

Pittsburgh career and technical education programs get financial boost

June 13, 2015 12:06 AM

By Eleanor Chute / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Pittsburgh Public Schools is considering adding a public safety program to its career and technical education offerings, which received a \$150,000 boost from the American Federation of Teachers Innovation Fund.

The money will help pay for a counselor to promote career and technical education and goes along with plans to add a public safety program to the offerings, if approved by the school board.

The district discontinued a public safety program at the former Pittsburgh Peabody High School years ago.

Thursday's AFT announcement of the "Promising Pathways" program included public schools in three other AFT-affiliated areas: Peoria, Ill.; San Francisco and Miami. Together, the four are sharing \$500,000.

"We want to make sure that all of our students are workforce ready and career ready and college ready," Nina Esposito-Visgitis, president of the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers, said.

Angela Mike, executive director of career and technical education in Pittsburgh Public Schools, said the district has 550 students in 21 programs and is looking to expand.

She said the new public safety program, which could begin in fall 2016, would be aimed at students who want to become police officers, firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

It would be a three-year program, beginning in 10th grade. It could have room for about 40 to 50 students in the first year. In subsequent years, it could grow by 20 to 25 each year.

The public safety program would be at Pittsburgh Allderdice High School but open to students throughout the city.

In a news release, Mayor Bill Peduto praised the initiative, saying, "We can create a pipeline into meaningful careers for the youth of our city."

First Published June 11, 2015 3:22 PM