Action Item

Subject:

Curriculum and Assessment Design Tool

Background:

Research into the factors affecting student learning, such as Robert Marzano's 30-year meta-analysis, has shown that the school-level factor with the highest impact on student academic achievement is the opportunity for students to learn what they're expected to know and be able to do and what they are held accountable for in terms of high-stakes tests, certification programs, and graduation. Opportunity to learn is based on a tight alignment between curriculum, instruction, and assessment. These three elements can be thought of as:

- Curriculum: the skills and concepts in the standards that students are expected to learn.
- Instruction: the activities and methods that teachers use. Textbooks, websites, and instructional software, etc. are resources that teachers draw on to teach the expected curriculum.
- Assessment: the ways that teachers measure student progress in learning the expected curriculum.

The district expects consistent use of rigorous standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment in order to provide Proviso students with a full opportunity to learn. Yet the district does not have an up-to-date system for teachers to easily design curriculum and assessments and to develop and share instructional resources targeted to their students' needs.

In previous years, curriculum maps and unit designs were housed in an online site called Curriculum Mapper. This license was dropped due to limited functionality and inflexibility in the program. Since then the district has used Microsoft Word templates for teachers to design district curriculum and assessments. These are housed on a network drive where sharing documents and setting permissions levels is cumbersome and which can be accessed only when users are on campus.

There are several occasions when teachers are involved in designing curriculum and assessments. Teachers on summer curriculum writing teams develop unit designs along

with common interim course assessments used throughout the district for instructional planning and for student growth measures for performance evaluation. PERA (Performance Evaluation Reform Act) also requires teachers to create classroom-based assessments as student growth measures. Teachers have had to find assessment questions on their own or write them from scratch without the benefit of item banks of questions aligned to standards and at different levels of cognitive rigor.

Teachers are also eager for an assessment administration and reporting tool that would yield more informative data. The current technology used by most teachers to administer classroom or district assessments are Scantron answer forms. A small number of teachers use Google Forms for students to enter answers from computers or smartphones. These tools produce student scores but do not track student progress towards mastery of standards or allow for teachers, department chairs, or building administrators to view data across classes, course teams, departments, and schools. The only way that administrators can see this data is to retrieve reports for individual teachers and complete a manual data analysis. The lag time between students taking a district assessment and usable data for end users is about 6 to 7 weeks. This is too long for teacher teams and administrators to make informed decisions about subsequent instructional practices.

Administration's Analysis:

The district is in need of a powerful and flexible tool for teachers to write district curriculum maps, unit designs, and related assessments based on standards and at the levels of cognitive rigor needed to improve and accelerate student learning. In addition, teachers are eager for a tool to design assessments to supplement or enhance the tests in their textbook or program materials so that they can better pinpoint student needs.

In addition, the upcoming move to competency-based education at Proviso East will require re-designed curriculum maps and assessments based on standards and competencies with an effective and efficient tool for teachers to complete this work.

An RFP process for five interrelated assessment components was used to solicit vendors whose products could meet five interrelated curriculum and assessment needs. Ideally we wanted a single system that could fill all five needs. After a comprehensive review of the products offered by each vendor that responded, vendor presentations to teachers and administrators, and discussions with other districts, the decision was made to select a tool with the most powerful functionality for teacher-designed assessments. Upcoming action items will be presented for the remaining services.

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Bids for teacher-designed assessments were received from the following vendors listed below with the cost per student and item banks. Proposal cost sheets are attached.

Vendor	Cost per student
Academic Approach	$ 8.70
Edulastic	$ 4.00 + $ 2.00 item bank
Illuminate	$ 6.00
MasteryConnect	$ 6.00 + $ 2.00 item bank
Mastery Manager	$ 8.92 (includes item bank)
Renaissance	$ 3.68 ($ 15,271.99 for 4150 students)
SchoolCity	$ 7.00 (includes item bank)

MasteryConnect was identified as the vendor that best meets the district's needs. The districts that were contacted as current users of MasteryConnect reported high levels of satisfaction with the tool and its impact on teacher effectiveness.

Founded in 2009, MasteryConnect is a flexible, cloud-based system used by teachers in 85% of school districts nation-wide. It allows collaboration around real-time data from standards-aligned assessments with these features:

- Searchable standards and assessment item banks for English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies in English and Spanish.
- Assessment items coded with Webb's Depth of Knowledge levels of cognitive rigor.
- Option for teachers to write their own questions with support for over 50 different assessment response types besides multiple choice.
- Ability to enter our own standards and assessments.
- Curriculum "shells" to house district or teacher curriculum documents that align assessments to curriculum units.
- Permission levels that allow review of new curriculum and assessments before approval.
- Access to assessments shared by an online community numbering over 2 million users.
- Assessments administered with paper bubble sheets, online, or with mobile devices and scored via webcam or with manual entry using rubrics for performance tasks such as essay questions or diagrams.
- Immediate and 24/7 access to assessment results at classroom, school, and district levels with drill-down to individual students.

The contract (Subscription Order Form—see attached) is for three years and is based on an estimated enrollment of 4650 students district-wide. The SY18 cost is $43,200 for

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student licenses and professional development, with payments of $37,200 in the two following years for a three-year total of $117,600.

	3-year per student cost	Licenses	3-year total
Multi-year student license	$ 21.00	4650	$ 97,650
Discount	- 4.50	4650	- 20,925
Certica item bank	10.50	4650	48,825
Discount	- 3.00	4650	- 13,950
Professional development	n/a	n/a	6,000
Grand Total			**$ 117,600**

Statute, Administrative Policy or Board Rules Statement:

Board Policy 6:340 Student Testing and Assessment Program states that the district should provide information for determining individual student achievement and instructional needs; curriculum and instruction effectiveness; and school performance measured against District student learning objectives and statewide norms.

The Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.21) and Board Policy 4:60 Purchases and Contracts require that all contracts for supplies, materials, or work involving expenditure in excess of $25,000 shall be made in accordance with State law bidding procedure, unless specifically exempted. Contracts will be awarded by the Board of Education at an official meeting.

Implementation or Assessment Plan:

The contract (Subscription Order Form) includes professional development during SY18 in a train-the-trainer model for building and district administrators and department chairs followed by a virtual leadership session and four virtual "booster" sessions scheduled by the district throughout the school year. Teachers and administrators will have 24/7 online access to on-demand professional development.

The district plans to invite interested teams of summer curriculum writing teams to use MasteryConnect to write or review curriculum and assessments. Teams that decide to participate will receive professional development. During the summer, existing district curriculum documents and assessments will be transferred from the network shared drive to MasteryConnect.

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During the first phase of implementation in the 2017-18 school year, professional development will be provided for teachers to access and administer district assessments and to use reports. Selected departments in each school will receive additional training to create classroom-level assessments, with the training to be informed by feedback from teachers who use MasteryConnect during the summer. Implementation will be expanded to additional departments during second semester. In addition, the student and parent portal will be prepared for roll-out during the second semester.

The district will evaluate the first phase of implementation with feedback from teachers and administrators to guide full implementation for the summer of 2018 and the 2018-19 school year.

Administration's Recommendation:

That the Board of Education of Proviso Township High Schools District 209 accept the Superintendent's recommendation to approve the contract with MasteryConnect in an amount not to exceed $117,600 for three years pending legal review.