



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **Ohio Public Schools to Receive \$4.5 Million for Advance Placement and Foreign Language Courses through Pilot Project**

(Columbus, OH) - The eTech Ohio Commission, in conjunction with the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), is pleased to announce that in support of House Bill 1, grant funds are currently available to support advanced placement and foreign language courses in eligible Ohio high schools. Funded through the federal Enhancing Education Through Technology initiative, 248 of Ohio's public schools will have an opportunity to apply for this competitive grant.

"The primary goal of the Synchronous Interactive Video Conference Distance Learning pilot project is to increase access to advanced placement and foreign language courses for students who traditionally would not have access to these types of classes," said Kate Harkin, eTech Ohio Executive Director. "Students in geographically isolated regions for example, may not have access to the resources for challenging, specialized, high-level courses. This pilot program will give them the opportunity to learn through interactive distance learning."

eTech Ohio, in collaboration with ODE, will award grants in a manner that ensures diversity among grant recipients according to geographical regions, economic scale, and school district size. "Many of the eligible schools are in regions that are challenged to provide non-traditional, advance placement coursework. Innovative technology enables us to ensure that all students have equal opportunities for education," said Beth Cortolillo, eTech Ohio Deputy Director.

Funding in the amount of \$4.5 million will be awarded through a competitive application process to eligible Ohio public high schools. Eligibility for this grant is based upon a combination of factors including the federal Free and Reduced Lunch program, high technology need and low access to advanced placement and foreign language courses. Ohio anticipates releasing funds to the selected buildings in March. A list of eligible buildings can be located online at <http://www.etech.ohio.gov>.

Buildings submitting a response are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) online at <http://www.etech.ohio.gov>. The LOI deadline is January 20, 2010 at 11:30 A.M. (EST). Eligible buildings should submit the narrative portion of the Synchronous Interactive Distance Learning application via the Title II-D portion of ODE's online Comprehensive

Continuous Improvement Planning tool at <https://ccip.ode.state.oh.us>. The deadline to submit the application is January 29, 2010 at 5:00 P.M. (EST).

Ninety schools statewide will be awarded \$50,000 each in implementation funding to help set up a Synchronous Interactive Distance Learning pilot project classroom. Grant winners will be announced in March.

Aventa Learning, East Central Ohio Educational Service Center, iQity, K<sup>12</sup> Virtual School and Wide Area Media, LLC have been selected to offer courses for this pilot project in a synchronous interactive video conferencing format; providing students the opportunity to connect with the instructor and other students through real-time communication. The pilot project will begin during the summer of 2010.

### **About eTech Ohio**

eTech Ohio is a national leader in educational technology access and integration. eTech Ohio has made a commitment to serve Ohio citizens through educational initiatives and putting new technology to use for affiliates so that Ohio's learners will succeed in the schools of today and the world of tomorrow. Visit [www.etech.ohio.gov](http://www.etech.ohio.gov) for more information about eTech Ohio.