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## School districts will vie for \$250 million in state grants

By Catherine Candisky

Educators with ideas to boost student learning and reduce education costs have an opportunity to stop dreaming and start doing.

Ohio schools will compete for \$250 million in innovation grants available from the state's new Straight A Fund.

Gov. John Kasich's administration is seeking proposals aimed at improving student achievement, lowering education spending and directing more money into classroom instruction. Schools also must show how they will sustain their initiatives once the grant money is gone.

"Sometimes in Columbus and Washington, we like to make prescriptions for what local schools should do, our teachers and buildings should do in order to achieve success, when really we should be focusing on outcomes and empowering them to implement what they need to do to get to that outcome, and I think the Straight A Fund does that," said Ohio Schools Superintendent Richard A. Ross.

Because there are no restrictions, Ross said he expects a wide range of proposals, although based on conversations with local school officials, literacy and technology initiatives might be among the more popular.

Schools are ramping up on both fronts with Ohio's new third-grade reading guarantee increasing the focus on literacy and technology needs getting more attention as districts seek to expand online learning and assessments.

"We have lots of ideas," said Tricia Moore, spokeswoman for Reynoldsburg schools. "It's a tremendous opportunity."

Article continued here: <http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2013/09/11/school-districts-will-vie-for-250m-in-state-grants.html>

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