Excitement, support, and experience would all promote growing local teachers

Motivation
In 2020-21, a record-low 4,220 certifications (licensures) were awarded, down from 16,000+ in 2012-2013. Creating a college-in-high school program for teacher education courses would provide a solution: low-SES students at a rural partner school would take a university-sanctioned introduction to education course, get university credit/Pitt transcription, and be supported to pursue teaching.

Project Description
Research on “Growing Your Own Teachers” (GYOT) is robust and indicates the strength of such programs in developing teachers. Recommended practices include strong school-university partnerships, community-based recruitment, mentoring, field experiences, and community building. These elements are built into our program.

It “broadens our academic opportunities to include more nontraditional students and settings”, allowing for lower SES students to take advantage of college-in-high school programs; it “extends networks and supports to help students graduate on time, secure meaningful employment, and realize early career success.”

Context
This program takes a team effort, with each member contributing knowledge. This introductory course will be applicable for high school students who want to teach early childhood (PK-4), secondary (7-12), Spanish (PK-12) or special education (PK-12), which are the programs Pitt-Greensburg offers, and meets Pennsylvania Department of Education competencies.

Project Deliverables
• Present formal proposal to School Board
• Select teacher with support of principal and superintendent
• Build out training and curriculum for school administration
• Meet with and maintain engagement with parents, students and school counselors
• Determine specific needs/supplies for class/room
• Open student registration and complete teacher training

Potential Impact
Once the program is set up and supported, it would be self-sustaining thereafter.

If it is as successful as we hope, we would add a second class (e.g., Introduction to psychology, which may appeal to an even greater number of students and is mandated for education majors, usually in their first semester.)

Further, once this program is shown to work in a cost effective way at one local district, we could look into expanding it to other districts with which we currently work. Overall, implementing a sustainable and expandable Grow-Your-Own-Teacher program is exciting and very necessary.

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