



COVER SHEET – AGENDA ITEMS #R2

For Commission Meeting: October 16, 2017

“Reynolds School District TechSmart Grant Agreement Amendment”

Grant Committee Recommendation:

The MHCRC Grant Committee recommends that the Commission approve an amendment to increase the total amount of the Reynolds School District grant agreement and to amend the grant project budget. (See attached amendment with Exhibit A).

Background

In May 2017, the MHCRC Grant Committee discussed and approved a recommendation to amend the Reynolds School District (RSD) grant agreement for its TechSmart Initiative project. The recommendation was not brought forward to the full Commission at that time due to the pending lawsuit, which has since been dismissed.

As a reminder, the RSD project centers around 6-9th grade math with the goal to increase the rate at which 9th grade students were attaining their math credit necessary to graduate on-time. The project includes all math teachers from three middle schools and 9th grade math teachers from the Reynolds High School.

RSD’s strategy to achieve its goal was to bring on a select “cohort” of about 13 teachers each school year so that by Year 4 of the project, all 39 math teachers would be included. To provide the training and professional development for the teachers, RSD proposed to provide a half-time Instructional Technology Coach for the first three school years and ¼ time coach for the fourth year.

Through review of the RSD TechSmart status reports and discussions with the RSD project lead, MHCRC staff became aware of potential issues with the amount of time available from the Instructional Technology Coach to provide an adequate level of training to enable teacher’s technology use in the classroom to better serve students. In early Spring, PRE conducted teacher interviews with the RSD cohort 1 and 2 teachers as part of its TechSmart evaluation. PRE found a lot of concerns surfacing about only having a part-time coach for teach training in Year 3 when the most inexperienced and reluctant teachers would be new to the program. In addition, the PRE interim evaluation, across all TechSmart projects, has indicated that it takes about three school years of high quality, high concentration professional development and training for teachers to really grasp the integration of the technology tools to support curriculum and classroom learning.

In its discussion, the Committee recognized that Reynold’s challenges were not because the project wasn’t working; the RSD coach and teachers were working hard and displaying a lot of enthusiasm. The difficulty was mostly related to the original project allocation for teacher training was proving to be insufficient and would not be enough to support the additional, new 13 teachers in Year 3, plus the 12 teachers that would be in their second year of technology integration.

The Grant Committee recognized that some of the Commission’s and the District’s assumptions have not always played out and that the purpose of the Initiative is to learn and make coarse corrections along the way. It’s interesting that the teacher coaching and professional development has been identified as key to success.

In addition, the Committee noted that the original RSD grant amount was less than the total amount available for Reynolds at that time under the method used by the MHCRC staff to allocate TechSmart funds among the school districts.

If the Commission approves the amendment at its October meeting, the Instructional Technology Coach would be full-time for the remaining 10 months of the SY17-18 and for SY18-19.

Amendment Details

The amendment increases grant and match funds for RSD to have a full-time instructional technology coach in Year 3 (10 months) and 4 of the grant (the current project includes a half-time coach in Year 3 and a quarter-time coach in Year 4). The additional grant funds needed would be about \$114,000.

Cost Category	Original Project Budget			Amended Project Budget		
	Grant Funds	Matching Funds	TOTAL	Added Grant Funds	Added Match	Amended TOTAL
Personnel	\$ 32,640	\$ 1,123,881	\$ 1,156,521	\$114,407	\$124,072	\$ 1,395,000
Equipment	\$ 1,194,968	\$ 96,588	\$ 1,291,556			\$1,291,556
Education	\$ -	\$ 51,000	\$ 51,000			\$51,000
Travel	\$ 11,600	\$ 2,900	\$ 14,500			\$14,500
Technology Infrastructure	\$ 14,781	\$ 26,700	\$ 41,481			\$41,481
Miscellaneous	\$ -	\$ 18,112	\$ 18,112			\$18,112
Overhead	\$ 59,565	\$ 62,661	\$ 122,226			\$122,226
Project TOTALS	\$ 1,313,554	\$ 1,381,842	\$ 2,695,396	\$ 1,427,961	\$ 1,505,914	\$ 2,933,875

Attachment: Amendment to the Reynolds School District grant agreement with Exhibit A

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