Approval of Contract in Excess of $2,000,000

Vendor: D2L - Desire2Learn

Item: Brightspace Learning Management System

Contract Period: September 2019 – August 2024

Amount: $4,084,550

Campus: Entire Purdue System:
West Lafayette, Purdue Fort Wayne, Purdue Northwest, and Purdue Global

Source of Funds: $6.4M in existing LMS budgets at each campus (resulting in $2.3M in software savings for Purdue System)

Remarks:

A learning management system (LMS) is software for delivering and managing courses. The LMS is now a ubiquitous digital extension of the physical classroom for face-to-face courses, and provides the core of the classroom for online courses. Instructors use the LMS to organize a course; communicate with students; deliver content and feedback, manage and grade assignments, conduct student learning analytics and more. For students, the LMS is an essential tool for their course engagement and success. Virtually every course in the Purdue University system utilizes an LMS.

The Purdue system currently has three LMS contracts with two different vendors. The West Lafayette and Northwest campuses are nearing the end of a contract with Blackboard Learn (initiated in 2012); Fort Wayne has a separate contract with Blackboard Learn; and Purdue Global uses Desire2Learn Brightspace. Blackboard Learn is an aging, "on premise" technology that lacks major functionality, such as mobile-device compatibility, and is being phased out by Blackboard in favor of new products. The opportunity exists to unify the Purdue system on one cloud-based product and acquire the required functionality necessary for the Online Education and Transformative Education Purdue Moves.

A year-long, comprehensive system-wide review and case study-based RFP process incorporated input from over 1200 faculty, staff, and students to evaluate three RFP respondents. D2L Brightspace outscored all other vendors in academic, technical, and cost assessments. Brightspace provides an intuitive teaching and learning environment that is agnostic to device type and has advanced features, including learning analytics and "intelligent agents" for communication with students.

Based on existing contracts, the Purdue system will spend $6.4M on LMS product costs over the next five years. The proposed system-wide contract with a single vendor, D2L, will result in software costs savings of $2.3M for the Purdue system. Hardware costs are expected to be flat or decrease with the transition to a cloud-based solution from the current on premise installs of the Blackboard products. Personnel expenses and other direct and indirect costs are not expected to increase with implementation of the new product, given LMS support resources available for the existing systems. Course transition costs (one-time) to the new LMS for IT and academic support across the Purdue system are expected to be approximately $2.5M and be covered by reallocation of existing ITaP, Teaching Learning Technologies (Purdue Online), and college/regional campus resources, and from software cost savings (if needed).