



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2020

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services for a 2020 Juvenile Justice System Improvement Title II Grant to Provide Mentoring Programs for Fourth and Fifth Grade Boys.

ISSUE: Consideration of a grant application to provide funding to the Court Service Unit to partner with the Capital Youth Empowerment Program in providing mentoring programs for minority and immigrant boys to build developmental assets and pro-social skills, reduce racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system and prevent juvenile crime.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the proposed grant application for \$75,000 in funding from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VDCJS); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The City of Alexandria plans to apply for a \$75,000 juvenile justice system improvement grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (VDCJS). The grant does not require a cash match.

DISCUSSION: The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) is making federal funds available for projects under the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act Title II Formula Grants Program from the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Eligible applicants under this solicitation are Virginia local units of government; community organizations may implement programs on behalf of the applicant locality at the discretion of the applicant locality.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention identified that youth mentoring - a consistent, pro-social relationship between an adult or older peer and one or more youth - can help support the positive development of youth. Mentoring has been shown <<http://www.crimesolutions.gov/PracticeDetails.aspx?ID=15>> to improve self-esteem, academic achievement, and peer relationships and reduce drug use, aggression, depressive symptoms, and delinquent acts.

Chaired by the Court Service Unit (CSU), the Alexandria Mentoring Partnership ensures that quality mentors and mentoring programs are available for Alexandria's youth in need; the Partnership works to maximize mentor recruitment, screening and training, and to ensure best practice programs. The CSU has managed the SOHO-Space of Her Own mentoring program for girls since 2002 and has piloted two mentoring programs for boys; collectively these programs have served 408 at-risk youth and 98 percent have not become court-involved. The Partnership and Alexandria City Public School administrators have identified the need for new mentoring programs for elementary boys, specifically at Jefferson Houston and Cora Kelly Elementary Schools.

The Capital Youth Empowerment Program has a record of success serving the Alexandria community, leading the Fathers in Touch parenting program since 2008 and the Project Success teen pregnancy prevention and HIV/AIDS risk reduction program, in partnership with the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy since 2014.

If approved, the City of Alexandria will serve as fiscal agent for this grant and will contract with Capital Youth Empowerment Program to provide services, under direction of the Court Service Unit and with support from the Alexandria Mentoring Partnership.

The proposed program will operate at Jefferson Houston and Cora Kelly Elementary Schools, serving a total of 24 boys, and will provide mentoring and build developmental assets and pro-social skills. The program will also help youth develop skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, providing experiential learning, technical skill development and career awareness.

FISCAL IMPACT: If approved, this grant will not require any new funds from the City.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF:

Debra Collins, Deputy City Manager
Joanna Anderson, City Attorney
Morgan Routt, Office of Management and Budget
Mike Mackey, Court Service Unit
Linda Odell, Court Service Unit
Vyvonne Dilbert, Court Service Unit
Candise Jones-Burks, Court Service Unit