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Stark Awarded \$918,750 to Impact Literacy

During COVID-19 school closures, local grant writing teams applied for the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) [Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant](#) to provide Stark educators with specialized literacy training and resources. ODE recently announced that 34 organizations across Ohio were selected to receive the competitive grant funds. Congratulations to two Stark awardees – Alliance City \$525,000 (middle school) and YWCA, Canton Inc \$393,750 (birth to age 5).



This four-year subgrant will focus on developing model comprehensive literacy sites. These sites – including early childhood education programs and district preschools, to elementary, middle and high schools across the state – will concentrate on implementing practices consistent with [Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement](#). Each grant applicant outlined the way they would develop the following five components to increase language and literacy proficiency: 1) shared leadership; 2) multi-tiered systems of supports; 3) teacher capacity; 4) family partnerships; and 5) community collaboration.

This is Alliance City Schools second [Comprehensive Literacy State Development Grant](#) award. Their first award was to intensely train their K-5 educators, and this second award will strengthen their middle school educator skills.

Natalie Kern, Alliance District Instructional Coach, explains: *"With the grant funds, we plan to provide training for our teachers with evidence-based strategies and materials to implement the training. Most importantly, the funds from this grant will allow for two instructional coaches at the building who will provide more personalized teacher development, as well as individual coaching, in order to support teachers in the implementation of these literacy strategies. We expect that these funds, and their direct impact on the teaching practices at the middle school, will result in improved reading and writing proficiency with our challenging adolescent learners."*



The YWCA grant was written by a [Great Start for Great Futures Coalition](#) team including the Early Childhood Resource Center, Stark Education Partnership, State Support Team 9 and YWCA. This team researched and designed a plan impacting six preschool programs across Alliance, Canton and Massillon and builds on the already strong parent/caregiver relationships developed by family support specialists in the YWCA early education programs. The literacy plan is designed to deepen coaches, teachers, support teachers and administrators' understanding of how children learn to read, diagnose

why some children struggle, and sharpen teachers' abilities to select and implement evidence-based practices and interventions.

The Stark Education Partnership (a 501(c)3 non-profit organization) collaborates with education, business, civic and community members across the entire spectrum – cradle to career – to create and respond to opportunities that will provide ALL students with education and career success.

