



135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

June 6, 2023

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE:

CONTRACT: Professional Development and Computer Software Licenses

RECOMMENDATION:

That the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Period of Contract</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Fishtank Learning 769 Centre, Suite 208 Boston, MA 02130	7/1/23 – 6/30/24	\$31,500.00

DESCRIPTION: This contract will provide professional development and teacher access to on-line curriculum modules, professional development module, and supplemental materials to support the rollout of the Fishtank Learning Curriculum, a literacy curriculum for grades 6 to 8. See the attached supplemental information for additional details.

SUPPORTING DATA, RULES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE: Chapter II, Section 12..." motions calling for the appropriation or expenditure of money require the affirmative vote of four members."

BUDGET REFERENCE:

Fund	Account	Dept.	Grant
25000	Grant Fund 55804	Computer Software 840148	English Language Arts General Instructional Support SC22216 ESSER III

Respectfully Submitted,

*Victoria L. Greer* PhD  
 Victoria L. Greer, PhD  
 Superintendent of Schools

## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION: FISHTANK LEARNING (6-8 CURRICULUM)

**Purpose:** Beginning in September 2023, 6th -8<sup>th</sup> grade ELA educators will adopt the Fishtank Learning Curriculum, with ongoing professional learning to support effective planning and aligned implementation across schools.

**Amount of Contract:** \$31,500.00

### **Summary Description / Scope of Services:**

- Ongoing professional development sessions for core-content teachers, coaches and interventionists, including SEI and special education teachers.
- Curriculum licenses (online teacher access to curriculum, PD modules and supplemental resources)

### **Additional Information:**

Fishtank will provide a well-designed, rigorous and engaging literacy curriculum that empowers students to be critical and creative readers, writers, thinkers and individuals. The curriculum was selected through a robust curriculum review process that used the EdReports Criteria and the Culturally Responsive Curriculum Scorecard, along with research-based recommendations and educator values. ELA department staff, along with upper school ELA educators and coaches participated in this review.

### **Professional Learning Overview:**

- Fishtank workshops are designed to provide teachers with the skills and knowledge to implement the Fishtank curriculum and adapt materials as necessary for their unique classrooms. Instructional preparation and decision making within these sessions supports educators in delivering a more rigorous, equitable and anti-racist learning experience for all students.

### **Grade Level Curriculum Overview:**

- In 6th grade, students explore the topic of *"Coming of Age."* Texts feature protagonists from diverse backgrounds, places and time periods, all of whom face challenges as they struggle to define their identities and claim their place in the world. Students consider how historically significant and everyday events in a young person's life can influence the person they become.
- In 7th grade, students explore the question: *"What does it mean to be American?"* Texts address diverse aspects of the American experience, including those of indigenous Americans, African Americans, first- and second-generation immigrants from different time periods and countries of origin, undocumented and LGBTQ+ youth. Students think deeply about the complex past, present, and future of America, and how to define their ever-changing identity as a nation.
- In 8th grade, students explore a timeless question: *"Are human beings fundamentally good or evil?"* Through classic and contemporary texts, students consider how access to power influences human behavior, and how everyday people respond in the face of unjust leadership, violent oppression, and cruelty. Students grapple with dark events from the past and contemplate their power as young people to create a better future.

**NOTE:** This contract does not represent the full cost of implementation. The related novels and texts for this curriculum will be purchased separately from the specific publishers. The estimated cost of these novels is \$71,000.