



## Recommendation for Action

**File #:** 19-2831, **Agenda Item #:** 46.

9/19/2019

### **Posting Language**

Authorize negotiation and execution of a first amendment to an interlocal agreement with Austin Independent School District for the provision of startup costs for up to five new Pre-Kindergarten classrooms to expand affordable early childcare options for Austin residents in an amount not to exceed \$80,000.

### **Lead Department**

Austin Public Health.

### **Fiscal Note**

Funding in the amount of \$80,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Austin Public Health Department's Operating Budget.

### **Prior Council Action:**

February 21, 2019 - Council approved an interlocal agreement with Austin Independent School District for the provision of startup costs for up to five new Pre-Kindergarten classrooms to expand affordable high quality early care and education options for Austin residents for a seven-month term in an amount not to exceed \$80,000, on an 11-0 vote.

### **For More Information:**

Stephanie Hayden, Director, 512-972-5010; Donna Sundstrom, Assistant Director 512-972-5038; Lucy Thompson, Agenda Coordinator 972-5045.

### **Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:**

April 11, 2018 - The Early Childhood Council recommended all items for Council Consideration developed by the Work Group responding to Council Resolution 20170928-057, which included to, "Leverage up to \$112,000 in State funding per classroom per year by investing in one-time startup costs associated with setting up new Pre-K 3 classrooms, including up to eight classrooms in Austin Independent School District and up to three classrooms in Pflugerville Independent School District."

May 2, 2019 - The Early Childhood Council recommended Council keep \$128,000 in the City's Fiscal Year 2019-2020 budget to provide area school districts start-up costs to open eight new Pre-K classrooms in Austin.

### **Additional Backup Information:**

On September 28, 2017, City Council approved Resolution No. 20170928-057 (Resolution), which directed the compilation of information related to community data, equity gaps, and potential policies and resources that could provide opportunities to expand existing affordable high-quality childcare services and access to Pre-K. One of the twelve deliverables was to consider the availability of Pre-K programs and provide funding options for start-up costs to expand Pre-K programs in the Austin Independent School District (Austin ISD) and surrounding school districts that enroll Austin children.

As part of the efforts to respond to the Resolution, Austin Public Health and community work group members worked with school districts that served Austin children to determine current Pre-K services and gauge

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capacity for potential expansion opportunities for Pre-K. Council previously authorized the negotiation and execution of an interlocal agreement with Austin ISD for the provision of startup costs for up to five new Pre-Kindergarten classrooms to expand affordable high- quality early care and education options for Austin residents for a seven-month term in an amount not to exceed \$80,000. Approval of the first amendment to this interlocal agreement would allow Austin ISD to add up to five additional Pre-K classrooms in the amount of \$80,000. Public Pre-K provides a dual benefit to families by serving as both free child care and early education for eligible children. Each investment of \$16,000 covers the start-up costs for a new Pre-K classroom. Once start-up costs are covered, Austin ISD will be able to cover the cost of the teacher by drawing down funding from the state. Each new classroom will be able to serve up to 32 children, 16 in the morning and 16 in the afternoon. The school district will draw down \$3,500 for each student served in the new classrooms.

Investing in Pre-K is aligned with the community's Success By 6 School Readiness Action Plan for Austin/Travis County for 2019-2023, which furthers the Early Childhood Education strategy related to Pre-K of increasing the number of eligible three and four-year old children enrolled in Public Pre-K in Travis County school districts and other high-quality early education settings.

According to the Texas Education Agency Pre-K Partnership Implementation Guide, "it is estimated that only five out of 10 children enter Texas kindergarten classrooms ready to learn and be successful in school. Therefore, half of our youngest learners may not have the ability to follow routines or multistep directions, sustain attention to a task, hold a book, identify letters and sounds, sequence ideas, take turns or sit up during circle time. Pre-kindergarten programs are vital for developing these skills and more." Additionally, "E3 Alliance found that, 'Central Texas students who participated in public school Pre-K or high-quality child care prior to school entry were much more likely to be prepared for kindergarten success.'"