

MACOMB COMMUNITY COLLEGE
14500 Twelve Mile Road, Warren, MI 48088

ACTION REPORT: Authorization to Purchase

ITEM: PLATO Development Learning System

Since 2003, PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations) computerized tutorial software has been used in the College's Learning Centers as an essential assessment of college readiness and progress in developmental programs. The PLATO system is a standard based, on-line learning program that targets the skills that learners need to improve to meet the requirements of college level studies. The systems reporting capabilities allow the students and instructors to monitor student progress and achievement and to pinpoint areas that require further study. Many faculty have integrated PLATO developmental modules into their curriculum either as graded work or extra credit in order to improve student success. Students can also use PLATO independently for ACCUPLACER, HESI, and Work Keys preparation, as well as subject area support. Our experience with PLATO as well as the level of integration through the College courses, website and learning center makes it the best solution for the College. Edmentum is the sole provider of PLATO.

The vendor has offered a 5% discounted price of \$127,443.75 for a three (3) year renewal (\$42,481.25 annually). The college is receiving an additional discounted price is due to the College's M-CAM PLATO purchase as approved by the Board of Trustees at the February 17, 2015 meeting.

Funding for this purchase will come from the College's technology accounts. User Department rationale is on the reverse side.

RECOMMENDATION OF ADMINISTRATION

That the Board of Trustees authorize award of a three-year contract with Edmentum of Bloomington, MN 55437, for the total amount of \$127,443.75 for computerized tutorial software.

Senior Vice President and Provost of the Learning Unit
Vice President for Business
April 19, 2016

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USER DEPARTMENT FOR THE PURCHASE OF PLATO DEVELOPMENT LEARNING SYSTEM

PLATO was first introduced to the College through a grant-funded initiative with our high school partners through the Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD). When its purpose and success was realized after a two-year period, the software became 'institutionalized' and its versatility has allowed usage applications to increase regularly. Containing coursework appropriate for skill levels K through adult, many of our high school partners customize components of the PLATO coursework into actual course 'semesters'. This allows opportunities to enhance the classroom experience. High school students have also used PLATO for ACT/SAT test preparation.

As a service to the Macomb County community, the College is able to offer access to PLATO accounts free of charge. Many community members have requested the ESL modules to assist in English language skill building as they assimilate to this new area. A PLATO application also exists to assist in preparation for the TABE, ASVAB (*Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), and ACT/SAT Workkeys tests. A module has been created to assist with preparation for the GED exam. Success on these exams builds bridges to the College for prospective students.

PLATO courseware modules contain tutorials, drills, applications, problem solving activities, reviews, practice, and mastery tests. Assessment tests diagnose and automatically prescribe individualized learning paths within a specific PLATO course for each learner. A wide variety of assessment strategies are available. Students can work independently on improving skills in grammar, writing, vocabulary, spelling, math, reading, study skills, English as a Second Language, keyboarding, and word processing. PLATO can be used to assess student skills, review old skills, get a head start on upcoming classes, study and practice new skills and take practice tests and quizzes. PLATO has the following standard curricula containing over 1,400 lessons in reading and writing, mathematics, life and career skills, and sciences. It is available for classes and for individual students.

Reading & Writing

- Intermediate Reading for the Real World
- Essential Reading Skills
- Vocabulary & Reading Comprehension
- Reading for Information
- Writing in the Workplace
- Communication
- Writing Series

Mathematics

- Math Fundamentals
- Math Problem Solving
- Applied Math
- Pre-Algebra

- Beginning Algebra
- Intermediate Algebra
- Advanced Algebra
- Geometry Measurement
- Trigonometry
- Calculus
- Data Skills

Career Skills

- Life and Job Skills
- Employment Partnership
- Reading for Information
- Communication
- Writing in the Workplace
- Data Skills
- Applied Physical Science
- Qualify Fundamentals

Science

- Applied Physical Science
- Science Fundamentals
- Chemistry 1 and 2
- Biology
- Physics

Using the core components of PLATO courseware listed above, customized PLATO courses are designed by College technicians, tailored specifically to meet the needs of Macomb Community College students. These modules provide online instruction for basic through advanced skills across a broad curriculum using language, examples, and content that are appropriate for them and reflect their lives and concerns. These all have been aligned in conjunction with the coursework offered at Macomb Community College to offer students successful strategies. Additionally, modules address applications for a number of high-demand examinations offered by the College. Preparatory modules for the ACCUPLACER, HESI, Admission Assessment, as well as various course placement tests, are available. More than 30,000 hours of tutorial work have been sorted, refined, and packaged to meet the most direct needs of our student and community patrons. These published custom courses include:

Language Arts

- English Literature and Composition
- Reading Skills
- Writing Skills

Math

- Pre-Algebra
- Beginning Algebra
- Intermediate Algebra
- Advanced Algebra
- Pre-Calculus
- Calculus

Science

- Biology
- Chemistry
- HESI Preparation
- Physics
- Physics & Chemistry: Integrated

Social Studies

- Economics
- American History-Pre-Columbian to Present
- U.S. Government-Eras in the United States
- World History
- Art History and Appreciation
- Geography
- Political Science

OTHER

- ACCUPLACER Preparation
- ACT/SAT Preparation
- ACT Work Keys
- ASVAB Preparation
- Compass Preparation
- GED Preparation
- ESL Competency
- Career Readiness
- Computer Applications and Technology
- TABE Testing: Language, Mathematics, Reading

The versatility of the PLATO software allows for expedient adapting to new learning requirements and the upcoming change from Compass to ACCUPLACER testing for new students is an example. A module will be readily available for implementation prior to the launch of the new placement test at Macomb. Also, supplementary modules have recently been purchased with grant funds to address support for Career Technical Education, as required by an IT Grant for 'Michigan Pathways to Credentials'.

Michael Balsamo

Dean of Learning Resources and Libraries

April 13, 2016