
BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Information/Discussion _____

Future Action _____

Action _____x_____

Item: Seat Purchase Agreement with GVSU

Submitted by: Mary Kay Murphy, Executive Director
West Michigan Teacher Collaborative

Date: 9/14/2026

Recommended by: Jenny Fee

Board Meeting Date: 9/21/2026

REQUESTED ACTION:

Board approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with Grand Valley State University (GVSU) and an associated tuition payment not to exceed \$2,232,713, to be paid in full prior to September 30, 2026, using Round 1 Section 27b grant funds.

BACKGROUND:

The West Michigan Teacher Collaborative (WMTC), a no-cost, accelerated work-based teacher residency housed at Kent ISD and operated as a regional consortium with Ottawa Area ISD and Muskegon Area ISD, with GVSU as the educator preparation partner. WMTC is funded in part by a \$19,062,651 Section 27b Grow Your Own grant awarded by the State of Michigan in 2023.

To date, Kent ISD has paid GVSU tuition semester by semester as members enroll in coursework. However, the Round 1 Section 27b funds must be expended by September 30, 2026. Recognizing the spending and timeline challenges faced by GYO programs, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) issued guidance allowing grantees to purchase seats from an educator preparation program before instruction begins. Rather than paying semester by semester, this arrangement requires GVSU to be paid in advance for each member's full anticipated remaining program cost. Kent ISD's auditing firm has reviewed the arrangement and confirmed it is permissible under MDE's guidance and consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and Governmental Accounting Standards Board standards. The full expenditure is recognized in September 2026 and reported to the granting agency as expended as of September 30, 2026, with grant revenue and expenditure both recognized in FY 2026-27 and no prepaid expense carried at June 30, 2027.

The \$2,132,713 payment purchases seats for 139 currently enrolled WMTC members through the Winter 2028 term, ending May 2028. Covered members include Resident Candidates pursuing initial certification, Advanced Candidates pursuing endorsements or graduate degrees,

and Pre-Resident Candidates with a completion date no later than May 2028.

GVSU has an established process for districts purchasing seats and has executed agreements under this guidance with other districts. GVSU has drafted the Seat Purchase Agreement, which identifies each covered candidate and the program services included in that candidate's seat, and has established the financial structures needed to administer the funds consistent with MDE requirements.

The Seat Purchase Agreement between Kent ISD and GVSU, included, remains in draft. Kent ISD has reviewed the draft and submitted requested changes to GVSU, which are under review. The requested changes address compliance language and drafting clarifications and are not expected to alter the number of seats purchased or the cost ceiling. Final candidate counts and invoicing from GVSU are pending. The agreement will be executed at the final invoiced amount, within the approved ceiling, before the September 30 payment deadline.

FISCAL IMPACT

The full payment of \$2,132,713 is drawn from Round 1 Section 27b grant funds. There is no impact to the Kent ISD general fund. WMTC's continuing operations are supported by its Section 27r School Aid allocation, Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) grant, FY26 Section 27b award, and Section 27h state mentoring grant, which together fund the program through September 30, 2029.

TIMELINE

Approval at the September 21 meeting allows the purchase requisition and purchase order process to begin on September 22, with payment issued in the final September check run on September 24, ahead of the September 30 grant deadline.