



Legislation Text

File #: 59738, Version: 1

Fiscal Note

No additional City appropriation is required with accepting the 2020 Early Childhood Plan for the City of Madison. The Community Development Division's 2020 Adopted Operating Budget includes a new Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant position, which is included as a recommendation in the plan.

Title

Accepting the 2020 Early Childhood Plan for Madison

Body

BACKGROUND

In 2017, The City of Madison applied and was accepted into the National League of Cities (NLC) Early Childhood Network. The goal of the network is to better align local systems in early childhood with the support of NLC and other cities across the country. Early childhood is defined as birth to age eight in this context and encompasses many programs and resources that help families maintain stability such as child care, home visitation, parent education, parent crisis support, etc. A core group of early childhood stakeholders, led by the City of Madison's Community Development Division and United Way of Dane County, determined that a comprehensive plan for early childhood in Madison would serve to guide collective action.

ACTION

WHEREAS, in 2017, the City of Madison was selected by the National League of Cities (NLC) Early Childhood Network to join a collaboration network that aims to align local systems in early childhood across the country. Early childhood is defined as birth to age eight in this context and encompasses many programs and resources that help families maintain stability such as child care, home visitation, parent education, parent crisis support, etc; and,

WHEREAS, a core group of local early childhood stakeholders, led by the City of Madison's Community Development Division and United Way of Dane County, formed to participate in the NLC Early Childhood Network; the group was known as the Early Childhood Plan Advisory Group (Advisory Group); and,

WHEREAS, the Advisory Group identified the need for a comprehensive plan for Madison's early childhood system to guide collective action, and took the lead to develop an Early Childhood Plan for the community; and,

WHEREAS, in January 2018, the Advisory Group began a robust community engagement process to gather input. Using assessment tools developed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy and the National League of Cities, the Advisory Group first engaged more than fifty (50) leaders from organizations that serve families in the Madison area; and,

WHEREAS, the Advisory Group and staff reviewed and analyzed the results of the assessment and synthesized the findings into broad action steps to be used for community feedback; and,

WHEREAS, the recommendation from attendees at the assessment meeting was to solicit broader feedback from families with young children and individuals who work directly with families in the community; and,

WHEREAS, in the summer and fall of 2018, members of the Advisory Group presented the action steps to several groups within Madison that support families with young children and to parents of children in

four-year-old kindergarten for feedback; and,

WHEREAS, in 2019, an AASPIRE intern working in the Community Development Division solicited input and reactions to the action steps through dozens of listening sessions, interviews, surveys and community gatherings with child care staff and families at community centers, Head Start sites, the YWCA, community meals, and other gatherings; and,

WHEREAS, the Advisory Group subsequently prepared a draft of an Early Childhood Plan for Madison, which proposes the following recommendations and goals:

- 1. Recommendation:** Connect Families with Resources through Public Information Sharing
Goal: Community resources for children and families are well known, accessible, and easy to use
- 2. Recommendation:** Improve Access to High Quality Child Care
Goal: Families have access to high quality, basic services that proactively promote and support health, learning and family strengths
- 3. Recommendation:** Support the Early Childhood Workforce
Goal: Service providers access supports to ensure staff are well-supported, grow professionally and are retained within the workforce
- 4. Recommendation:** Coordinate Early Childhood Efforts
Goal: Local early childhood leaders work together and across systems to coordinate efforts and review implementation of plan
- 5. Recommendation:** Inform Strategies with Data
Goal: Local early childhood leaders use data to drive systems change

WHEREAS, the Early Childhood Plan for Madison was presented to, discussed with, and revised by the City's Early Childhood Care and Education Committee in January, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, in February 2020, the Early Childhood Plan for Madison was brought back to the original group of leaders from organizations that serve families in the Madison area for reaction and final input,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Common Council accepts the Early Childhood Plan for Madison as developed by the Advisory Group, with input from the Early Childhood Care and Education Committee; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council directs City staff to draw on these findings to inform future early childhood strategies, policies and programs that can help further the goals of the plan.