

8/30 mtg

Lussier Community Education Center Feedback on CSC Preliminary Recommendations – 8/30/10

First we want to thank you for your longstanding support of the center and the funding you have already recommended for the programs we offer our community. We are requesting that you consider including the following three items in the funding being considered this evening:

LCEC Elementary Program \$34,171– This program plays an important role in the lives of low income children in our neighborhood. The City of Madison is a critical partner. We have a concrete and specific plan in motion to increase the numbers of kids attending our program (and improve the program overall). The cornerstone of this plan is obtaining licensure of the program. We have completed the pre-application process with the Supporting Family Together Association (SFTA) and have submitted our application to the state. We have received word that it has been passed on to the licensing specialist, and we are waiting to hear the date for their review/inspection. Achieving licensure will allow us to increase the number of children we serve by opening the program to 5 and 6 year olds. A cut of this size would be devastating to the program - and to the kids and families who depend upon us - just as we are on the cusp of taking the program to the next level.

LCEC/Jefferson Youth Resource Center \$7,799 – The possibility of losing almost \$8000 in funding for this program comes at a time when we are trying to increase services to make sure kids don't fall through the cracks even though we have already absorbed multiple cuts from other sources. Our program budget for the YRC has absorbed \$18,000 in cuts in annual funding. Additionally, the partners with whom we run the Youth Resource Center program at Jefferson are being forced to cut back what they offer. MSCR in particular has had to reduce the number of days that it is able to provide staff and transportation to the program, and they have had to reduce the number of staff they are able to provide during the days we do have programming.

We are working to make up the difference. The LCEC is planning to offer YRC programming ourselves on many of the days that our partners are unable to do so. We are working to secure transportation so that kids who need it can participate in programs when the school district cannot provide a late bus.

Community Leadership, Engagement and Organizing (CLEO) \$11,517 – It is our understanding that the main reasoning behind cutting this funding had to do with geographical reach. This is a program that has always exceeded its goals and the LCEC has developed a strong reputation for its ability to build neighborhood capacity and nurture neighborhood leaders. The committee simply saw planning councils as serving a broad geographical area and our program as focused just on Wexford Ridge. It is important to correct this misperception of our organizing work. From our perspective there are two very powerful reasons to restore funding of the CLEO program.

- ***CLEO develops leaders from around the west and southwest side of Madison.*** Members of Women Rise Up and the Model Communities Leadership Team come from a variety of different neighborhoods, and the leaders who take part organizing specific events for the community are even more broadly distributed.
- ***Under the current proposal, the City of Madison would not be providing funding to any neighborhood leadership/capacity building efforts on the west side at all.*** It seems that the commitment of approximately \$11,000 is a relatively small investment in capacity building for a growing area of the city. We are not requesting that the City invest \$40,000-\$60,000 in neighborhood capacity building as it does in other parts of the city, but simply keep making the modest investment that has been so successful over the years.