

RESOLUTION NO. 20200507-058

WHEREAS, in the wake of COVID-19, the City of Austin has worked diligently alongside other governmental, nonprofit, and businesses to provide relief for unprecedented levels of food insecurity in our community; and

WHEREAS, since the pandemic, Austin Independent School District (AISD) has been consistently serving between 4,000 and 6,000 school-aged children approximately 8,000-12,000 meals per weekday at more than 70 sites across Austin; and

WHEREAS, student meals are reimbursable under the federal National School Meals program and are provided five days per week with a Friday pack that includes meals for the weekend; and

WHEREAS, the City's Food Access Working Group has received reports of caregivers splitting student meals in order to fill the gap created by the job and income loss they are experiencing due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, AISD and other Independent School Districts (ISDs) cannot receive reimbursement for meals provided to caregivers of students; and

WHEREAS, partnering with businesses to prepare caregiver meals would allow the City to support economic recovery efforts as well as fill the gap of food insecurity created by COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, City staff has contacted all of the ISDs within the City of Austin to gauge their interest and capacity to provide caregiver meals, should funding be identified; and

WHEREAS, the City has worked with the ISDs to identify businesses that are in need of economic support due to second-order effects of the COVID-19 emergency and that can begin meal preparation within one to two weeks; and

WHEREAS, providing caregiver meals along with student meals leverages school districts' existing investment in transportation and distribution; and

WHEREAS, AISD estimates that adult meals will cost approximately \$5 per meal and that approximately 6,000 adults could be served each day; and

WHEREAS, businesses would benefit from this funding, and this partnership assists the City's efforts to support economic recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Board of Agriculture has extended AISD's ability to provide emergency student meals until the end of June; and

WHEREAS, AISD and Del Valle Independent School District (DVISD) have confirmed its interest in such an arrangement; and

WHEREAS, AISD estimates that the cost to serve up to 6,000 caregivers per day until the end of June is approximately \$1.47 million if the program begins on May 11; and

WHEREAS, DVISD estimates that it could serve up to 20,000 adult meals a week and in consultation with Austin Public Health, the City estimates that cost for these meals could be up to \$700,000 if the program begins on May 11; and

WHEREAS, leveraging public dollars to scale-up existing community hubs that are providing essential, life-sustaining services to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic is critical; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL:

The Council authorizes the City Manager to allocate up to \$2.2 million of previously unbudgeted funding for caregiver meals to be delivered through AISD and DVISD's school meal distribution sites. The City Manager is authorized to implement this action by expanding existing contracts, executing new emergency contracts, or any other reasonable means. Funding for this allocation is pursuant to approval of the companion budget amendment.

The City Manager is directed to execute the agreements necessary to invest the emergency funding so that caregiver meal distribution can begin on May 11, 2020, if possible.

The City Manager is directed to submit these costs for reimbursement under the CARES Act, as applicable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to continue conversations with other Independent School Districts within the City of Austin limits to assess their interest in and need for caregiver meal distribution to connect with businesses in need of economic support due to second-order effects of the COVID-19 emergency. The City Manager is directed to provide City Council with information about these conversations by May 13, 2020, and, if appropriate, to

present Council with a proposed budget amendment for consideration. Should a budget amendment be approved by Council, the City Manager is directed to apply for reimbursement under the CARES Act, as applicable.

The City Manager is directed to discuss with Travis County the possibility of a similar partnership with school districts that fall outside of the City of Austin and within Travis County and to provide Council with a status update on this engagement.

ADOPTED: May 7, 2020

ATTEST:

 for
Jannette S. Goodall
Secretary