

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ohio Learning Network

Contact: Rich Bowers, Coordinator, Ohio IT Clearinghouse ([rbowers@oln.org](mailto:rbowers@oln.org)  
or 614-995-3240)

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### **New Program to Help Ohio Students Acquire IT Certificates**

COLUMBUS, Ohio – An innovative program now enables Ohio students to acquire professional-grade certificates in information technology (IT) related fields, for less money and less hassle.

A new joint statewide membership in CompTIA – an international industry group that supervises the certification processes – will reduce costs to students for the tests – in some cases a reduction of more than 50%. The “umbrella” membership also makes it easier for any student at an Ohio high school, career center, 2-year or 4-year college to register for the exams. Any of these public schools needs only to register under the Ohio plan – and no longer needs to join separately – to achieve the cost benefits for its students.

The enhanced program deals with well-known industry certifications like A+ (Plus), Network+, Security+, Linux+ and 6 others. The program can be found on the Internet at [www.ohioitplus.org](http://www.ohioitplus.org) .

The Web site contains information both for students and for schools (teachers and administrators) – with instructions for registration and information about each exam.

“The certifications are widely recognized and respected by business and industry,” said Richard Bowers, Coordinator of the Ohio IT Clearinghouse. “We anticipate that more Ohio students – who are already taking the course work - will sit for the exams and go to work here in the state.”

“This may be the first of several programs bringing the common interests of ODE and the Ohio Board of Regents together in partnership to help solve Ohio’s workforce problems,” said Bowers. “Recent news has pointed out a decline in interest in key career fields like IT. Here two state agencies have joined forces to find a means to attack a larger problem.”

These improvements are possible through a cooperative effort of the Ohio IT Clearinghouse (supported by Ohio Learning Network and the Ohio Board of Regents) and the Career-Technical & Adult Education unit of the Ohio Dept of Education. The statewide membership in CompTIA establishes full coverage for the state, and to reduce the complexity of getting students into the certification programs and exams.

The Career Technical & Adult Education unit of the Ohio Department of Education (<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/ctae/>) and the Ohio Board of Regents (<http://www.regents.state.oh.us/>) are responsible for the innovative itWORKS Ohio program (<http://www.itworks-ohio.org>), defining a detailed curriculum for Ohio secondary schools and 2-year colleges.

The Ohio IT Clearinghouse ([www.ohioitclearinghouse.org](http://www.ohioitclearinghouse.org)) is a project of the Ohio Learning Network, sponsored by the Ohio Board of Regents. The Ohio Learning Network ([www.olin.org](http://www.olin.org)) is also an initiative of the Ohio Board of Regents.

CompTIA is the abbreviated name of the Computing Technology Industry Association ([www.comptia.org](http://www.comptia.org)), dedicated to advancing the growth of the information technology (IT) industry and those working within it, through more than 20,000 members in 102 countries.

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