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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PBS Western Reserve to Participate in Statewide Initiative to Accelerate Learning

Ohio Learns 360 to serve kindergarten through fifth-grade students from underserved communities

Kent, OH – Thursday, June 23, 2022 -- PBS Western Reserve will soon be working with area summer and after-school programs to address disruptions to learning caused during the COVID-19 pandemic. The initiative, Ohio Learns 360, is a partnership between Ohio's eight PBS stations and the Ohio Department of Education. It will target kindergarten through fifth-grade students from underserved communities and will provide programs with PBS resources, including standards-based curriculum and materials; virtual field trips; interactive video programs; community events; and more—all designed to accelerate student learning and support the state's most vulnerable learners.

"Ohio's PBS stations have been wonderful partners in prioritizing additional education opportunities to support Ohio's students since the beginning of the pandemic," Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction Stephanie Siddens said. "The Ohio Learns 360 initiative will give families an additional pathway to support student learning beyond the school day."

Ohio Learns 360 will continue through September of 2024. The Ohio Department of Education will provide \$5 million in funding through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), first authorized by Congress in 2020.

"Since the early days of the pandemic we have been working with our local communities and school districts to combat students' learning loss," said PBS Western Reserve President and CEO Trina Cutter. "We are proud to continue these efforts by joining forces on the Ohio Learns 360 statewide initiative."

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Students in out-of-schooltime programs will be able to engage in hands-on STEM activities with some of their favorite characters, such as The Cat in the Hat, or go on a virtual field trip to one of Ohio’s leading science museums. Students at home will also be able to participate in virtual after-school programs that feature a well-known PBS Kids character. Parents can learn how to support their child’s learning through Parent Power webinars, and families will be able to attend PBS Western Reserve-hosted community events. The project is being led by Public Media Connect in Dayton and Cincinnati.

“Ohio Learns 360 exemplifies what Ohio public media does best—coming together and using our resources to provide a needed statewide service,” said Kevin Martin, President of Ohio Educational Television Service and Ideastream Public Media. “Our colleagues at Public Media Connect in Dayton/Cincinnati will continue to lead this effort on behalf of all of the Ohio PBS stations, so we can be assured to meet the very high expectations and standards of the Ohio Department of Education, educators and parents.”

More information about Ohio Learns 360 will be coming soon.

About PBS Western Reserve

PBS Western Reserve is the brand name of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

A trusted community resource, PBS Western Reserve uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. It serves the largest population of Ohio’s eight PBS member stations.

PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1), a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of Northeast Ohio. It is available to 4.9 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average month, more than 1 million people tune in. The organization also operates two standard definition channels: Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2) and FNX (WNEO 45.3 / WEAO 49.3).

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