

Career Enhancement Grant: Computer Science Essentials

1. Describe the program improvement plan's alignment to the appropriate institution or building plan(s). For all program improvement plans which are multi-year in length, explain the connection the funding request has to enhanced or augmented instruction during the grant period, and to longer term improvement for the program and either institution or building plan(s).

With this grant money, we are seeking to systematically expand/enhance our current course offerings to students with the express purpose of preparing them for post-secondary options that match their career interests. Each of our expansions/enhancements will provide a pathway for a student to eventually earn possible college credit and/or an industry credential. Specifically, we are planning to offer the first course in the Project Lead the Way computer science program to our high school students, Computer Science Essentials (CSE) in the 2018-2019 school year.

Currently, less than 5% of our students have access to the PLTW computer science program. By offering the first level of coursework, (CSE), we expanded the learning opportunities our students had in the area of computer science. It is our intention to further expand the programming by offering Computer Science Principles in the 2019-2020 school year and additional courses in school years beyond that time frame. In particular, we are considering Computer Science A or Cybersecurity. In addition, the middle school in the district began offering the Gateway program (in the areas of App Creators and Computer Science for Innovators) in the 2017-2018 school year. We believe this will help students be even more prepared to enroll in PLTW courses once they begin to enter high school in the fall of 2018 and beyond.

This plan continues to fall in line with the visions of our high school's College and Career Readiness Work Group, Advisory Board and our district Innovation Committee; these groups are committed to expanding course offerings at the high school in areas of occupational need and increased rigor. The College and Career Readiness Work Group consists of district office administrators, building administrators, counselors and post-secondary institution representation. The Advisory Board consists of community/business members, teachers, administrators, parents and students. The district Innovation Committee includes district administration, building administration (K-12), teachers (K-12), board members and community members.

The plan for these grant dollars aligns to the Raymore-Peculiar School District's multi-year strategic plan which was developed under the leadership of our superintendent and involving over 50 stakeholders, including administrators, certified and classified staff, Board of Education members and community members. The team developed three focus areas (Success Ready Students, High Quality Staff and Financial Responsibility) and all work in the district is aligned to at least one of these areas.

The goals of our strategic plan directly aligned to this improvement plan are as follows:

- I. “Incorporate additional real-world, hands-on learning opportunities .” PLTW biomedical programming is absolutely focused on hands-on learning and provides students with real-world challenges they must work through. Students are more engaged in this type of learning and able to apply what they have learned more readily to a variety of situations. By opening this opportunity up to all of our students, they will be better prepared for post-secondary opportunities in college and the workforce. Each year, more and more students will be able to access this learning to a deeper level as we continue to offer additional courses.
- II. “Expand STEAM opportunities for students.” PLTW is a national curriculum that focuses on many components of STEAM. By beginning to offer coursework in the PLTW computer science pathway, we will be expanding opportunities for students in areas of science, technology and math.
- III. “Promote soft skills development--communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity.” The PLTW curriculum and assessment allows students to participate in an intense, demanding, high level of educational excellence in the area of computer science. At the same time, it focuses on the exact soft skills listed above. Students often have to collaborate which requires them to communicate effectively. As they are moving through the curriculum, they have to utilize their critical thinking skill and creativity in how to approach various scenarios. The skills and knowledge students bring into the course will further be sharpened and enhanced through participation in the curriculum. Through this opportunity, students will be able to maximize their academic potential and challenge themselves and their peers.

2. Describe how each program to be funded will use measurable objectives to determine effective use of requested funding and to demonstrate successful rollout of the improvement plan for the grant period, and positive impact toward success of the institutional or building plan(s). Explain the extent in which the program improvement plan has determined the composition of allowable items to be funded by the grant.

In the 2017-2018 school year, the middle schools offered the two Gateway courses that focused on computer science. Enrollment in these courses included almost 270 students. Based on the popularity of these courses, we believe we have a solid pipeline into the Computer Science Essentials course at the high school. As our preliminary enrollment numbers come in, we know we already have enough student requests for one section of CSE; this number may grow to two as enrollment requests continue to be entered. Growing enrollment numbers and student achievement on the end of course exams will be used to determine the success of the computer science program over the course of multiple years. Our baseline assessment data will be provided this spring. From there, we can set specific achievement growth goals with the ultimate goal being 100% proficiency among our students.

Data and progress will be measured on a regular basis by the Advisory Board as well as our Innovation Committee. In addition, our district practices the data team process. Once

specific learning targets are designed, the teacher will be expected to track student achievement at the classroom level by analyzing pre/mid/post assessment data aligned to the targets. The items requested on the grant are aligned with the PLTW supply list so there is no question as to whether we have the appropriate items for optimal student learning. Items not covered in the grant will be purchased by the district.

3. Include a description of the improvement plan's measurable objectives for the grant period, and if applicable, longer term rollout of the plan. If the program improvement plan identifies objectives beyond the grant period, explain the correlation between those anticipated to be achieved during the funding timeline and those further into the future. Explain the extent in which the objectives will determine project success.

The ultimate measurable objective of the improvement plan is to increase the number of students who graduate college and career ready. As a part of this grant, we will offer Computer Science Essentials to our students in the 2018-2019 school year. In 2019-2020, we will offer at least one additional PLTW computer science course. Decisions will be based on the advice of the Advisory Board and student interest. Although not funded from this grant, we currently offer the two foundational Gateway courses (App Creators and Computer Science for Innovators) at our middle schools (this began in the 2017-2018 school year). We believe this will better prepare our students as they enter high school and generate increased interest in the computer science program.

Through the computer science PLTW programs, and as a result of the strong curriculum, teacher training and real-world/hands-on learning opportunities PLTW courses provide, we will be able to provide a relevant, academically challenging path for students that will prepare them for a variety of post-secondary options. We will use our initial year of CSE enrollment as baseline data and seek to continue to increase this number in subsequent years with the specific intent to double enrollment numbers after the first year. The Advisory Board will set reasonable yet challenging benchmarks to reach in regards to enrollment for future years and courses. In addition, we will administer the end of course exam to our students as an external measure of progress made and learning achieved. The first year will serve as baseline data and, again, the Advisory Board will be charged with setting and monitoring measurable goals starting with the baseline. In addition, PLTW utilizes a balanced assessment approach and therefore formative and summative assessments are used at the classroom level. The teacher will monitor student achievement through the data team process as an internal measure of achievement.

4. Describe the eligible courses for which funding is sought by course name and CIP Code, what teacher will be providing instruction for each course, and designate in what building and room(s) instruction will occur for each funded course. Include a description of what is to be purchased for each course along with how these expenditures will address needed improvements and/or augmentation in the delivery of the eligible course(s) and student performance and/or learning.

Computer Science Essentials

CIP Code 21.0105

Huey Ru Strauss will be teaching this course; she currently teaches in our business department. Although she has not yet attended CSE training, she is excited about the opportunity and has agreed to attend training in the Summer of 2018. The district and the school are registered with PLTW.

The course will be taught at Raymore-Peculiar High School in our business wing. The high school just underwent some major reconstruction and CSE will be housed in one of our most modern classrooms (room 522).

Through participation in CSE, students work through engaging and challenging problems that require critical thinking skills. They will explore a broad range of computer science topics, including computational thinking to solve problems and think critically. They work both individually and in teams to design solutions to a variety of problems and regularly document and present their work. The PLTW supply list was used as guidance in regards to what needed to be purchased. This will ensure the fidelity of the program. The following items are recommended by PLTW in the computer science class inventory and are a part of the grant proposal: self-driving vehicle as well as computers and tablets. Monies are also being requested to pay the Pathway to Computer Science software license and the registration for the teacher training this summer. The PLTW supply list was used as guidance in regards to what needed to be purchased. This will ensure the fidelity of the program in regards to equipment being of industry-standard. Training will ensure the fidelity of the program in regards to the curriculum being used and the instruction being delivered. This combination will lead to high student achievement in our PLTW course.

5. Describe any student performance and/or learning measures which be used to determine project success.

The courses will be evaluated using a variety of methods during the initial implementation year and subsequent years after. Results will be shared with building and district administration as well as the advisory board. In addition, regular updates will be provided to the Advisory Board and the Innovation Committee.

- I. Students in CSE who go on to take CSE will be assessed through the end of course exam and hands-on experiences.
- II. Throughout the school year, students will be assessed through the use of unit assessments; results will be used to plan for additional instructional opportunities as needed via our data team process.
- III. The teachers will be evaluated using the district's performance-based teacher evaluation tool as required by the state of Missouri and our local school board policies.
- IV. Data gained through assessments, hands-on labs and evaluations will be analyzed by advisory boards, teachers and administration.
- V. Students who complete the program will be surveyed for post-graduation work and/or education through the 180 day follow-up as required by the state.

6. Describe any relationship the program improvement plan and/or funding request has to specific industry credentials, including the development of such when none is presently available, and the potential for future career mobility for students.

While there are no specific industry credentials for the computer science course sequence, students will be able to take the end of course exam that will show higher institutions their expertise in the field. Colleges and universities will also be able to see, on the student's transcript, that he/she has engaged in a challenging, real-world curriculum at the high school level. Some college and universities offer reward opportunities for students based on end of course exam results.

Computer science is one of the fastest growing industries in the Kansas City area and the nation. Currently there are over 26,000 computer science jobs in Kansas City and that number continues to grow each year. The projected growth in this field by 2023 is a 19.6%. The job potential for our current students is extraordinary. Allowing students the opportunity to enroll in PLTW courses in the computer science field will better prepare them for the rigor of post-secondary education and provide them with a solid foundation in this areas.

7. Describe the composition of the applying program's occupational advisory committee. Explain the extent the committee, building/district/institution administration, faculty and other key stakeholders were involved with the development of the program improvement plan and prioritization of the funding request.

The Advisory Board consists of building administrators, counselors, teachers, and district level administration. In addition, we have business/labor leaders, parents, community leaders and senior citizen representation. Members are involved in creating plans and prioritizing fund requests. Student interest is also considered in the development of plans. For the past three years, business/technology has been one of the top career choices for our students according to their ACT interest surveys and career interest inventories we have conducted with our students. The supply list for the CSE course is based on the PLTW recommended inventory list so that students have what they need to achieve. The instructor reviewed the supply list as well. Advisory board members will be a part of reviewing the progress of the implementation of PLTW in the high school and monitoring the success of the program through an analysis of enrollment numbers and assessment data. Eventually, members will also be able to review students' postsecondary decisions to determine if students who are a part of the PLTW program go on to further their education and/or start high need, high paying careers.