

Antoinette Dunbar, Deputy Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction

SUBJECT: REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH LEARNERS ONLINE TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AN ONLINE LEARNING TOOL SYSTEM TO SUPPORT THE TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY GRANT IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$119,000 EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 18, 2007, THROUGH JULY 30, 2010.

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO DISTRICT

STRATEGIC PLAN: IMPROVE RETURN ON INVESTMENT OF GRANT DOLLARS

At the August 1, 2007, meeting of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, the Board authorized the Superintendent to accept a grant award from the United States Department of Education (USDOE) in the total amount of \$1,739,378, to fund the Teaching American History program. In accordance with the grant proposal submitted to USDOE, authorization is requested for the Superintendent to enter into a contractual agreement with Learners Online to provide professional development and online learning tools for 200 teachers choosing to participate in the grant program. These grant funded services will be provided, in an amount not to exceed \$119,000, beginning October 18, 2007, through July 30, 2010.

Learners Online was specifically named in the grant proposal to provide professional development for teachers throughout the three-year grant period. Learners Online is a nationally recognized organization in the field of online learning tools. Learners Online, through their WebLessons.com program, will provide 200 teachers of American history with professional development and innovative and proven online lessons and resources that engage and motivate student learning. Additionally, Learners Online will assist the grant's evaluator in developing the pre- and post-test measures of both teacher and student knowledge of American history. The Learners Online WebLessons.com program was specifically developed to provide support for the Teaching American History grant program.

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Through this contractual agreement, Learners Online will provide six days of professional development (two per year) during the three-year grant period. During this professional development, teachers will learn how to more effectively use technology in teaching American history. The lesson plans developed by teachers receiving the professional development will be evaluated using a rubric and posted for use by social studies teachers District-wide. Finally, as part of this contract, a perpetual license to WebLessons.com is provided for teachers who participate in the Teaching American History program. The perpetual license includes access to over 150 American history lessons and instructor's guides, correlations to national and state standards, on-line training and support, content and technical support and WebLessons.com Learning Management System.

In accordance with the Teaching American History grant application submitted to USDOE, authorization is requested to enter into a contractual agreement with Learners Online totaling \$119,000, as listed below, serving schools throughout the District with a concentration on schools that have not met Annual Yearly Progress as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act. Learners Online will collaborate in the design, implementation and program evaluation of the professional development opportunities provided through the Teaching American History grant in order to meet the goal of increasing teacher knowledge of American history.

The Professional Services Contract Committee established by School Board Rule 6Gx13-3F-1.021 reviewed this contractual agreement on September 27, 2007, and recommended that an exception to the rule regarding bids or Requests for Proposals be granted by the Committee because the contractor provides specific expertise in providing professional development in the teaching of American history and developing online resources that promotes the integration of technology into the classroom.

The appropriation for this item is included in the Contracted Programs Fund of the 2007-2008 Budget adopted in August 2007, under:

Fund 0420, Function 6400, Program 4928, Object 5310, and Location 9634.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, authorize the Superintendent to:

1. grant an exception to School Board Rule 6Gx13-3F-1.021, based on specific expertise; and
2. enter into a contractual agreement with Learners Online to provide professional development on the teaching of American history and an online learning tool system to support the Teaching American History grant awarded to the District by the U.S. Department of Education, in an amount not to exceed \$119,000, effective October 18, 2007, through July 30, 2010.

AD/MRF/JRD:rcb