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## BOARD AGENDA ITEM

Information/Discussion\_\_\_\_\_

Future Action\_\_\_\_\_

Action \_\_\_\_X\_\_\_\_

Item: Approval of MEERA Lab Purchases

Submitted by: James Hisson

Date: 07/13/2026

Recommended by: Ron Gorman

Board Meeting Date: 07/20/2026

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### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board approve the purchase agreements with TECHnista for the purchase of two (2) MEERA lab equipment packages at a cost of \$195,000 each (\$390,000 total), along with annual MEERA subscription services for each lab at \$12,000 per lab (\$24,000 total), for a combined authorization amount not to exceed \$414,000.

### BACKGROUND:

In June, Kent ISD received notification that it was awarded a \$750,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education through a Fiscal Year 2026 Congressionally Funded Community Project (CFCP) request submitted through the office of Senator Gary Peters. The purpose of the grant is to advance the goals of Kent ISD's CareerPrep 2030 initiative by expanding access to high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) and CTE-like programming across the region. The proposed MEERA equipment and subscription purchases were included in the approved federal grant application and will be fully funded through this award.

Manufacturing and Engineering Education Reimagined for All (MEERA) is an innovative middle school program to expand student access to advanced manufacturing and engineering education through industry-aligned equipment, curriculum, and educator professional learning.

Kent ISD has established a strong partnership with MEERA through previous grant funding that supported the development of a regional MEERA Training Center on the Kent ISD campus. This training center already serves as a regional resource for educator professional learning and supports the implementation of MEERA programming throughout West Michigan.

During the 2025–26 school year, several Kent ISD constituent districts expressed interest in implementing the MEERA program and applied for funding through the State of Michigan's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Expansion Grant Program. Due to the competitive nature of the program, not all interested districts received awards.

The districts selected to participate through this federal grant (Kelloggsville and Northview) are those that demonstrated readiness by applying to the state CTE Expansion Grant Program but were not selected for funding.

The requested approval includes two MEERA Lab Equipment Agreements with TECHnista at \$195,000 each (\$390,000 total) and annual MEERA subscription services for each laboratory at \$12,000 per lab (\$24,000 total). The subscriptions provide ongoing access to curriculum updates, software, technical support, and instructional resources necessary to maintain the functionality of each laboratory. The grant will support two years of the subscriptions for each participating district, at which point the districts will then need to cover these costs moving forward.

The total amount requested for Board approval is \$414,000. All expenditures will be funded through the FY26 Congressionally Funded Community Project award, and no local funds are required.