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March 6, 2015

Senator William J. Larkin
1093 Little Britain Road
New Windsor, New York 12553

Dear Senator Larkin:

Orange-Ulster BOCES has a unique opportunity to partner with Mr. Warren Black of Computer Technology Consultants, Inc. to develop content-rich educational gaming programs for school districts in our region and across the state.

As you know, educational gaming can enhance the learning environment in a highly engaging way, while also teaching and assessing content understanding, 21st Century skills, and S.T.E.M skills. Research has shown that playing educational computer games increases students' language, math, reading, and social skills, in addition to producing reductions in reaction times, improved hand-eye coordination, and raises players' self-esteem. Curiosity, fun, and the nature of the challenge, contribute to the games' educational potential. Well-designed, content-rich, non-violent computer games have the capacity to engage students in technology to research, communicate, collaborate and construct meaning, directly impacting learning. Allowing students to design and play their own games truly enhances learning while building college and career ready skills.

Orange-Ulster BOCES is a proven leader in the region and across the state for being on the forefront of innovation and curriculum development. From our Distance Learning Program in Mandarin Chinese to our K-12 county-wide Social Studies initiative, our goal is to bring services and programs to our districts that directly impact student achievement. Working collaboratively with Mr. Black, we plan to train and implement gaming modules in all of our twenty middle schools impacting over 14,300 students. We will also identify key topics in the new Social Studies Framework that can be reinforced and assessed through students' ability to design and develop their own game. The "units" will be developed by expert teachers and student-tested to ensure expansion in other content areas.

We are excited about this collaboration and hope that through your support and financial commitment, Mr. Black and our educational team can create a gaming product that can be utilized with students in schools throughout the state. Please accept this letter as my commitment to this project. In addition, I have enclosed our Project Proposal and budget for your review. I would be pleased to discuss this project further with you should you have questions.

Sincerely yours,

William J. Hecht
District Superintendent/CEO