

Action Item - 24

Title: Contract with University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education for Professional Development Services (\$150,000) – Added 3.12.2025

Board of Education Meeting Date: 3/27/2025

Action Under Consideration:

The Administration recommends that the Board of Education authorize The School District of Philadelphia, through the Superintendent or his designee, to execute and perform a contract, subject to funding, as follows:

With:

University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education

Purpose:

To provide PVA teachers and staff personalized professional development.

Start date: 4/1/2025

End Date: 1/31/2028

Compensation not to exceed:

\$150,000

Location:

Philadelphia Virtual Academy (PVA)

Renewal Option:

N/A

Description:

Why is this contract needed?

This contract is needed to provide PVA teachers and staff personalized professional development specific to the online model of the school design. This contract would serve as a key action component in filling that need. The selected vendor has the necessary qualifications to provide professional development with a focus on teaching and learning, online learning design, digital literacy, and engaging and interactive instruction via an online environment for teachers in Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

How will the success of this contract be measured?

The success of this contract will be measured using an evaluation metric tool built around the specific deliverables guaranteed by the vendor and their ability to provide these services in a timely fashion. In addition, there will be multiple built in measures

to gauge the meeting of staff expectations including pre- and post-program assessments, surveys, and classroom implementation reviews. These measures will provide insights into the impact of professional development on teacher practices and student learning, ensuring continuous program refinement and success.

When applicable, is this an evidence-based strategy? If so, what evidence exists to support this approach?

University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education's Virtual Online Teaching (Penn GSE VOLT) program is currently the only State approved online teaching Certificate program and rooted in evidence-based practices that align with current educational standards; their programs are designed to provide tailored support that reinforces continuous growth and practical application in the classroom. As such they will be utilizing many evidence-based strategies, including but not limited to Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

When applicable, was a larger community of District community members and/or stakeholders involved in this selection process? If so, what groups and how?

The District followed the protocols for the Request for Proposal process outlined by the Office of Procurement and the Office of Grants and Compliance. As such, the process involved multiple stakeholders from the school community, including the District's central office staff, outside community partners, school advisory council and representatives on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, using a root cause analysis of PVA over a year long deep dive and multiple meetings and discussions regarding student data.

Which Goal and/or Guardrail does this Action Item support? Has this investment been discussed during a progress monitoring session? Which session?

This action item supports Goals 1-4 as it relates to the specific education of students and the role of properly prepared teachers in that process, and Guardrail 1 in relation to PVA teachers being the driving factor in creating an online school environment that has "inclusive climates that provide students with access to robust social, emotional, and mental health supports". As part of PVA's CSI process this investment was specifically developed from multiple progress monitoring meetings over the course of a year. In addition, PVA leadership discussed this at both their staff and parent budget meetings planning for SY24-25 as aligned to Guardrail 3, "Every parent and guardian will be welcomed and encouraged to be partners in their child's school community".

Does this Action Item support a specific strategy/intervention identified in the Strategic Plan?

Yes, this action item supports Priority Area 3, Strategy 3.9, identified in the Strategic Plan. Authorization of this contract through the action item will provide support for PVA teachers in areas of content knowledge and student engagement. Additionally, teachers will be able to properly create interventions to support students and drive academic improvement, which are specific strategies in PVA's School Plan.

Related resolution(s)/action item(s)

N/A

Funding Source(s)

FY25 Grant

FY26 Grant

FY27 Grant

Office Originating Request:

Academic Services