

## **Action Item - 24**

**Title:** Authorization to Apply for and, if Awarded, Accept Six Solar for Schools Program Grants (\$2,137,596) – Added 02.20.2025

**Board of Education Meeting Date:** 2/27/2025

### **Action Under Consideration**

The Administration recommends that the Board of Education authorize The School District of Philadelphia, through the Superintendent or his designee, to accept a Donation as follows:

- Name of Donor: Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development
- Brief description of item/good: Grant
- Gift/Donation amount not to exceed: \$2,137,596

### **Description:**

#### **Why is this contract needed?**

The Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) requires a resolution to accompany any application to grant programs administered by DCED. The District's Office of Environmental Management Services (OEMS) is submitting six applications to DCED's *Solar for Schools* grant program.

The District has selected six geographically-diverse school sites across its portfolio to seek *Solar for Schools* grant funding, which can cover a portion of materials and installation of solar arrays (roof and ground). The schools and the grant amounts requested are Andrew Hamilton (\$287,781), Furness (\$183,868), Mayfair ES (\$445,535), NE Community Propel Academy (\$500,000), WB Saul (\$500,000), and Murrell Dobbins CTE (\$220,412). The combined total for all six schools is \$2,137,596. All six school sites are considered "solar-ready" thanks to a roof age that is within the District's typical 40-year warranty, and sufficient electrical capacity. Further, these sites can add local solar at a meaningful scale to materially reduce school site utility bills and reliance on a primarily fossil-fueled electricity grid.

The District will steward any grant dollars received from the Solar for Schools grant to leverage additional federal tax credits and utility rebate programs that can potentially reduce the cost of the solar arrays by roughly 75%. This contract is needed because it is likely the only time in the foreseeable future the District will be able to save such a large percentage of costs to execute large scale solar projects.

As required by the grant application, via this Action Item the Board of Education designates the Superintendent or his designee as the official(s) to execute all

documents and agreements between the District and the Department of Community and Economic Development to facilitate and assist in obtaining the requested grant/loan.

**How is this work connected to the District's plan to achieve Goals and Guardrails?**

This project supports Guardrail 1 making every school a safe, healthy and welcoming space for all students, staff and community. Cost-effective solar projects will save critical operating dollars for the School District of Philadelphia in the short and long term, advance its GreenFutures sustainability goals, and provide a learning opportunity for students, especially those enrolled in related career and technical education programs.

**How will the success of this contract be measured?**

The six applications add up to the following level of impact: A \$2,137,596 grant request for six schools representing 2 MW of solar power; \$5.4M total project portfolio *but only* \$1.5M net cost to the District after other incentives; covering an average 44% of school site electricity needs, and saving around \$175K in electricity costs annually. Benchmarking of electrical use, and annual assessment of cost benefit analysis will be conducted to measure the success of the solar systems once installed.

**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 Office of Environmental Management and Services partnered with Capital Programs to develop the scope of work for this grant application with support from grants development, grants fiscal, The Philadelphia Energy Authority, and the Pennsylvania Solar Center.

**Related resolution(s)/action item(s)**

NA

**Office Originating Request:**

Operations - Environmental Services