

**RESOLUTION NO. 20200729-089**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Austin Strategic Direction 2023 Plan, under the priority of Economic Opportunity and Affordability, identifies the burden of child care costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan identifies the need to “improve access to quality child care services near homes and workplaces”; and

**WHEREAS**, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, more than half of the child care programs in Austin that accept child care subsidies have closed and are not operating; and

**WHEREAS**, child care programs that remain open and operating child are facing impending closure due to increased operating costs associated with implementing health and safety protocols (such as additional staff to create smaller class sizes), reduced revenue due to reduced enrollment and attendance, and intermittent closures as a result of COVID-19 exposure; and

**WHEREAS**, child care programs that remain open and operating may have capacity to serve additional families, however the Austin/Travis County Workforce Board that manages the subsidy program currently has a waiting list of more than 2,000 children seeking child care subsidy; and

**WHEREAS**, the demand for child care subsidies and number of families eligible for subsidies is growing and expected to continue growing given the economic strain of the pandemic on our community; and

**WHEREAS**, the Essential Worker Child Care Subsidy is expected to be terminated imminently, which would result in additional loss of funding for child care and more families placed on the growing waiting list; and

**WHEREAS**, \$1 Million in funding already allocated by the City Council for the Austin Childcare Provider Relief Grant provides relief for economic loss from March to June, however the ongoing requirements for providing child care under current health and safety protocols will result in ongoing potential loss of revenue and increased expenses for all child care programs in Austin for the next 9-12 months; and

**WHEREAS**, the shortage of subsidy funds for child care disproportionately impacts children of color, whose parents and guardians disproportionately work in sectors that do not allow for remote work or work from home options, also increasing risk of COVID-19 exposure; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a need for accessible child care, supervision, and support options for children of working families for the duration of virtual instruction and possibly longer; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

The City Manager is directed collaborate with APH's Child Care working group to report on the state of child care and supervision and support for children and youth in our community and include actionable recommendations by August 13, 2020 to address the current and imminent challenges facing child care, and supervision, and support for children and youth brought about by COVID-19. Recommendations should include measures for stabilizing the local child care system as an essential component of the City's economic infrastructure, actions that may be taken by our community and local governments, as well as matters on which the City could press for action at the state and federal levels.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Should the use of City facilities such as libraries and recreation centers be helpful to local school districts and working families for the duration of virtual instruction and possibly longer due to COVID-19, the Manager is directed to collaborate with local school districts to make those facilities available when feasible.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

Recommendations should include an assessment of the viability of establishing a Child Care Stabilization Fund that may award immediate and

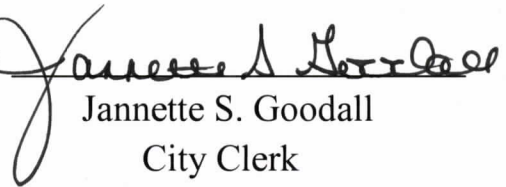
ongoing stabilization grants, and support other solutions to strengthen financial viability of the child care sector, and increase equitable access to quality child care.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

The Council further directs the City Manager to immediately implement recommendations from the report that may be enacted without Council approval.

**ADOPTED:** July 29, 2020

**ATTEST:**

  
Jannette S. Goodall  
City Clerk