

Action Item - 15

Title: Contracts with Various Vendors for the Provision of Digital Special Education Kits and Evaluation Tools, and Materials for School Psychologists (\$1,200,000)

Board of Education Meeting Date: 9/19/2024

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:

NCS Pearson, Inc.
Multi-Health Systems Inc.
Western Psychological Services WPS

Purpose:

Materials and online digital evaluation protocols and tool kits for school psychologists to use to evaluate students for disabilities

Start date: 9/20/2024

End Date: 9/19/2027

Compensation not to exceed:

\$1,200,000

Separate Compensation by Contractor:

All entities will be paid out of the aggregate amount not to exceed \$1,200,000

Location:

All Administrative Offices, All Schools

Renewal Option:

Number of options: 2
Duration of each option: 1 year

Maximum Compensation authorized per option period:

All entities will be paid out of a total aggregate amount as follows:
Option year 1 - Not to exceed \$440,000
Option year 2 - Not to exceed \$484,000

Description:

Why is this contract needed?

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) requires that students with disabilities and students thought to be disabled receive special education evaluations using reliable, scientifically tested, research-based, and peer reviewed and verified special education evaluations tools and protocols. These student evaluations and assessments must be performed by a certified school psychologist. Based on this stringent criteria, the Office of Special Education and Diverse Learners selected the Contractors to provide District school psychologist with materials and on-line digital student special education testing kits, protocols and tools. The Contractors shall provide District school psychologists with individual licenses to access their on-line evaluation tools and protocols.

These digital testing tools include scientifically-based student assessments for all learning disabilities including specific learning disability, autism, emotional disturbance, Intellectual disability, ADHD, and multiple disabilities. The selected Contractors are world-wide leaders in special education testing protocols and evaluation systems. All of the Contractors' digital testing protocols and non-digital protocols are research-based and have been peer reviewed and tested. District school psychologists are trained in the Contractors' assessments and have utilized these testing protocols for many years to successfully evaluate students for disabilities.

How will the success of this contract be measured?

School psychologists will be surveyed to determine satisfaction with the Contractors testing protocols and products.

If this is the continuation of a contract, how has success been measured in the past, and what specific information do we have to show that it was successful?

District school psychologists have used these digital testing products and protocols over the last 10 years with a high degree of satisfaction and testing accuracy.

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

The digital testing protocols are scientifically researched, evidence-based and peer reviewed. They are standard testing systems and protocols used by almost all school districts to evaluate students with disabilities or thought to be disabled.

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

Consistent with the District's competitive procurement process, the selection process resulting in the selection of these Contractors included a committee of District staff with relevant programmatic, IT, and fiscal expertise who reviewed and evaluated Contractors IFB responses.

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 Goal 1: that every student reads on or above grade level, and Goal 2: that every student performs on or above grade level in math. Reliable and accurate digital disability testing kits and protocols are essential to ensure that students with special needs are identified and supported so that they can perform at or above grade level in reading and math. In addition, accurate student testing for disabilities meets Guardrail 4 by supporting the elimination of unequal and discriminatory practices that hinder student achievement.

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

This action item supports Specific Strategic Action 3.8. Accurate and reliable student special education evaluation tools will help ensure that the District audits and improves compliance with IEPs. Accurate student evaluations provide the critical information needed to determine the individualized needs of each student and to prepare meaningful and compliant IEPs.

Funding Source(s)

FY24-29 Operating and Categorical (ACCESS)

Office Originating Request:

Special Education and Diverse Learners