
BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Information/Discussion _____

Future Action _____

Action ☒ _____

Item: Request for Personnel – Teacher Trainer

Submitted by: Cary Stamas, Director

Date: 2/28/25

Recommended by: Sue Gardner, Asst. Supt.

Board Meeting Date: 3/17/25

RECOMMENDATION:

Add 1.0 FTE for a Teacher Trainer position to support the implementation of the Manufacturing and Engineering Education Reimagined for All (MEERA) initiative. *NOTE: interviews and hiring of this position are contingent on an executed Memo of Understanding with TECHnista.*

BACKGROUND:

In late November, Kent ISD in collaboration with Ottawa and Muskegon ISDs submitted notification to the Office of Career and Tech Ed an indication of our joint interest in this region being considered as the initial Manufacturing and Engineering Education Reimagined for All (MEERA) program location in Michigan. Our collaborative initiative was selected and Kent ISD will serve as the Regional Training Center for this program making it the first location in not only Michigan, but the first in the nation.

MEERA is a program developed by TECHnista, a Department of Defense contractor, with the intent to promote awareness of manufacturing pathways in grade 6-8 to increase interest in these careers in order to develop the manufacturing capacity of the nation. Our region in Michigan was specifically selected because of the pre-existing manufacturing programs at the secondary level in three tech centers and within the LEAs throughout the region which feed into post-secondary programming at both GRCC and MCC. The development of the Memo of Understanding between TECHnista and three ISDs (Kent, Muskegon, and Ottawa) is in progress to finalize the details of this partnership.

The Regional Training Center houses a model lab which is equipped by TECHnista (~\$150,000) and staffed by the Teacher Trainer whose salary and benefits are reimbursed to Kent ISD by TECHnista for 3 years. The Teacher Trainer will support the LEA middle school teachers implementing the 6-8 manufacturing instruction using content provided by TECHnista. The first two labs during year one of the program, 24-25 school year, are fully equipped by TECHnista (~\$125,000 each). The plan calls for an increase of 6 additional labs in 25-26 and another 20 labs in 26-27.



Date: 3/6/25

To:
Kent ISD
Cary Stamas
1633 E Beltline NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

Subject: Letter of Intent for Funding MEERA Regional Teacher Trainer Position

On behalf of **TECHnista LLC**, we are pleased to submit this letter of intent to formally communicate our commitment to funding the position of **MEERA Regional Teacher Trainer** in support of the deployment and execution of the Manufacturing and Engineering Reimagined for All (MEERA) Program.

This newly established role is essential for the continued success and expansion of the MEERA program within Kent ISD. As part of our ongoing collaboration and dedication to enhancing educational outcomes, the MEERA Regional Teacher Trainer will work to provide guidance, training, and professional development to educators within the region, ensuring successful implementation and sustained engagement with the MEERA program.

Funding awarded to TECHnista, LLC through the Innovation Capability and Modernization Office (ICAM) will support the salary and fringe benefits associated with the MEERA Regional Teacher Trainer role for a period of **three (3) years**. This agreement is contingent upon the continued availability of funding from the ICAM and the Department of Defense (DoD). This commitment reflects our confidence in the long-term impact of the MEERA program and our desire to work alongside Kent ISD in fulfilling its mission to equip the next generation of manufacturing workforce.

Details of Funding Support:

- **Position Title:** MEERA Regional Teacher Trainer
- **Duration:** Three (3) years
- **Salary & Fringe:** TECHnista LLC will cover the full salary and fringe benefits
- **Funding Availability:** Starting as early as 3/6/2025
- **Contingency:** Funding will be contingent on the availability of continued DoD funds; TECHnista LLC will inform Kent ISD of any changes in funding availability as soon as such information is received.

We are excited about the opportunity to partner with Kent ISD in supporting this important initiative. We believe this role will play a pivotal part in the successful expansion of the MEERA program.

Should you have any questions or require additional details, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly at 434-334-4001 or trobertson@technistaconsulting.com.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Timothy Robertson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Timothy Robertson', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

Chief Operating Officer/Owner

TECHnista LLC

trobertson@technistaconsulting.com



Mission: Kent ISD partners with our schools and communities providing enhanced and equitable opportunities to enrich the experiences and achievements of our learners.

Vision: Building thriving communities through meaningful partnerships and equitable educational opportunities for all learners.

Values: Relationships, Learning, Equity, Opportunities, Innovation, Service, Excellence

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Title: Teacher Trainer – MEERA Program

Kent ISD – Muskegon Area ISD – Ottawa Area ISD
Kent Conference Center
Non-Union Professional Salary Position – Grade 7
Full-Time, 200 Days

Reports To: Director of CTE

Positions Supervised: None

Broad Summary Statement About MEERA and the Position:

The Manufacturing and Engineering Reimagined for All (MEERA) Program is an initiative designed to transform the educational and workforce development landscape by providing students with hands-on experience and exposure to high-demand careers in advanced manufacturing and engineering. By partnering with local schools, industry leaders, and community organizations, MEERA works to foster a new generation of highly skilled professionals to create a more robust regional manufacturing workforce. MEERA will accomplish this by serving as a catalyst to supercharge regional career and technical education pipelines by exposing students to education and career opportunities aligned to their region.

Note: The anticipated funding for this position provides for three years, and thereafter continuation of the position is subject to need and funding sources.

About the Role

The MEERA Teacher Trainer will be responsible for delivering high-quality training and support to K-12 educators in Kent ISD, Muskegon Area ISD and Ottawa Area ISD, helping them integrate industry-relevant technologies and hands-on learning into their classrooms. This role requires a strong commitment to workforce development, as well as the ability to build relationships with stakeholders and educators across the region. The Teacher Trainer will work closely with educators to ensure they

are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver cutting-edge curriculum that aligns with industry standards and support classroom implementation.

Minimum Job Qualifications:
Qualifications

1. Bachelor's degree in Education, Engineering, Manufacturing, or related field.
2. Demonstrated experience in teaching or instructional support, with a preference for experience in manufacturing, engineering, or workforce development.
3. Familiarity with advanced manufacturing technologies and equipment (such as CNC machines, robotics, 3D printing, etc.). Knowledge of 3D modeling software (e.g., SolidWorks, Fusion 360) is preferred.
4. Strong ability to develop and effectively deliver training materials, with experience in both in-person and virtual learning environments.
5. Ability to move between facilities and operate/manipulate equipment; may require lifting up to 50 pounds.
6. Strong communication and interpersonal skills, with a proven ability to build relationships with diverse groups of stakeholders. Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
7. Excellent oral and written communication skills
8. Strong organizational and time management skills
9. Ability to effectively utilize a range of technology devices and applications
10. Demonstrated customer service, problem solving and conflict resolution skills
11. High degree of creativity, flexibility and accountability in order to achieve defined objectives
12. Strong organizational skills and attention detail necessary to maintain accurate records as may be required for Kent ISD and MEERA

Specific Duties & Responsibilities:

1. Curriculum Delivery & Teacher Training

- a. Coordinate and effectively deliver the MEERA teacher professional development, including summer training and ongoing professional development throughout the year.
- b. Provide quality instructional support to educators, ensuring the effective implementation of MEERA curriculum and industry technologies in the classroom.

2. Technical Support & Equipment Maintenance

- a. Offer technical assistance and training on equipment used within the MEERA program, including troubleshooting, maintenance, and ensuring proper setup in classrooms.
- b. Serve as the primary contact for any equipment issues, providing timely and effective resolutions.

3. Collaboration & Best Practices

- a. Foster a collaborative environment among educators by sharing best practices and strategies for teaching manufacturing and engineering concepts.
- b. Support educators in creating engaging, hands-on learning experiences that prepare students for careers in advanced manufacturing.

4. Assessment & Continuous Improvement

- a. Regularly assess the effectiveness of curriculum delivery and training through feedback from teachers and observations in the classroom.
- b. Collaborate with the MEERA team to make recommendations for continuous improvement of the program.

5. Competitions & Events

- a. Organize and coordinate regional competitions and events to engage students in real-world manufacturing challenges and skill-building activities.

6. Relationship Building & Outreach

- a. Cultivate and maintain strong relationships with local school districts, industry partners, and community stakeholders to promote and expand the MEERA program.
- b. Represent the MEERA program at meetings, conferences, and other events to raise awareness and support for the initiative.

7. Travel

- a. Travel to the MEERA National Training and Technology Center (NTTC), located in Danville, VA, will be required for continued professional development and training.
- b. Travel to schools and other locations as needed and directed to provide on-site training, technical support, and program coordination.
- c. Occasional overnight travel may be required.

8. Other

- a. Assist, as needed, with budget functions pertaining to MEERA
- b. Collaborate with other ISD departments and programs to enhance the opportunities and resources accessible to staff
- c. Identify key measures and data that serve as indicators for success
- d. Complete and submit accurate compliance reporting as required by grants, state or other requirements
- e. Comply with applicable school policy, regulations and laws.
- f. Regularly attends all (types of meetings), as required
- g. Maintain regular and consistent employee attendance
- h. Occasional travel to and from local schools and events will be required.
- i. Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned

The above is intended to describe the general content of and requirements for the performance of this position. It is not to be construed as an exhaustive statement of duties, responsibilities or requirements. To perform this job successfully, an individual must be able to perform each essential duty satisfactorily. Alternative requirements that may be appropriate and acceptable to the School Board may be considered. The requirements listed above are representative of the knowledge, skill and/or ability required. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the essential functions.

To Apply: Kent Intermediate School District manages employment applications online. No hardcopy applications/resumes will be accepted for this position.

- Applications must be completed online at www.jobs.kentisd.org

The final candidate for this position will be required (at their cost) to furnish Kent Intermediate School District with a current Michigan State Police and FBI criminal records LiveScan check prior to our recommendation to hire.

It is the policy of the Kent ISD School Board that no student, staff member or candidate for any position in the District shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, ancestry, age, gender/sex, gender orientation, sexual orientation, marital status, height, weight, veteran status, political belief or physical/mental disability which does not impair their ability to perform adequately in the individual's particular position or activity, excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or to be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which the Kent ISD School Board is responsible for or receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.