

About the Believe in Ohio Statewide program

What was the Believe in Ohio statewide program?

The Believe in Ohio program (BiO) was a statewide Ohio STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) and entrepreneurship program for high school and middle school students that integrated entrepreneurship and innovation as pathways to create future jobs. The program was developed by Entrepreneurial Engagement Ohio (EEO), a Northeast Ohio entrepreneurship-focused 501(c)(3), in collaboration with The Ohio Academy of Science (OAS), a statewide STEM-focused 501(c)(3) located in Columbus, with support from The Ohio General Assembly and The Ohio Board of Regents.

Some history and facts about the Believe in Ohio program:

- Believe in Ohio operated during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, and during the 2016-2017 school year until funding ran out on December 31, 2016.
- The Ohio General Assembly provided \$5 million in funding in 2013 to launch the program. Despite the support of 15 members of the Ohio House of Representatives and several Ohio State Senators, continued program funding was a casualty of Ohio's 2017-2018 state budget shortfalls. This left the program's 10,000+ student participants and their teachers across Ohio in the lurch and without a program.
- Believe in Ohio recognized the challenge that our continuing prosperity depends on an "All Hands on Deck" strategy requiring men and women from all backgrounds, demographic groups and areas to develop an entrepreneurial mindset to become the innovators and job creators of the future.
- Historically entrepreneurs who have assumed this role have been overwhelming upper demographic, non-minority males. For an "All Hands on Deck" strategy to be successful, the ranks of future entrepreneurs, innovators and job creators must include women, as well as youth from Ohio's underserved urban, rural and suburban communities that often lack a strong entrepreneurial heritage. This was a special focus of the Believe in Ohio statewide program.

Believe in Ohio was a highly successful statewide program. During its first three years:

1. More than 6,000 students, teachers and guests attended one of 28 STEM Commercialization & Entrepreneurship Forums held at universities and schools around Ohio.
 - These STEM Forums were held at Hudson HS, Westerville North HS, Miami Valley Career Technical Center, Ohio State, Ohio U, U of Cincinnati, U of Akron, LCCC, OSU-OARDC, Wright State, U of Toledo, Cleveland State, BGSU, Youngstown State, Kent State - Kent. Kent State – Tuscarawas, and John Carroll, Hiram College.
 - More than 120 leading Ohio STEM researchers, entrepreneurs & practitioners spoke at the Forums.
2. More than 300 teachers from more than 150 schools across Ohio, including more than 10,000 students, participated in STEM Commercialization and STEM Business Plan competitions at their schools.
 - More than \$600,000 in high school competition awards and teacher support grants were awarded.
3. More than \$1.2 million in cash awards and scholarships to Ohio colleges & universities were awarded in Believe in Ohio's State Competitions in 2015 and 2016:
 - 731 students earned the right to participate in Believe in Ohio's 2016 regional Plan competitions.
 - 170 students from 48 high schools in 25 counties participated in Believe in Ohio's 2016 state competition and won scholarships and cash awards.
4. Altogether, during the 2015-2016 school year, approximately 11,000 high school and middle school students participated in either a STEM Plan Competition and/or a STEM Forum.
 - Of this number, about 54% were females, with about 5,000 students from underserved rural schools, about 1,300 from underserved urban schools, with the balance from suburban schools.

More about the Believe in Ohio Statewide program

Teacher Feedback provided at the May 2016 Believe in Ohio State Competition:

Andrea Harpen, Blanchester High School (Clinton County): "This is the best program that has happened in Ohio ever. This exactly meets the demand for encouraging young people in STEM."

Susan Dunn, Springfield Local High School (Mahoning County): "My students learned the real life applications of science. They learned the process of problem-solving and they discovered how marketing could make an idea economically successful."

Tom Slaven, Canfield High School (Mahoning County): "It's the project that definitely helped the students see how you could develop your own business. How you can go from an idea to a product and definitely explore different careers."

Catherine Tate, MC2 High School (Cuyahoga County): "I think the biggest benefit that they had is this. The write up that they did. The practice right up. The ability to communicate a concept or a product scientifically is such a necessary skill in a lot of careers. A technical writing piece of the caliber that they had to provide for Believe in Ohio is phenomenal."

Robert Spath, Van Wert High School (Van Wert County): "To be able to critically think through their ideas and be able to succinctly write those in a paper and then defend those in front of judges was enormous."

Catherine Tate, MC2 High School (Cuyahoga County): "The best part was watching the students get their papers read by judges because I think that they didn't realize how good some of their ideas were until somebody else was reading them. The students that I'm here with today were talking about an attachment or a modification to a wheelchair to allow it to go up and down stairs. And it's a great idea on paper and then when you start thinking of all the places that it could be applicable and hearing the judges responses to that they're really impressed with the thoroughness of it. I think it really boosts the student's confidence and it really pushes them to get to that next level of excellence in their work."

Andrea Harpen, Blanchester High School (Clinton County): "This particular program helps them take some ideas and take it to the max, to their maximum ability, and then get outside feedback as to whether they're talented in this area. And I see my students come alive and say things like, 'this is the first time you know I've thought about a STEM career'. And I've heard parents say 'I've never seen my son work so hard'. So you know that that tells us that we're really getting at something deep inside the child."

Student Feedback provided at the May 2016 Believe in Ohio State Competition:

Brendan Daugherty, Blanchester High School (Clinton County): "The skills that I learned...most of it was technical, but a lot of it was also people skills. I learned how to better talk to people, how to better address people, how to deal with problems that arise with real-world issues because Believe in Ohio isn't a test. It's something that you have to work with."

Alexis Paige, Canfield High School (Mahoning County): "I learned a lot of skills on how to work on this type of project, how to create a presentation, how to give a presentation, and how to be more comfortable sharing my ideas with possible investors."

Katie Tirttschuh, Van Wert High School (Van Wert County): "We learned how much, how many steps it takes to actually make an idea happen. When you have just an idea, it's not, you don't think of all the behind the scene things, and the finances, and all the meetings you have to have with people to actually put this into work."

Lauren Soto, Medina County Career Center: "I think the best part about participating in the Believe in Ohio program was the confidence I gained. From actually being chosen, going all the way here, and talking about the things that I'm passionate about, and knowing that I could do that successfully, I feel like it made me a better person."

Andrew Cypcar, Hudson High School (Summit County): "It's really great for bringing the teaching out of the classroom and it's fun to apply science to other parts of life and solving problems and being creative."

Harbor Lovin, Blanchester High School (Clinton County): "It's just something so different from anything else we do in school. We're working towards a goal. We started months and months and months ago. We'd known about it in the summer. We've been working on it for eight to ten months. It's a huge project that doesn't come down to what our teacher thinks about it necessarily, but we have to present it to a plethora of people and get a lot of feedback."

Peyton Morgan, Minerva High School (Stark County): "I think Believe in Ohio has actually helped me figure out what I might want to do with my life, and where I would want to go to school and what I want to like major in. It's helped me with things that I would actually enjoy doing in life and give me lifelong skills."

Julia Faust, Strongsville High School (Cuyahoga County): "I think it's really prepared me for job interviews. For our presentation piece of it, not exactly knowing what questions might be, and trying to answer them as best as possible, and as well as just the research behind it really prepares you for not only school but later in life. I mean, you have to write up reports in a lot of jobs, and just communicating your idea as well."