they will need in college. They felt that the students that they taught in dual enrollment had high levels of personal responsibility and tended to be in at least the top 20 percent of the class. Teachers and students both said that courses are also more rigorous than traditional high school classes. Teachers were not able to compare the rigor of dual enrollment courses to that of Advanced Placement (AP) courses because AP courses are not offered in their district.

Respondents in all groups identified one of the main benefits of dual enrollment as giving students the opportunity to explore the option of going to college, which they may not have had the chance to do previously. Dual enrollment also gives students a sense that their work in high school is meaningful since it can contribute to progressing to higher education.
goals after high school. One teacher said that there are about 40 students in the district who are taking some combination of CCP courses and traditional high school courses.

- “[The students] actually see progress like okay I’ve got this out of the way I can actually move towards something else when you show them their pathway or you show them this is what you need to do they can see that they are getting closer.”

The Implementation team discussion revealed a belief that dual enrollment would lead to more students pursuing higher education. The team also believed that there was benefit in creating an environment for students that was modeled after college because it incentivizes students to want to become involved with dual enrollment. For instance, dual enrollment students are given perks such as more freedom and a CCP lab where they can work.

- “I think it is definitely motivating, gives them something to work towards and work for. They can be freshmen and look at some of the seniors who get to hang out in the CCP lab and if it’s for nothing else that wow if I work hard and get good grades you know I can have just certain privileges.”

There were a wide range of opinions about the new schedule that accompanies dual enrollment courses which varied both between different groups and within groups. Some teachers noted that there were positive aspects of the new schedule. For instance, several teachers indicated that the schedule gave them more free time that they could use as a planning period. They also felt that dual enrollment was preparing kids for a college class schedule. Other teachers said that it made helping students schedule classes difficult. This was due to the fact that students may want to take a combination of DE courses offered at the school, DE courses being shared in, traditional courses or even courses offered off campus. Since all of these components may be on different, conflicting schedules, this poses a challenge. One teacher said “It’s probably the biggest challenge that I find when I am trying to help kids schedule stuff. Trying to get everything to line up time wise.”

DE students also seemed to have mixed opinions about the DE schedule. On days that students had DE classes they had a four hour break in between DE classes and any non-DE classes they were taking. Some students liked the break time in between classes because it gave them a time to complete their work. Other students preferred that their classes be taken in one uninterrupted block.

Dual enrollment (DE) students in the focus group noted that there are several opportunities for dual enrollment at their high school. Students considered the availability of these courses a benefit because they allow them to advance their education. Some of the students noted that their plans for the future after graduating from high school had changed because of dual enrollment. Students said that it saved time and allowed them to pursue higher degrees than they might have otherwise. One student said “Well if I hadn’t have been able to take college courses I probably wouldn’t have...well I probably still would’ve went to college but I doubt I would’ve went to...like a higher. Maybe like just an associates.”

DE Students also like the freedom that dual enrollment classes are able to offer them. The students interviewed indicated that the classes allowed them to work at their own pace.
Dual enrollment courses carry a more demanding workload; however, DE students found that they typically had time during the day to get their work done.

- “You do have more freedom to get your work done. You’re not just sitting in a classroom for 8 hours a day and then go home and work on your essay.”
- “They have a large break and during that break you have a lot of work that you can get done. And with your independent studies. And those classes do take more time though so that’s good. Sometimes classes will only be like Tuesdays and Thursdays or something so those other days are for us to work on stuff.”

Students cited getting to take classes with teachers they had already built a relationship with to be another positive of dual enrollment courses offered in school. They said that they feel more comfortable asking questions to a teacher they already know than they might with a new person. Students indicated that they preferred face-to-face interactions over electronically mediated interactions. Class sizes for dual enrollment courses also tend to be smaller than traditional college courses, which students liked.

Teachers expressed concern that the Accuplacer test, which acts as a gatekeeper for deciding if a student is permitted to take dual enrollment, should not be used exclusively to make this determination. Some indicated that the Accuplacer test failed to take dimensions of student readiness other than intellectual capacity into account. For instance a student may have the intellectual capacity to do a dual enrollment course, but may not have the level of maturity, time management, and responsibility necessary to succeed in dual enrollment. However, teachers mentioned that students who were unprepared only occasionally ended up taking dual enrollment courses. Teachers indicated that most students, approximately 90 percent, were successful.

- “You should at least take teacher opinion or guidance counselor opinion or some other criteria besides that they can pass that Accuplacer test that says that they’re ready because just because you’re smart enough doesn’t mean you’re capable of being mature enough or capable of doing things on your own.”

Non-DE students who were interviewed said that since the grant, there are more classes offered to them than before. Some new non-CCP classes identified by students were composition, college algebra, government, outdoor adventures, shop class, and various music classes. Several of the non-DE students, all of whom were juniors, said that they were planning on taking CCP courses next school year. They said they hoped it would help them decide if they wanted to pursue college.

- “I wish I would’ve done [dual enrollment] before my senior year. Cause I waited till senior year cause I was scared of them because of football and everything. I didn’t want to put too much on me. But after seeing all my other friends who are doing them this year I’m like I could probably do that.”

Teacher Credentialing

Teacher credentialing was discussed only in two groups, dual enrollment teachers and the implementation team. Both groups indicated that the overall benefit of teacher
credentialing was apparent in the types of opportunities that it allowed that district to offer students; however, there are some obstacles in terms of meeting demand for credentialed teachers.

Teachers were overall positive about the teacher credentialing process. They indicated that it gave them the opportunity to offer their students instruction that they would not have been able to do otherwise. Teachers who had been through the credentialing process thought that although it placed an extra workload on them, getting credentialed was worth it overall.

- “So it was difficult but I was glad that we were able to do some over the summer, that helped a little bit, it was a lot of reading of course with the English part but it was worth it now, I’m glad that I said yes that I would be willing to do it.”
- “I’m glad because I get to offer different things for the kids, like it’s just different than the regular traditional classroom, and I’m glad that I have had this opportunity because I obviously talked to my colleagues who are in the regular classroom and just the different day to day stuff is just different and the different responsibilities that I can put on the kids because they are college kids is different than when you have your traditional high school kids I think who are you know making them more responsible or accountable I think is very helpful to them and then it’s helpful to me too.”

Implementation team members believed that there was benefit to getting teachers within the district credentialed because it means that students do not need to leave the high school building to take classes. These respondents noted that it was a hurdle to get teachers credentialed because it put an extra workload on teachers. Team members hoped that in the future they would be able to get teachers credentialed in subjects that allowed them to share courses with other districts. As it stands, teachers are typically credentialed in a limited range of subject areas, which restricts the coalition’s ability to meaningfully share courses.

Teachers felt that there was not a lot being done to incentivize teachers to teach dual enrollment in the district. For instance teachers are not offered a stipend or additional compensation for teaching dual enrollment. Because of the way that dual enrollment is scheduled, however, teachers said an unintentional benefit is that they get more time to plan.

- “I would say the best thing is that you don’t technically have class every single day so you might get like an extra like on Fridays I have an extra planning period technically.”

Work with Institutions of Higher Education (IHE)

This topic was discussed with the DE teachers. They had mixed experiences working with IHEs. Whereas some teachers have already had extensive contact with the IHE, others had not had much but expected to have more in the future. The level of interaction seemed to vary based off of the department the teacher worked with. All DE teachers who were interviewed mentioned that the IHE helped connect them with instructional resources.
Some teachers found that the resources were better organized and more accessible than others. For instance, one teacher had been able to set up a field trip for her students to learn how to utilize the IHE’s library with the help of IHE faculty. DE teachers also had positive experiences with being able to observe professors teaching at the IHE the district was working with. Teachers noted that IHEs provided classroom observations and feedback for improvement.

> “I have a lot of interaction with the English department from Zane State. They’ve been very helpful. I would say as far as the English department is concerned, they attempted and really tried to help me make sure I was on the same path and doing the same thing that they were on campus.”

> “I’ve had very limited interaction with the math department, I got access to the syllabus and the math department head had told me if I need if I want to look at old exams that they have and old quizzes to kinda get an idea that I could.”

**Pathways**

Pathway development seems to be going slowly but surely in the district. DE teachers, DE students, and non-DE students found that the pathways were helpful for students because they helped them discover if college would be right for them. It removed barriers, most notably time and money, that might have deterred students from pursuing higher education. DE teachers indicated that they had strongly encouraged students to take the Accuplacer test to explore which pathway would be best for them.

> “I try to tell them like another pathway is not bad, it’s just another pathway. It is not a bad thing when it comes to a fork in the road your just not going to go on the path that you thought you were going to go on a couple of years ago, just a different direction.”

Students across groups recognized first being given information about career pathways in 8th grade though a field trip to a career center. DE students felt that the pathways gave students a more individualized plan for graduation and the future. DE students indicated that they had received advising from teachers and guidance counselors. As compared to non-DE students, DE students identified specific pathways, specifically engineering and business, more readily. DE students liked that these pathways came with the possibility of earning an associate’s degree while still in high school. Classes for the engineering and business pathways are taken at the IHE. DE students thought that the engineering pathway was the most popular pathway, but also the one that was the most rigorous and selective.

> “And then I think STEM is coming into play which is the science and technology, mathematics and engineering. I think it’s coming into play. There was also like fieldtrips for that too if you were interested in those paths then you could go on fieldtrips and learn more about it.”

> “[The business pathway] a little less strict than the engineering one. You don’t have to have as high of a GPA and they accept more people I think. Because pathways to engineering I think they only accepted 24 for the whole like all the schools around Zanesville.”

“Plus they can get...like we have a friend that goes to...she’s in the engineering program and she could get a job right out of high school. She could further her degree but then she could also get a job.”

One DE student who planned to start the engineering pathway next school year said that one barrier they had to overcome was transportation to the IHE. The student said “The only thing that was kind of an issue for me was getting up there to Zanesville everyday. Because I won’t be able to drive when school starts yet. So there’s another student who got accepted too, I’m going to ride with him.”

The implementation team indicated that there were challenges with career pathways because the district is small and students will only occasionally want to and be able to utilize the pathways. The team said that they are starting to work with students on STEM as early as 4th grade in order to put them in a good position to take advantage of a STEM career pathway in the future. Implementation team members noted that there is a business pathway available and that a STEM pathway is being further developed. One barrier identified by the implementation team is that much of the work for these pathways has to be completed off campus.

“We have not had many kids in the younger grades qualify to take CCP classes and we did have four kids last year that actually graduated with two year degrees. We are just not a big school where we are going to have a bunch of kids marching through in these pathways.”

Students in the non-dual enrollment focus group did not seem to have a strong understanding about career pathways in general. Most of the non-DE students had received informal guidance on which classes they should take from a guidance counselor. Non-DE students said that they had not received much information about industry credentials or certificates they could get while in high school. However, students did seem to have some awareness of the engineering pathway, with one non-DE student mentioning the fact that students can get an associate’s degree while in high school.

**Professional Development (PD)**

Progress with professional development seems to be advancing unevenly depending greatly on individual circumstances. DE teachers and the implementation team identified some shared benefits to professional development. Among DE teachers there were varied levels of engagement in professional development activities. Teachers seemed confused in general about the relationship between Battelle for Kids and the work that was being done in the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative. Some teachers indicated that they have used Schoology, a platform for resources and content to be shared with and among teachers, and others said they had not. The DE teachers who had used Schoology said that it was beneficial for them in part because it encouraged them to learn more about the different dual enrollment pathways.
“I did the pathways badge, so it kinda’ I don’t want to say forced me but when you go through that it forces you to look at the pathways, it forces you to talk to your colleagues and to like the administrators of what are the pathways what do they look like. Without doing that, I don’t know if I would have looked myself.”

“Well, it has benefited me being associated with Battelle for Kids as far as I have participated in the teacher curative project with Battelle for Kids and then I’ve also taken a couple of their whatever courses that you would take for your badge, but I forget what they are called so I’ve done those and that’s, I don’t know if that’s true if Battelle for Kids is part of the Ohio Appalachian Collaborative.

The implementation team said that there had been efforts to increase professional development opportunities. For instance, the number of professional development days had been increased from two to five. Teachers did not directly comment on this change. Many of the professional development advancements identified involved teachers learning how to better utilize technology, such as Google classroom, at their disposal. Team members expressed that it was important that much of the professional development was teacher-led.

“From my perspective as the person who leads professional development, I could stand in front of them and teach a lesson and show them how to do something but it means a lot more coming from a colleague that is in their hall way. So I guess our goal is to tap that potential of the teachers who are doing it and have them distribute it.”

Collaboration

Respondents from the teacher group and the district implementation team were the two groups that commented on collaboration efforts. Since the grant was implemented, progress with collaboration efforts between and within school districts has been strong. DE teachers indicated that they had collaborated more with teachers from other school districts than they would have without the grant. There was evidence that teachers from other districts had been working together to figure out how to share more classes between districts. Teachers were able to compare their instruction methods and identify some best practices. Schoology also appeared to have a positive impact on the level of information sharing between teachers, particularly concerning knowledge about the different pathways.

“I worked a lot with charity dog with our pod with our group of teachers from the different group of schools where we met three or four times throughout the year to see how we are gonna be able to share more classes than what we do already.”

“One of the biggest benefits of the OAC is it – again with the initial one, [is] showing teachers the collaboration and the strength of collaborating together, I don’t we’re going to stop those practices.”
Communication

The groups all indicated that there had been increased opportunity for communication. There were, however, some apparent gaps in communication between various groups and with other stakeholders.

DE Teachers indicated that they would like to see improved communication about what options and resources are available to teachers. They felt that there was a lack of a central authority that they could go to for information about professional development especially. DE teachers thought that improved communication would increase the level of teacher engagement with Schoology and other professional development opportunities.

- “I get all that information but I don’t think its communicated to everyone very well because like its free CCE, its free stuff to renew but I don’t think that other teachers are getting that from somewhere, I don’t know if it’s from the kids or from our administration, there is some disconnect.”
- “Yeah I don’t know who Battelle for Kids wants in the district to go say to the teachers look you can do this this and this. I would bet you now, one a month, thirty days whatever, not every teacher gets it.”

One DE teacher stated that the biggest challenge related to communication that they had faced with dual enrollment was scheduling. They attributed part of the challenge to difficulties communicating between various organizations. One roadblock is that different districts and IHEs are on conflicting schedules with one another. DE teachers thought that problems with scheduling had the potential to deter some students from participating in dual enrollment at all.

- “You know [students] really can't take everything that they want because of the schedule and I think that’s why some kids don’t go full time secondary because it's just easier to schedule classes.”

The implementation team group indicated that communication between administrators, teachers, and guidance counselors from various school districts within the coalition had been constructive. A primary benefit has been increased collaboration. They said that this has helped with figuring out course sharing between districts. Team members said that communication with local stakeholders, the schoolboard, parents, and the community has been a continuous effort. Communication largely occurred through re-enrollment meetings at the beginning of each year and quarterly newsletters. Team members also said that the district communicated with the community though informational tweets and texts.

- “I think [parents have] been involved throughout. I mean it’s – when you start sending computes home with kids, it raises eyebrows and then when you – meetings about how we are going to implement…”
- “The only issue that I have seen from a parent or concern I guess was the amount of credit hours that their child was getting they thought oh this is good but I don’t know that they weren’t misinformed or that they didn’t pay attention when they were told that you know you got all those for free but you can only get 120 something hours, so like the rest you know what I mean is gonna be up to you…”
Implementation Team members said that there had been communication with partners in the community, but most of that communication was not directly related to the dual enrollment program. Implementation team members noted that the school district often served as a resource for the community, but there were a limited number of instances where the community provided some direct educational opportunity to the district. One of the partnerships that the school has with the community allows them to offer an outdoor recreation course for students through Deerassic Park. Another with Friends of East Guernsey allows teachers to apply for grants for projects in the classroom.

Course Sharing

There has been some progress in this district in terms of course sharing, however there are still many hurdles that need to be addressed. Course sharing posed scheduling difficulties for both DE teachers and students.

Several courses were shared into the district, but no courses were shared out of the district. Members of the implementation team said that this was in part because the courses that their district had available to share out were already covered by other districts. One of the courses that was mentioned as being offered through video streaming into the district was United States History.

- “I think one of our struggles that we have is like scheduling. I mean like if somehow we could work on the scheduling and you know colleges are on different schedules and each school district is on different schedules. Relying on another district to bring in something is difficult when your schedules don’t match up.”
- “Some of the issues with the sharing are we all seem to have people get certified in the same way.”

Implementation team members said that the video streaming capabilities that they were now equipped with had allowed them to offer students easier access to dual enrollment opportunities. They said that course sharing allowed them to keep high achieving students in the district as much as possible.

- “Everything to poly-coms that we were allowed to buy which is something that helps us get kids better and easier opportunities for CCP. To be quite honest, I thought we would use them more than what we have. But the kids would rather have a face to face versus the long distance.”

The implementation team also reported that scheduling had been the biggest challenge with implementing course sharing. Team members said that they have tried to make the schedules for dual enrollment students as similar to a college schedule as possible. Course scheduling was also made more difficult by the fact that teachers across various districts are often certified in a limited range of subjects. This means that it is hard for some districts to offer unique course sharing options because the subjects they offer are already covered by a teacher in the home district. Another challenge is that some subjects and classes are
not well suited to be shared through video streaming. For instance, many science courses incorporate labs where it is important for students to be able to physically interact with materials. Team members expressed faith that over time coordination on course sharing between districts would make it more mutually beneficial for everyone.

- “The bottom line is if you are going off campus and go CCP, you have to take classes when they are scheduled. We will never be able to make everybody in our pod at the same bell schedule and all of that. We just have to offer what we offer and those that can take can take it.”

Some member of the implementation team expressed the idea that course sharing would be best accomplished with other schools that were similar in size and demographics. One implementation team member said “One thing that has come out of that in the pod meetings and we found smaller schools who are similar to us in demographics a lot of times would be easier for us course share with.”

**Technology**

All of the groups interviewed said that improvements in technology had benefitted them and significantly changed how education is delivered. DE teachers indicated that they had incorporated technology into their instruction that has made it easier to engage students, collect assignments, and administer tests. All groups said that having chrome-books for all the students has been a positive development. All students used the chrome-books very frequently in their classes for activities like research and assignments. Students also liked that the chrome-books meant that they could work wherever they went and created the opportunity for deadlines to be outside of the school day.

All students in grades 7 through 12 are provided a chrome book to use for coursework. Classrooms in k-6 have also been equipped with computer carts for in class use. Chrome books allow teachers to give assessments and collect assignments online. The chrome books were identified by team members as being lasting changes. Team members said that they had to plan financially to continue to supply chrome books to students in the future.

- “I think without a doubt, if you could just say – the technology, we’re aren’t going back. We got lots of technology and it created an inertia and that is just something that we can’t live without”.

- “You don’t have to worry about signing out a computer for like a day or whatever you just have your own and it’s nice.”

Non-dual enrollment students said that having chrome books of their own helped them access study resources such as online textbooks, assignments, and research material. These students said that it also meant that they could get their work done faster. Non-dual enrollment students also liked that it let them access their grades whenever they wanted and more easily communicate with their teachers. These students indicated that the use of chrome books had been incorporated into most of their classes.
DE teachers said that they had incorporated Blackboard into their instruction as a forum for discussion boards and journals. DE students said that they benefitted from having more discussion boards than in non-DE courses. Students said that the courses that used discussion boards and online forums the most were English courses. Teachers had also used smartboard to provide students with access to notes from class.

Course sharing has also been made more accessible to students because of the poly-com system that supports video streaming. Several groups, namely DE students, teachers, and the implementation team, also noted that technology was used to video stream courses that were shared into the district. DE Students who had taken courses that were shared into the district using video streaming said that a lot of technological difficulties that they had faced in previous years had been resolved.

DE teachers found that technology also helped them take advantage of resources offered through IHEs. For instance, one IHE department had a One Drive that allowed teachers to share instructional material that they had created.

- “The English department has actually like used that has created a One Drive where they share it with us on Blackboard so that we can see what people have shared, what they’ve done, quizzes that they’ve created.”