

Committee:	Date:
Finance Committee	17 February 2015
Subject: City University Maths Project: Release of year-three funding	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision

In 2011 only 31% of pupils at the City of London Academy Islington (COLAI) gained 5 or more GCSE passes (grades A* to C). This placed the school in the lowest 100 performing schools in England for 2011. City University therefore applied for three-year funding to run a project that would utilise City University's expertise in mathematics to improve the standards of numeracy and maths at the Academy.

In August 2012 the Finance Committee agreed, under urgency powers, to award City University with a three-year grant of £181,000 to undertake a maths programme with the City of London Academy Islington (COLAI). Following the first year, funding for subsequent years was conditional on an annual evaluation report being submitted. The year 1 evaluation report was submitted to the Finance Committee in May 2014; the year 2 evaluation is appended to this report.

Key aspects of this project have been to offer an introduction to teaching for the undergraduate students and to encourage them to consider a career in the profession. As set out in the report and the attached monitoring report, this has been very successful and the City of London/City University/ Academy project (for providing undergraduate student tutors to support Maths) has been shortlisted for a NEON Award.**

The 2014 summer examination results were the best the Academy has ever had, with 70% of students achieving the highest grades of 5 A*-C passes, including English and Mathematics. This achievement has led to the Academy being recognised as one of the most improved schools in the country.

The project has been delivered well and within budget for 2013/14 and this has enabled the request for the final year of funding to be reduced substantially to the sum of £25,000 (rather than £57,000 as originally envisaged) without compromising on a successful set of outcomes.

Deliverables for 2014/15 will include the provision of 5 undergraduate student tutors to support the Academy in English (as well as in Mathematics). City University, London have confirmed their plans to continue to support the delivery of this work after the completion of the 3rd and final year of funding from the City of London Corporation. The evaluation report, at Appendix 1, has also been signed off by the Project Steering Group. This group comprises members of staff from the Academy and a representative from the City of London Corporation.

*** (NEON is the professional organisation supporting those involved in widening access to higher education (HE).)*

Recommendation:

That the Finance Committee continues to support the project through the award of £25,000 for the final year (2014/15).

Main Report

Background

1. In 2011, only 31% of pupils at the City of London Academy Islington (COLAI) gained 5 or more GCSE passes (grades A* to C). This placed the Academy in the lowest 100 performing schools in England for 2011. City University therefore applied for three-year funding to run a project that would utilise City University's expertise in mathematics, in order to improve the standards of numeracy and maths at the Academy.
2. The City of London Academy, Islington, is an 11 to 19 school. 58% of Academy students are boys, 57% receive free school meals, 69% are from ethnic minorities and 20% are "statemented" or on School Action Plus. The highest proportion of special needs students are those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and the levels of deprivation experienced are approximately 2.5 times the national average. Typically, students enter the Academy with prior attainment levels significantly below national averages (the percentage of low attainers is approximately twice the national average and consistently around 36%).
3. Notwithstanding these challenges, the Academy's vision is to be 'outstanding' and it's sponsors are significant stakeholders in the Academy's transformation to realise this vision. The City of London Corporation and City University London are co-sponsors of COLAI. The University values their work with the Academy as a key part of their commitment to make a difference to the local community in Islington.

Current Position

4. An evaluation report covering the 2nd year of the Project (2013/14) is provided with this report. Over this period, the University advertised, recruited and deployed 20 undergraduate student tutors who successfully applied for the project. Under the direction of Academy teaching staff, student tutors worked with groups of pupils from years 7, 10 and 11, as follows:
 - **Year 7:** Pupils were tutored in groups of 4 to 6 during timetabled lessons. Pupils were set tasks by Academy teaching staff which they completed with the help of their tutors.
 - **Year 10:** Tutors adopted the role of teaching assistants in Mathematics lessons to support, answer questions and assist in solving problems.
 - **Year 11:** Pupils received one-to-one tutoring in March and April before their GCSE examinations. These sessions were crucial in helping with

revision and examination preparation. In addition, the project provided a Mathematics residential weekend prior to mock examinations.

Teach First delivered the following 3 sessions for student tutors.

- Tutoring and Mentoring:
 - Effective Teaching Skills and Behaviour
 - Assessment in the Classroom
5. The project continues to be overseen by a stakeholder Steering Group which meets regularly to review progress and provide guidance. The Steering group has representation from the Academy and the City of London Corporation.
 6. The 2014 summer examination results were the best the Academy has ever had. GCSE results doubled from 2012 to 2013 - and the 2014 results are higher still, with 70% of students achieving the highest grades of 5 A*-C passes including English and Mathematics. The achievement has led to the Academy being recognised as one of the most improved schools in the country.
 7. Feedback demonstrates that the project made a significant impact in building confidence and enthusing Academy pupils towards studies in Mathematics. Over 80% of Academy pupils engaged on the project reported that City University student tutors had improved their understanding of Mathematics and helped them to achieve more in their studies. The City of London/City University/ Academy project (providing undergraduate student tutors to support maths) has been shortlisted for a NEON Award. **

Financial Implications

8. The original application for support requested funding for a three year period (**Year 1 = 64k; year 2 = 60k and year 3 = 57k**). This was approved, in principle, subject to good progress demonstrated through annual review (the submission of an annual evaluation). To date, the following funding has been allocated to the Project:

Year 1: (covering 2012/13) = £64,000

Year 2: (covering 2013/14) = £60,000

9. This funding has covered the costs in the recruitment and deployment of student tutors; support from the University's Centre for Mathematics; project management and project materials. The funding has enabled the project to deliver a significant set of outcomes.
10. The project has been able to deliver well within budget for 2013/14 and this has enabled the request for the final year of funding to be reduced substantially to the sum of £25,000 (rather than £57,000 as originally envisaged) without any dilution in the range of support for pupils. Deliverables for 2014/15 will also include the provision of 5 undergraduate student tutors to

support the Academy in English (as well as in Mathematics). This development is fully supported by the City of London Corporation's representative on the Steering Group and is a natural extension of their work.

Proposals

11. City University are seeking the second tranche of funding, at the substantially reduced sum of £25,000.

Conclusion

12. The evaluation report shows that the project has been able to deliver well within budget for 2013/14 and this has enabled the request for the final year of funding to be reduced substantially to the sum of £25,000 (rather than £57,000 originally envisaged) without any dilution in the range of support for pupils. The City University, London recognises the value of this initiative and plans to continue to support the delivery of this work after the completion of the 3rd and final year of funding from the City of London Corporation.

Appendix 1 - City University Mathematics Project – Evaluation: Year 2.

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