



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 24-4133, Agenda Item #: 28.

3/21/2024

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of agreements with six agencies to provide early childhood services, including early childhood education, infant and early childhood services, and early childhood education quality improvement, for a 12-month term through March 30, 2025, and four 12-month extension options, each in an amount not to exceed \$2,670,433, for a total agreement amount not to exceed \$13,352,165 divided among the agencies.

Lead Department

Austin Public Health.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$1,335,217 is available in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Public Health Department Operating Budget. Funding for the remaining months of the current term and remaining terms is contingent upon available funding in future budgets.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

This action will authorize negotiation and execution of six agreements with six social service agencies for a 12-month term beginning on April 1, 2024.

The awarded agencies for the early childhood issue area will increase the number of individuals and families having access to direct childcare, quality early childhood education, parenting programs, quality improvement initiatives, and early childhood intervention services.

The agencies below were awarded agreements to provide these services and were scored as follows:

Agency	Score	12-month amount
Austin Child Guidance Center	86.73	\$138,560
VinCare Services of Austin	84.4	\$91,200
Any Baby Can of Austin	83.37	\$1,629,096
Mainspring Schools	80.28	\$68,000
Todos Juntos Learning Center	80.0	\$607,450
Rise Child Development Center	78.6	\$136,127

Austin Child Guidance Center will provide quality training to early childhood education staff that supports healthy child development, parental education that is culturally relevant and age appropriate, and promote

school readiness and improve the social and emotional health of at-risk children with lower income while reducing the rate of suspensions and expulsions of children ages zero to five.

Vincare Services of Austin d/b/a St. Louise House will provide quality care for children overcoming homelessness to single mothers with low-income. Services include direct care, parenting education, and wraparound support services to support successful caregiving and employment success for adults.

Any Baby Can of Austin, Inc will provide direct childcare, early childhood education, parenting education, early childhood intervention, and case management services. The purpose of these services is to enable children to reach their full potential, build nurturing and self-sufficient families and create and support a thriving Austin community.

Mainspring Schools will provide professional development opportunities to early childhood education teachers, enabling them to build skills and expertise in early childhood education.

Todos Juntos Learning Center will provide early childhood education to ensure Pre-K and Kindergarten readiness. The program focuses on parent-child togetherness to build parents' capacity to support healthy brain development, peer-to-peer support, and access to critical resources.

Rise Child Development Center will provide free or low-cost, short-term, culturally congruent, high-quality drop-in childcare, for Black mothers who are a part of the Black Mama's Village in Central Texas for children six weeks through age 5. Drop-in care is a back-up childcare option for parents when they need temporary, short-term care. The purpose of this program is to address barriers for Black mothers to obtain economic security, which is the lack of access to affordable and reliable childcare.

The agreements were awarded through Request for Proposal (RFP) 2023-006, Early Childhood, by analyzing community needs data from Travis County, the Community Health Assessment, and data from a survey distributed by Austin Public Health in English, Arabic, Korean, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, and Vietnamese and was closed on March 17, 2023. There were 112 responses received from the survey in English and Spanish. The most urgent need identified by respondents was access to high quality, affordable direct childcare.

The Early Childhood RFP was divided into five issue areas.

- 1) Provide affordable, high-quality Early Childhood Education (ECE).
- 2) Provide parental education that is culturally relevant and age appropriate.
- 3) Provide wraparound and support services to foster successful caregiving to ensure children are happy, healthy, and prepared for school-success.
- 4) Provide quality training to early childhood education staff that support responsive teacher-child interactions and other best-practices to promote healthy child development.
- 5) Provide family-friendly transportation to and from pre-natal, well-child, and other medically necessary appointments.

Austin Public Health sent solicitations to over 800 vendors and received 15 proposals. Of those proposals, six are recommended for award, each for a 12-month term and up to four 12-month extension options. The RFP evaluation process set criteria for uniform review of all applications by a separate and independent panel. An evaluation panel comprised of individuals with education and expertise in the given issue area rated each application. Evaluators agreed on the strengths and weaknesses of each application, and each application received a resultant score based on this process. The criteria for evaluation included the following: fiscal and administrative capacity, experience, and cultural competence/racial equity; program design and performance metrics; data-

informed program management; and cost effectiveness.