



Committee: Joint
Committee Review: At a future date
Staff: Vivian Yao, Legislative Analyst
Purpose: To receive testimony – no vote expected
Keywords: Youth Development and Engagement Hubs, Collaboration Council

AGENDA ITEM #10
December 1, 2020
Public Hearing

SUBJECT

Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, Department of Recreation, Youth Development – After School Youth Support and Engagement Hubs \$406,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves) and Amendment to Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Resolution 19-472 Section G, FY21 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Contract Award Status: Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

None

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

The County Council will hold a public hearing on the FY21 Operating Budget for Department of Recreation to support after school youth development and engagement hubs coordinated by the Collaboration Council.

SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- Councilmembers Jawando and Riemer are proposing a package of appropriations and legislation to invest in positive youth development and well-being services for students and restorative justice, while prohibiting the Montgomery County Police Department from placing School Resource Officers (SROs) in school buildings.
- This special appropriation would provide structured positive youth development and social emotional learning services for vulnerable County youth, targeted at specific needs identified by their school community.
- A committee worksession on this item will also be scheduled for December 3, 2020.

This report contains:

Memo from Councilmembers Jawando and Reimer
Draft Special Appropriation Resolution

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

WILL JAWANDO
COUNCILMEMBER
AT-LARGE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Council
FROM: Will Jawando and Hans Riemer, Councilmembers
DATE: November 12, 2020
SUBJECT: Removing SRO's from MCPS and Special Appropriations

Today Montgomery County has a police officer in every high school and several middle schools. At the same time, our counselor-to-student ratios lag far behind other school systems both in the region and nationally. Over time, our county government has chosen to prioritize funding of police in schools who can quickly make arrests, instead of professionals and services that can assist our students with non-law enforcement-based interventions and mental health or wellbeing.

Over the past four years, almost half of all student arrests were of Black children, a cohort that is one-fifth of the student body.¹ These disparities raise serious concerns about the school-to-prison pipeline. In fact there are broad disparities in how students are treated once they enter the criminal justice system. Black students are nearly 20 times more likely to be held by the Department of Juvenile Services for pretrial detainment for misdemeanor offenses than their white peers.² Black students are 85% less likely to be referred for Screening and Assessment Services for Children and Adolescents (SASCA) Diversion Programs for substance abuse and mental health.³ Black students are 320% more likely to be incarcerated at the conclusion of their trial than white students.⁴

While we know our SRO's are good people doing the job they have been assigned, there are better research-based approaches to resolving disciplinary problems and more effective ways to use precious county resources. School counselors, nurses, therapists, and security guards are better equipped to help students deal with the challenges that today may result in arrests. We should address behavioral problems early through guidance, mental health support, and restorative justice techniques rather than criminalizing adolescent mistakes.

School discipline begins with the teacher, ensuring that all teachers are properly trained in mediating conflicts. Students are another key factor: ensuring that students take steps to atone for the harm they have caused has been correlated with lower suspension and expulsion rates and with students feeling

¹ Statistic derived from previous 4 years of Maryland Department of Education Public School Arrest Data reports. These reports indicate that from SY 2015-2016 through SY 2018-2019, 475 of the 1042 students arrested on MCPS property were Black.

² Statistic is derived from Table 5.24 of the 2016-6 OLO School to Prison Pipeline Report, page 72

³ Statistic is derived from Table on page ii of 2016-6 OLO School to Prison Pipeline Report.

⁴ Statistic is derived from Table 5.27 of the 2016-6 OLO School to Prison Pipeline Report, page 73

safer in the school community. Principals and other administrators are also a key component, as they frequently request arrests or police intervention as a means of resolving disciplinary problems. Training all employees in MCPS in restorative justice and other practices to ensure equitable discipline from the classroom up through the administration is essential to reducing disparities and ensuring better outcomes for all students. That is one of the key goals of our appropriations.

The package of appropriations and legislation we are introducing today will invest in mental health professionals and restorative justice while prohibiting the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) from placing SROs in school buildings. The discontinuation of the SRO program would achieve approximately \$3 million in annual cost savings in future fiscal years. We are not suggesting firing these officers, rather they should be moved to other unfilled positions within MCPD.

Beginning next year, the \$3 million in savings would be allocated to 3 separate programs that will better address the needs of students: 1) Providing funding for an after school student service hub model to reduce risk factors for students through the Montgomery County Collaboration Council (\$406,000), 2) Providing recreational therapeutic group activities for students through HHS (\$312,455), and 3) Providing funding for restorative justice training for MCPS educators and staff (\$750,000). Our goal is to provide at least some funding before the end of the fiscal year. Next year when we begin to work through the budget, we need to take a closer look at the counseling and therapy needs for students and look at addressing mental health professional ratios. It is necessary to begin to address these mental health challenges as soon as possible. Thank you for your careful consideration of these proposals.

Resolution No.: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: Councilmember Jawando and Councilmember Riemer

SUBJECT: Special Appropriation to the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Recreation
Youth Development – After School Youth Support and Engagement Hubs
\$406,000 (Source of Funds: General Fund Reserves) and
Amendment to Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget Resolution 19-472
Section G, FY21 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive
Contract Award Status: Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children,
Youth and Families

Background

1. Section 308 of the County Charter provides that a special appropriation is an appropriation which states that it is necessary to meet an unforeseen disaster or other emergency, or to act without delay in the public interest. Each special appropriation shall be approved by not less than six Councilmembers. The Council may approve a special appropriation at any time after public notice by news release. Each special appropriation shall specify the source of funds to finance it.
2. Youth from low-income families face significant challenges as a result of the economic impacts resulting from COVID-19 and social isolation arising from the need to prevent the spread of the virus. Continued distance learning in public schools and limited opportunities to congregate safely with peers due to COVID-19 prevention measures have increased feelings of alienation and isolation among young people and impacted engagement of students in school.
3. There is a need for structured positive youth development and social emotional learning services for vulnerable County youth. This appropriation will support a pilot program designed to increase accessibility to quality youth programs focused on the positive development of their academic, social-emotion and overall well-being. As part of this process, the Collaboration Council will map local assets, perform community needs assessments in specific high-need school clusters in collaboration with MCPS, and coordinate sustainable supports and partnerships to ensure that youth and families are connected and supported.

4. The funding will support:
 - the operation of two 12-week sessions of an after school engagement hub pilot in each of four high needs school clusters/communities in the County.
 - Wrap around family engagement services; and
 - Coordination, monitoring, technical assistance, evaluation and reporting of the program.
5. Notice of public hearing was given and a public hearing was held.
6. The County Council declares this request is in the public interest to be acted upon without delay as provided for under special appropriation requirements described in Article 3, Section 308 of the Montgomery County Charter.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

A special appropriation to the FY21 Operating Budget of the Montgomery County Government, Department of Recreation, Youth Development – After School Youth Support and Engagement Hub program is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel</u>	<u>Operating</u>	<u>Capital</u>	<u>Source</u>
<u>Expense</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Outlay</u>	<u>TOTALof Funds</u>
\$0	\$406,000	\$0	General Fund Reserves

The funding appropriated in this resolution must be added to a noncompetitive agreement with the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families used to implement the After School Youth Support and Engagement Hub program. The Department of Recreation will administer the funds.

This resolution amends Resolution 19-472, Section G, FY21 Designation of Entities for Non-Competitive Award Status to fund a contract with the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families with the purpose to “implement an after school youth support and engagement program for vulnerable and/or low-income middle and high school youth.” in the amount of \$406,000.

This appropriation is needed to address a public health emergency and to act without delay in the public interest.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council