

SUSPENSION



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

April 25, 2016

The Honorable Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street-Fourth Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Authorization to enter into a contract to continue college-wide rollout of the Early Warning Software System, Starfish by Hobsons

Honorable Members:

Attached is a proposed resolution and accompanying memorandum from Erie Community College (ECC) requesting authorization to enter into a contract with Starfish by Hobsons. The ECC Board of Trustees, at its meeting of March 23, 2016 meeting, approved this contract.

Thank you for your consideration of the attached. If your Honorable Body requires any further information, kindly contact Ben Packer, Erie Community College Executive Vice President for Student Affairs at 851-1102, email packer@ecc.edu, or our office, and we will be happy to accommodate your request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark C. Poloncarz", written over a horizontal line.

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

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MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Ben Packer, Executive Vice President for Student Affairs-Erie Community College
Re: Authorization for a Contract for Starfish by Hobsons for Erie Community College
Date: April 6, 2016

Summary

It is recommended that the Erie County Legislature authorize a contract with Starfish by Hobsons in order for ECC to continue its college-wide rollout of its early warning system. The software is designed to help facilitate communications between faculty and staff concerning at-risk students. Faculty and staff are able to raise concerns and understand a student's level of risk based upon a formula of predicative analytics, a non-cognitive assessment, and observable behaviors exhibited. This ensures a more timely and tailored response to the students who need it the most. The program will assist in the persistence (semester to semester), retention (year to year), and graduation rates of ECC students.

Fiscal Implications

The vendor expense will be no more than \$58,200. The cost includes \$3,000 for a PDF insert that will host an academic improvement plan for probation students, \$3,000 for twenty professional service hours, \$32,200 for the early warning software that supports a user band between 8,000- 15,000 students, and \$20,000 for predictive analytics. ECC has adequate funds available in its operating budget to fund this expense.

Reasons for Recommendation

The software will help ECC students by providing early interventions to at-risk students and will further aid in student success. It is expected that persistence, retention and graduation rates, all key benchmarks in ECC and SUNT Excels, will all increase through the use of this early warning system. The first tangible persistence results will be known at the conclusion of the current spring semester after grades are posted and retention results will be known once the fall 2016 semester begins.

The ECC Board of Trustees can only approve contracts up to \$50,000. The original contract was approved by the ECC Board of Trustees February 26, 2015. This contract is a continuation of the previously approved contract that was under \$50,000.

Background Information

Starfish by Hobsons will allow ECC to provide tailored and timely interventions to at-risk students. The early warning program will further support the mission of the college by connecting students to the individuals and services that aid in the student's success at ECC.

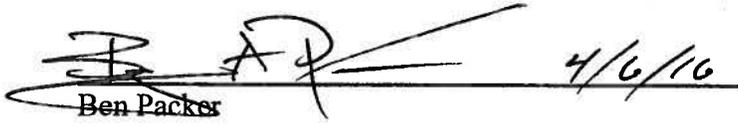
Consequences of Negative Action

Without this service, the persistence, retention, and graduation rates would be adversely impacted.

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Steps Following Approval

Certified copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Erie County Executive, President of Erie Community College, and the Chair of the ECC Board of Trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "B. Packer", is written over a horizontal line. To the right of the signature, the date "4/6/16" is handwritten.

Ben Packer

Executive Vice President for Student Affairs
Erie Community College

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ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE-PROPOSED RESOLUTION

Erie Community College Authorization for a contract with Starfish by Hobsons

WHEREAS; The Erie Community College Board of Trustees approved Starfish by Hobsons as a vendor after a RFP process at their February 26 , 2015 Board Meeting; and

WHEREAS; Starfish by Hobsons was the firm approved with a maximum contract price not to exceed \$58,200 for the second year which is the SUNY/NYS pricing; and

WHEREAS; the Erie County Legislature must approve contracts in excess of \$50,000 for the College; and

WHEREAS; Starfish by Hobsons will continue to assist Erie Community College with the integration of an early warning software program to provide tailored interventions with at-risk students, thereby improving the persistence, retention and graduation rates of students; and

WHEREAS; Starfish by Hobsons was chosen as the provider for an early warning software program. The software was implemented in the fall of 2015 with a pilot group of approximately 2600 students. Plans for college-wide implementation will occur in the fall of 2016. Participation in the early warning program will assist students in receiving timely and more holistic services to increase their chances of academic success.

WHEREAS; ECC has adequate operating funds available to fund this expense.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED; that the Erie County Legislature hereby approves awarding a contract to Starfish by Hobsons for the purpose of the integration of an early warning system for Erie Community College students at a cost to the college not to exceed \$58,200; and be it further

RESOLVED, the President is authorized to enter a contract with Starfish by Hobsons for the above mentioned services, and be it further

RESOLVED, that copies of the resolution be forwarded to the Erie County Executive, the President of ECC, and the Chairman of the ECC Board of Trustees.