

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has an interest in the health, welfare and development of all residents in the community; and

WHEREAS, the success of Austin's schools is critical to the long-term health, welfare, and prosperity of the entire community; and

WHEREAS, City Council passed Resolution No. 20110217-048 asking the city manager to look into partnership opportunities with the Austin Independent School District (AISD); and

WHEREAS, Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) builds a foundation of academic and social skills needed for school success through group and individual activities; and

WHEREAS, Pre-K participation has been demonstrated to advance literacy, communication and social skills as well as nurture creativity, curiosity and problem solving; and

WHEREAS, children who participate in Pre-K are less likely to be retained or need special education services during Kindergarten through 12th grade and have higher graduation rates and higher wages as an adult; and

WHEREAS, State funding is provided to districts to offer Pre-K at no cost to parents if they meet at least one of several criteria including:

- low family income,
- English language learner,
- foster care or Child Protective Services custody,
- homeless or migrant,
- child of an active duty member of the armed forces or child of a member injured or killed while in active duty; and

WHEREAS, Central Texas has seen a dramatic increase in child poverty, increasing 121% between the year 2000 and 2012 and only 53% of Central Texas Students were evaluated to be ready for Kindergarten according to an a recent E3 Alliance *Ready, Set K!* study; and

WHEREAS, currently 3 out of 4 low income children attend district high quality Pre-K, but the families of the remaining eligible 4-year olds, approximately 1,900 in number, have been challenging for the school district to effectively outreach with, identify and enroll; and

WHEREAS, the School Readiness Action Plan has been adopted as way of coordinating government, non-profit and community agents to work towards common goals like the alignment of early childhood efforts and Pre-K instruction;
NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City of Austin endorses the work of local area non-profits in their Pre-K enrollment efforts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to coordinate communication efforts through existing resources to assist AISD and other community organizations in their enrollment of Pre-Kindergarten for the 2014-2015 school year. The communication effort should include, at minimum:

- referrals through information services such as 2-1-1 or 3-1-1,
- posting of literature in libraries, community centers and other city locations used by families with young children,
- referrals through programs that currently conduct income verification,
- referrals through programs that currently interact with low-income or limited English language proficiency families such as Women, Infants

and Children (WIC) assistance, youth development services and Fresh Food for Families.

The council finds for the reasons stated above that these efforts will serve a municipal purpose of the City.

The City Manager should report back to the Early Childhood Council and Austin City Council within 90 days regarding the efforts taken, their impact and future opportunities for enrollment assistance in future school years.

ADOPTED: _____

ATTEST: _____

Jeannette S. Goodall
City Clerk