

21st Century Grant Focused on Student Achievement

For the past nine years, Dover Middle School and Dover High School have been the recipients of a 21st Century Grant. This federally funded grant program supports high-quality, out-of-school time learning opportunities and related activities for students who attend eligible schools. School districts partner with local organizations to provide intervention and enrichment activities for students.

Dover students participate in programs aimed at the varied interests of teens through a partnership with the Dover Public Library. In one program, students collaborate to produce a magazine of their writings. Other activities with the library include ukulele lessons and Escape Room challenges. This year our middle school students will participate in “Make it NASA: What will it take to live on Mars?”

The Dover High School Youth 2 Youth members provide mentoring and other activities for the students at the middle school. Community service is also part of the program with activities that have in previous years included making tray favors for local nursing home residents and singing at local nursing homes at Christmas. The Tuscarawas County YMCA has also worked with our students to provide fitness classes and information on wellness.

The grant is written in collaboration with the staff of the East Central Ohio Service Center and administered in the district by Gina Franks, Director of Special Education. The grant was originally awarded for five years, but through positive evaluations and 100% compliance, it was extended an additional five years. The total awarded to Dover Schools to date is \$1.6 million.

The primary focus of the program is to increase student achievement. Each year approximately 12 high school and 17 middle school teachers work after-school to provide instruction to individual students and small groups. This instruction is focused on what students are learning in the classroom and also what is needed for success in life. Approximately 26 high school and 52 middle school students participate each year.

Another aspect of the grant allows the district to purchase technology for our students to use at school and at home. The district has purchased 1195 Chromebooks over the past nine years. The devices aid and enhance learning in our classrooms and after-school activities. Students are also able to check out a Chromebook through our libraries to use at home.

It is the work of Dover staff to secure and implement these programs that makes a difference in the lives of our students. The extra funding provides much needed technology and individualized instruction. Strategic use of these federal funds not only benefits the students that participate, but also provides additional opportunities for all students.