

June 18, 2026

26-095

AUTHORIZATION TO CONTRACT WITH HILLSBORO AERO  
ACADEMY FOR FLIGHT TRAINING

PREPARED BY: Michael Mathews, Executive Director, Strategic Procurement & Contracting

FINANCIAL  
RESPONSIBILITY: Karen Paez, Associate Vice President, Academic and Career Pathways

APPROVED BY: Dr. Katy Ho, Acting President

STRATEGIC THEME: Holistic Student Support: Integrated, Affordable, and Accessible; Academic Excellence: Student Success, Delivery, and Programming; Community Engagement: Workforce, Education, and Industry Alignment

REPORT: Portland Community College's Aviation Science Professional Pilot program contracts with a flight training provider to deliver the practical flight instruction required for students to attain FAA Commercial Pilot and Flight Instructor certificates with Instrument ratings. On May 20, 2021, the Board approved Resolution 21-170, authorizing a contract with Hillsboro Aero Academy for three academic years, with the option to renew annually for two additional years, for a total of five years, through June 2026.

The College intends to award a new, multi-year contract for flight training services through a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP), issued under ORS 279B.060. Preparing a solicitation for services of this kind takes significant time, because the specifications must address FAA Part 141 certification, aircraft, certificated instructor staffing, facility and airport access, and continuity of student training records. The competitive process cannot be completed before currently enrolled students would experience a break in instruction. To prevent that break, the College seeks authority to enter a short-term interim contract with a qualified Part 141 provider, Hillsboro Aero Academy, while the competitive solicitation is performed.

## **Findings**

ORS 279B.085(4) permits the LCRB to approve a special procurement if it finds that the procurement (a) is unlikely to encourage favoritism in the awarding of public contracts or to substantially diminish competition for public contracts, and (b) either is reasonably expected to result in substantial cost savings, or otherwise substantially promotes the public interest in a manner that could not practicably be realized by complying with the ordinary source selection methods. The following findings support approval.

Finding (a): The special procurement is unlikely to encourage favoritism or to substantially diminish competition.

The interim contract is narrow and temporary. It is limited to a single award for a period not to exceed twelve months, and it exists solely to maintain an active instructional program while the College prepares a competitive solicitation. It does not foreclose competition for the substantive opportunity. The College is committed to awarding the ongoing, multi-year contract through a competitive Request for Proposals under ORS 279B.060, so competition for that contract is preserved in full.

The interim award does not give the selected provider an unfair advantage in the forthcoming competition. Award of the interim contract reflects only the practical reality that a Part 141 and Part 61 provider already positioned to instruct the currently enrolled students can do so without a disruptive gap, and that reality ends when the competitive award is made.

Finding (b): The special procurement substantially promotes the public interest in a manner that could not practicably be realized through the ordinary source selection methods.

Flight instruction under 14 CFR Part 141 follows a structured, FAA-approved syllabus with sequential lessons and periodic stage checks. Part 61 is a flexible, customizable approach. A student's progress, training records, and certificate eligibility are tied to the certificated provider delivering the instruction. If flight instruction were suspended while the College conducted a full competitive solicitation, currently enrolled students would be stopped mid-syllabus.

The harm to students from such a gap would be significant. Students would face delayed completion of their certificates and

degrees, disruption of FAA training continuity, and the possible loss of a term of enrollment. A break in enrollment can also affect financial aid satisfactory academic progress, which a substantial number of flight students rely on. These harms fall directly on students and, through them, on the public interest in an uninterrupted, accredited training program.

A competitive solicitation for services of this complexity cannot be completed before that harm would occur. Conducting full competition during the interim period is therefore not practicable, because doing so would impose the very interruption the interim contract is intended to prevent. The special procurement also protects the integrity of the eventual competition: it allows the College to prepare and conduct a deliberate, well-specified Request for Proposals rather than a rushed one, which serves the public interest in a sound long-term award.

For these reasons, the special procurement is unlikely to encourage favoritism or to substantially diminish competition, and it substantially promotes the public interest in a manner that could not practicably be realized by complying with the requirements of ORS 279B.055, 279B.060, 279B.065, or 279B.070.

No COBID-certified firms have been identified as providing this service.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board of Directors authorize a contract-specific special procurement to award a single interim contract for flight training services to Hillsboro Aero Academy, for a term not to exceed twelve months, in an amount not to exceed \$750,000, without conducting one of the competitive source selection methods for the interim period only. The College will conduct full competition for the ongoing, long-term services.

Costs for the resultant contract are paid directly by students.