

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

October 23, 2026

SUBJECT:

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) John Deere Grant Application – Elementary STEM and Science Education Expansion

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Aiken County Public School District seeks approval to submit a \$35,000 grant application through the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) John Deere Grant Program to strengthen fourth-grade science instruction across the district's 21 elementary schools.

The proposed initiative will focus on implementing PLTW Launch to provide fourth-grade students with engaging, hands-on science learning experiences aligned with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Science Standards. Through inquiry-based investigations, engineering design challenges, and collaborative problem-solving activities, students will have opportunities to explore scientific concepts, apply their knowledge, and develop critical-thinking skills.

Grant funding will support professional development for fourth-grade teachers, along with the purchase of instructional equipment and materials necessary to implement PLTW Launch activities. Professional learning will prepare teachers to facilitate hands-on investigations, integrate engineering and scientific practices into daily instruction, and effectively use the instructional resources to support student learning.

Implementation across all 21 elementary schools will expand equitable access to high-quality science learning experiences, strengthen teachers' instructional capacity, and support student understanding of essential science concepts assessed through the fourth-grade SC READY Science assessment.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Division of Instruction has evaluated the goals and objectives and finds them to be consistent with district educational goals.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the submission of the Project Lead The Way John Deere Grant Application in the amount of \$35,000 to support the Elementary STEM and Science Education Expansion Initiative and, if awarded, authorize the acceptance and expenditure of grant funds in accordance with district policies and grant requirements.

PREPARED BY

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