

For Immediate Release

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Board of Directors Approves Educational Partnership to Serve Wilkinsburg Secondary Students for the Start of the 2016-2017 School Year

PITTSBURGH October 28, 2015 – This evening the Board approved a Letter to Intent regarding the assignment of secondary students in the Wilkinsburg School District to the Pittsburgh Public Schools for the start of the 2016-2017 school year. Due to low enrollment, the Wilkinsburg School District announced it cannot provide the academic, extra-curricular and technology opportunities required to provide its students, in grades seven through twelve, the quality education they need. Approved last night by Wilkinsburg School Directors, the Letter of Intent creates an educational partnership to meet the needs of Wilkinsburg’s students and assigns students to Pittsburgh Westinghouse Academy 6-12.

“We want to thank both School Boards for their decision to support a cross-district partnership that serves both districts well and provides a better educational program for Wilkinsburg’s seventh through twelfth grade students,” said Pittsburgh Public Schools Superintendent Linda Lane. “Tonight’s vote provides the approval for both districts to work collaboratively to execute a thoughtful and deliberate transition plan that will allow multiple opportunities for board, family and community input.”

Letter of Intent

Following several months of discussion and opportunities for community feedback, the Letter of Intent includes 18 terms that consider financial and academic factors, programs and services, transportation and student assignment.

As part of the agreement, Wilkinsburg School District students, in accordance with Section 1607 of the Public School Code, in grades seven through twelve will be assigned by Wilkinsburg School District to attend Pittsburgh Westinghouse Academy 6-12, on a tuition basis paid by the Wilkinsburg School District. Additional terms include that Wilkinsburg students (Grades 7-12) will:

- Be fully eligible for all curriculum, instruction, alternative education services, career and technical education and co-curricular and extra-curricular activities available to resident students of Pittsburgh Public Schools
- Have the opportunity to enroll in the various Magnet School offerings in the same manner, and subject to the same requirements, as all resident students of the Pittsburgh Public Schools beginning with the 2017-2018 school year; (During the first year of the agreement in 2016-17, when Wilkinsburg students, shall be enrolled in Westinghouse and may apply for admission to a magnet school or program the following year.)
- Receive preparation for and be administered all mandated and optional standardized tests, with scores of Wilkinsburg students on State assessments attributed to the Pittsburgh Public Schools and provided to Wilkinsburg; and
- Follow the Pittsburgh Public Schools calendar.

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Wilkinsburg School District will be responsible for providing transportation for all Wilkinsburg School District students enrolled in Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Transition Planning

In order for Wilkinsburg School District and Pittsburgh Public Schools cross district partnership to be successful, it is essential that there is a smooth transition between the Wilkinsburg High School students in grades 7-12 and Pittsburgh Westinghouse students in grades 6-12. Both districts are committed to working collaboratively to execute a thoughtful transition plan that improves academic performance and ensures the safety and security of both Wilkinsburg and Westinghouse students and staff through four key strategies:

- Transition activities for students, families, staff and the community
- Resources to enhance academic programming, student support services and student safety
- Training and development of students and staff
- Dedicated staff responsible for supporting students during this transition

“The next nine months will be used to develop and execute a transition plan,” said Superintendent Linda Lane. “As we plan we will provide regular reports to the Board publically.”

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