



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
January 29, 2014

Contact: Andrew Benson
513.313.5109
andrewbenson32@gmail.com

School Districts create Ohio Blended Learning Network

Association will encourage high-quality blended learning in Ohio classrooms

COLUMBUS – A group of schools and districts have banded together to create a statewide network that will promote and encourage the development of high-quality blended learning instruction in Ohio classrooms.

The Ohio Blended Learning Network will be led by Matthew Miller, Superintendent of the Mentor Public Schools, which won four #BestEdTech awards this week at the annual Ohio Educational Technology Conference sponsored by the Ohio Board of Regents. The group convened at a luncheon Monday in conjunction with the conference here, which concludes today.

“We definitely see the value in blended educational opportunities for our students and students across Ohio,” said Miller. “I appreciate the opportunity to work with other superintendents and school districts to use blended learning to collectively reshape what teaching and learning looks like in Ohio.”

The Network will be staffed by Smarter Schools, a non-profit education consulting organization based in Cincinnati, and will receive technical support from Education Elements, a California-based education consulting firm that has worked with more than 100 schools across the nation, including Mentor and Reynoldsburg in Ohio.

Mentor and Reynoldsburg City Schools lead the list of 13 founding members of the Ohio Blended Learning Network, which include the following schools and districts:

Hilliard City Schools
Lancaster City Schools
Middletown City Schools
Pickerington Local Schools
Northwest Local Schools
Valley View Local Schools

KIPP Columbus
Lorain City Schools
Milford Exempted Village Schools
Nardon Hills Local Schools
Stepstone Academy

- more -

The focus of the Network will be to encourage the development of blended learning in Ohio classrooms as way to effectively integrate technology to extend the reach of educators and increase the engagement of students.

The Network plans to facilitate the development of standards for high-quality blended learning in the state as a way to ensure that educators have a model to use as a guide for how they can use technology effectively as a tool to enhance teaching and learning.

The Network also plans to help the state create a blended-learning credential for educators who learn to use blended learning effectively in their classrooms. And the network will pursue a Straight A Fund consortium grant this year to increase capacity in the state to train more educators to implement high-quality blended learning approaches in classrooms.

“We believe that schools and districts can help define and support high-quality blended learning and, with partners, can provide training to educators that will build capacity to create more blended learning classrooms in the state,” said Andrew Benson, Executive Director of Smarter Schools.

Already, Mentor Public Schools is creating the capacity to train educators to use blended learning, and other districts, Education Service Centers, and non-profit partners are ready to create that capacity as well.

For more on the Ohio Blended Learning Network, visit www.smarterschools.net.