



WGTE Public Media to Participate in Statewide Initiative to Accelerate Learning

Ohio Learns 360 educational initiative will provide out-of-school-time programs and resources to the region's youth, grades K-5

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Toledo, Ohio (March 24, 2022) — WGTE Public Media will be working with local summer and afterschool programs throughout northwest Ohio to address disruptions to learning caused during the COVID-19 pandemic thanks to a partnership between Ohio's eight PBS stations and the Ohio Department of Education. Called *Ohio Learns 360*, this new initiative 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, which targets kindergarten through fifth-grade students from underserved communities, kicks off this April and will continue through September of 2024. The Ohio Department of Education will provide \$5,000,000 in funding through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), first authorized by Congress in 2020.

"WGTE Public Media is ecstatic and grateful to be a partner alongside our fellow Ohio public media stations in the *Ohio Learns 360* initiative," said Katie Budas, Director of Educational Services. "This initiative helps us further expand our educational reach across the northwest Ohio region to those that need it most. Providing both in-

person and virtual resources is important in making sure we are reaching as many families as possible with these new programs."

Students in out-of-school-time programs will be able to engage in hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) activities with some of their favorite characters, such as 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 afterschool 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 WGTE-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 WGTE

WGTE Public Media, licensed and operated by The Public Broadcasting Foundation of Northwest Ohio, is a non-profit, noncommercial, educational TV and radio broadcaster and center of learning for northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. WGTE is proud to be a PBS and NPR member station. It was founded as a low-power educational television broadcaster in 1953. Education remains at the heart of what we do every day. From our entertaining, informative and educational programs that air on WGTE TV, FM 91, and www.knowledgestream.org to our professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers and preschool daycare providers and community engagement activities, WGTE makes northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan a better place to live. For more information, visit www.wgte.org.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Matt Reny at 419-380-4646, or email matt_reny@wgte.org.

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