



Legislation Text

File #: 15-1173, **Version:** 1

Recommendation to authorize City Manager to execute an agreement with the California State Library to facilitate a Career Online High School Pilot Program at Long Beach Public Libraries for a period of two years. (Citywide)

The Department of Library Services has been invited by the California State Library to participate in a Career Online High School (COHS) Pilot Program at Long Beach Public Libraries for a period of two years. COHS is an AdvancED/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredited program that enables students to earn their high school diplomas while gaining real-world career skills. COHS employs an innovative curriculum that is aligned to the National Common Core Standards (NCCS), the convenience of an anytime-anywhere online learning platform, and interactive content that engages adult learners. This agreement will bring non-traditional and/or adult learners back into the educational system and prepare them for jobs in growing sectors of the economy. Students graduate with the tools to take the next step in their careers or career-education.

Established in 2011, the COHS has a proven track record. Studies show that COHS graduates generally see a 50 percent increase in earnings within 12 months of completing the program. Additionally, high school diplomas offer far better economic outcomes than GEDs. On average, those with a high school diploma can expect to earn approximately \$1,500 more per month than those with GEDs. Public libraries in the cities of San Diego, Sacramento and Los Angeles currently offer this program and all are advocates of its effectiveness for participants.

The Department of Library Services will screen prospective students to determine if they meet basic criteria (age 19 and over; resident of the jurisdiction served by the library; have a library account in good standing). Candidates complete an online self-assessment and a two-week prerequisite course, designed by COHS, to determine if they will be successful. After completing the assessment and prerequisite course, candidates are interviewed by library staff. Once enrolled, students are given access to the COHS online system, which can be used through any computer with an Internet connection. Students can work from home as their schedules allow. Each student is paired with an online academic coach, who provides the student with an individual career path, offers guidance, evaluates performance, and connects the student with the resources needed to master the courses.

The COHS Pilot Program will provide an initial allocation of 10 COHS scholarships from the California State Library. The Long Beach Public Library Foundation will fund ten additional COHS scholarships by April 15, 2017. Each scholarship is valued at \$1,100 and allows one student to participate in the program.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Amy R. Webber on October 27, 2015 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on October 30, 2015.

City Council action is requested on November 17, 2015, in order to formalize an agreement with California State Library.

The staff resources to implement and maintain this two-year Pilot Program are minimal and can be absorbed within existing staff duties with no impact to other services. There are no direct costs to the City for implementation or maintenance of the COHS Pilot Program. The Library will receive access to ten online learning platform subscriptions from the California State Library, valued at \$11,000. The Long Beach Public Library Foundation will match funds to award an additional ten COHS scholarships by April 15, 2017. The award of this contract may result in a positive local job impact.

Approve recommendation.

GLEND A WILLIAMS
DIRECTOR OF LIBRARY SERVICES

APPROVED:

PATRICK H. WEST
CITY MANAGER