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To: Linus J. Guillory, Jr., Ph.D., Chief Schools Officer
From: Abigail Anderson
RE: WestEd Research Study Proposal
Date: February 12, 2021

WestEd, in partnership with the University of Massachusetts Amherst (UMass), is conducting an independent research study of an online math tutoring platform for sixth grade math classrooms. Funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (R305A190256), the Personalized Affective Learning Study will investigate the impact of using the MathSpring platform for 6th grade math instruction on teacher practices and student achievement. MathSpring is a free, research-based, online platform that students use to practice math in topic areas selected by a teacher. WestEd is proposing to lead a randomized control trial study to test whether MathSpring improves student outcomes related to learning and attitudes toward math that will be for the 2021-22 school year and run through December 31, 2023.

Teachers who wish to participate in this study will be randomly assigned to either the "immediate use" treatment group or the "delayed use" control group. Professional development will be provided and the use of MathSpring will be given to teachers of the treatment group for the 2021-22 School Year. Teachers that are assigned to the control group will use their existing math instructional and homework practices for the 2021-22 School Year and then may begin to use MathSpring in the following year (2022-23).

Data that will be collected will be in the form of principal and teacher interviews, teacher surveys, and classroom observations. Student demographic data, school enrollment and attendance records, and assessment data will also be collected. The district already utilizes these data so there are no additional lifts that will be needed. Teachers in both groups will receive stipends in recognition of their participation.

The work conforms with Policy LC. I recommend approval by the school committee.