



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Board of Supervisors
From: Melinda Cervantes, County Librarian
Date: February 27, 2018

Subject: Grant in the amount of \$3,285 from the CA State Library

RECOMMENDATION(S):

APPROVE and AUTHORIZE the County Librarian, or designee, to apply for and accept three scholarships for Career Online High School in the aggregate amount of \$3,285 (\$1,095 per scholarship) from the California State Library to provide qualified adult learners in Contra Costa County with an accredited online high school diploma and career training opportunity.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 100% required match is provided by a grant from Fremont Band.

BACKGROUND:

The Library, in partnership with the California State Library and Gale, part of Cengage Learning, has offered a limited number of adults in Contra Costa County the opportunity to earn both an accredited high school diploma and career certificate online through COHS. The three scholarships are fully funded by the California State Library, which requires a one-to-one match. CCCL has met the match requirement with five COHS scholarships for the 2017/2018 fiscal year, which were fully funded by Fremont Bank Foundation.

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **02/27/2018** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: John Gioia, District I
Supervisor
Candace Andersen, District II
Supervisor
Diane Burgis, District III
Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV
Supervisor

ABSENT: Federal D. Glover, District V
Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: February 27, 2018

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: June McHuen, Deputy

Contact: Walt Beveridge
925-608-7730

cc:

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

COHS was founded in early 2010 and accredited as the world's first online private school in February 2011. COHS is accredited by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission, which provides nationally recognized accreditation for school districts and individual schools and represents 32,000 public and private schools and districts throughout the United States and in 70 countries worldwide.

The Library's program, which launched in September 2016, has so far provided scholarships to 13 qualified adult learners, three of whom have graduated. In order to receive and secure a scholarship, applicants completed several steps (on a first-come, first-qualified basis):

1. Complete an online self-assessment
2. Enroll in and complete a prerequisite career course within two weeks
3. Complete a personal interview with Contra Costa County Library staff
4. Complete two additional career courses within 30 days

Once these steps are completed, the scholarship is final and the applicant has 18 months to complete their coursework and graduate.

The hope is to continue the COHS program at a modest level each year until there are success metrics to share. Since scholarship recipients have up to 18 months to complete their coursework, there will not be results until near the end of this rather long cycle. Once CCCL is able to show positive metrics, including more skilled graduates introduced into the local workforce, we will be in a position to pursue long-term, sustainable funding for the program.

Other libraries throughout the state (44 in California) and country have offered COHS with good results. Since February 2012, approximately 6,200 students have enrolled in the program with a retention rate of approximately 66% - 72%.

COHS is a remarkable opportunity for adults who want to earn their high school diploma and enhance their career opportunities, but who have scheduling, transportation, or child care challenges that preclude them from attending an in-person class. All recipients also cited their inability to handle the expense of other on-line programs. One COHS graduate was honored at the 1/23/2018 Board of Supervisors meeting. Here is what she had to say about this opportunity: "I have long been ashamed of myself for dropping out of high school, and wanted to set a better example for my child. I learned a great deal."

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the proposal is not approved, the Library will not be able to offer and provide access to Career Online High School to qualified county residents/adult learners.