

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. 07-155

Accepting the Portland Children's Investment Fund Recommendation to Renew Current Investments in After-School and Mentoring Programs; and Offering Advice and Counsel to the City of Portland Concerning the Recommendations

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. In 2002 the citizens of the City of Portland authorized a five-year property tax levy to fund proven children's programs within the City.
- b. The City of Portland and Multnomah County entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement to make certain that the funds received from the Levy are allocated in a manner complementary with a coordinated and comprehensive plan, and to ensure accountability and equity throughout the system. As part of the agreement, the City of Portland created the Children's Investment Fund Allocation Committee to provide citizen oversight of the Levy.
- c. Furthermore, the Board of County Commissioners, through its expertise and experience in children's policy and administration, provides the City Council with advice and counsel. In the past the Board has made recommendations regarding allocations for early childhood care and education, for abused and neglected children and for after school and mentoring programs. The Board is now making recommendations to renew current investments in after-school and childcare programs.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

1. The Board accepts the attached recommendation and request from the Portland Children's Investment Fund for After School and Childcare Program Investments.
2. Furthermore, the Board forwards the recommendation, with its own recommendation for adoption, to the Portland City Council for its consideration.

ADOPTED this 20th day of September, 2007



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON


Ted Wheeler, Chair

REVIEWED:
AGNES SOWLE, COUNTY ATTORNEY
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

By 
Agnes Sowle, County Attorney

SUBMITTED BY:
Ted Wheeler, Multnomah County Chair



portland children's investment fund

Request for County Board Approval

The Children's Investment Fund (CHIF) is requesting that the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners approve the following decisions of the Allocation Committee:

1. Allocate \$2.7 million over three years to Childcare Resource and Referral of Multnomah County (a division of Mt Hood Community College) for enhancing the quality of childcare at local childcare centers and for making quality childcare more affordable for children of low-income families.
2. Allocate up to \$500,000 million in leverage funds over three years to Neighborhood Partnership Fund to support childcare subsidies to children of families participating in Bridges to Housing program.
3. Renew investments in SUN Community school programs at Fernwood, Jackson and Sellwood middle schools by contracting directly with Portland Impact to provide services at Fernwood and Sellwood, and Neighborhood House to provide services at Jackson.
4. Allocate \$75,000 for SUN Community School services at Alder Elementary School for FY 2007/2008 only with services provided by Metropolitan Family Services.

Background and details regarding each of these allocation decisions is listed below.

1. Childcare Allocation

Background:

During the Spring of 2006, the Allocation Committee convened a workgroup to consider allocating approximately \$6.8 million in excess funds¹ to Head Start and to a childcare project aimed at improving quality and affordability of quality care for low income parents. The workgroup recommended allocating approximately \$3.4 million to a local Head Start expansion, and \$3.4 million to the childcare proposal. The Committee voted to implement the workgroup's proposal.

Later that summer, City Commissioner Dan Saltzman decided not to seek renewal of the Children's Investment Fund levy on the November 2006 ballot, and postponed the levy renewal until the November 2008 ballot. This decision meant that there would be a "gap year" (FY 2008/2009) in which the current levy stopped generating revenue and before the new levy (if passed) would start generating revenue. Staff analyzed grant commitments, accrued revenue and revenue forecasts available as of August 2006, and recommended that the

¹ This amount was based on assessments of accrued revenue as of winter 2006, and existing revenue projections for the life of the fund as of the same date.

Committee hold all accrued revenue and expected future revenue to finance a “6th year” of funding for current grantees, provided that grantees continued to meet performance requirements and standards.

The Allocation Committee voted to reserve all excess funds to support existing grants during the 2008/2009 fiscal year. The Head Start and child care proposals were put on hold until such time as funds became available. The vote also included discontinuing any further Leverage Fund investments so that these funds could be used to finance the 6th year as well.

Since August 2006, staff has received revised revenue forecasts. The Children’s Investment Fund projects it will have \$14.1 million available for FY 2008-09 because of one-time only savings due to a gradual start-up of grants during the Fund’s first year and unexpected higher tax revenues. After all grantees are funded for a sixth year of funding through June 30, 2009 at their current level plus 3 percent for inflation, a balance of \$3.2 million remains. This includes \$500,000 in unspent Leverage Fund dollars.

The Allocation Committee voted on April 24, 2007 to allocate the \$3.2 million in excess funds to the following two projects.

1. Allocation of \$2.7 million to Childcare Resource and Referral of Multnomah County for enhancing quality of childcare and providing childcare subsidies

The Committee voted to allocate \$2.7 million to support the early childhood workgroup’s childcare proposal that had been tabled in during August 2006. That proposal includes two efforts to be funded July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010:

- **Quality of Care:** Enhancing the quality of childcare at local licensed centers whose assessment through a state-developed “Quality Indicators” tool indicates a need for improvement. Childcare centers would receive staff mentoring and training in areas of child curriculum, health, mental health and business practices; they also would receive wage enhancements and grants to improve their childcare environment. It is estimated that up to 25 centers, serving over 1,000 children, could receive assistance over the three years.
- **Affordability of Care:** Providing annual childcare scholarships (subsidies) for up to 300 children of low-income, working parents earning an income of no more than \$38,000 per year for a family of four (185% of the federal poverty level or just over 50% of local median income). Childcare providers, including centers and family based providers, eligible to receive subsidies must meet various quality assurance criteria, including state licensure and certification, achieving standards on state and local childcare assessments, and having adequate liability insurance.

2. Allocation of \$500,000 to Neighborhood Partnership Fund for childcare scholarships for children of families in Bridges to Housing

The Committee voted to fund childcare subsidies to the 50 families currently in Bridges to Housing. The support will allow the program to leverage local resources and provide case management services for an additional 30 to 35 families. Funds would also be used to provide childcare subsidies to any new families participating in Bridges to Housing. Subsidies would be used only at state licensed or registered/certified providers. Funding period would be July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010.

Bridges to Housing is a local four-county effort to alleviate family homelessness in the Portland area. The effort is being coordinated by the Neighborhood Partnership Fund, a leader in affordable housing programs and services throughout the state. Other collaborators include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust and Multnomah County.

2. Renewal of Investment in SUN Community School Programs

CHIF has contracted with Portland Public Schools (PPS) for provision of SUN Community School services at Fernwood, Sellwood and Jackson Middle schools for the past three years. The initial two year contract was renewed for one year in June 2006. The one year renewal contract expired June 30, 2007. At its July 10, 2007 meeting, The Allocation Committee considered whether and on what terms to renew funding for services at these schools.

Under the terms of the expiring contract, PPS subcontracted the bulk of the funds to Neighborhood House and Portland Impact to provide services at the schools. The Allocation Committee decided to renew its investment in the SUN Community School programs at all three schools, but to contract directly with the non-profits providing the services. The rationale for this was two-fold:

1. Contracting directly with providers would save \$15,000 annually in administrative costs incurred by PPS;
2. Funds saved by contracting directly with providers could be used to provide direct service instead.

The Committee voted to provide each of the SUN sites with \$87,700 in funding for FY 2007/2008. This amount reflects the total contract amount granted to PPS (\$278,100) minus \$15,000 in administrative fees paid to PPS (\$263,100) divided by 3 sites (\$87,700). All other terms of the contract shall remain the same including the number of children served and the outcomes.

3. **Allocation of Funds for SUN Community School Program at Alder Elementary School for FY 2007/2008 ONLY**

The Allocation Committee also voted to provide \$75,000 for FY 2007/2008 only to operate the SUN Community School program at Alder Elementary school. As the board may be aware, the 21st Century School grant funds that are currently funding operation of this site will expire in early 2008. The 2007/2008 approved county budget does not include any funding to continue SUN programming at Alder.

Funds to provide these services will be drawn from the following two sources:

- \$15,000 saved by contracting directly with Neighborhood House and Portland Impact for SUN services at Jackson, Sellwood and Fernwood;
- \$60,000 from the monies CHIF has reserved to fund all current grantees during FY 2008/2009. This will slightly reduce funding available for inflation allowances for current grantees during FY 2008/2009.

The county has sought and received permission from the state to reallocate Alder's 21st Century School grant funds to Davis Elementary instead so that programming will continue at both elementary schools for the full school year. All parties have been advised that CHIF funding for Alder would be available for one year ONLY.

The Committee voted to provide this one-time money based on the following rationales:

1. **SUN Coordinating Council:** The SUN Coordinating Council has begun meeting and has formed sub-committees to recommend an allocation process and formula, and define core services. The Council expects to have adopted recommendations on these issues in the fall of 2007. The County will publish an RFP for SUN services at the beginning of 2008, the terms of which will be informed by the Council's recommendations for allocation of resources and core services. The Committee agreed to provide one-time funding while the Council completes its work in the hopes that resources throughout the system will be reallocated to assure continued program operation at high need schools.
2. **High Poverty at Alder:** At the close of the 2006/2007 school year, Alder was the highest poverty school in the city and county with 92% of its population participating in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program, 71% minority students, and 67% English language learners (primarily Latino).
3. **Low Achievement at Alder:** At the close of the 2005/2006 school year, approximately 60% of the student population met state math and reading benchmarks.

4. ***Funding is Consistent with CHIF Guidelines:*** Providing funding for a SUN program at Alder is consistent with the guidelines established in the original After-School and Mentoring Request for Investment (RFI) published in 2004. Specifically, the RFI noted that CHIF would focus its after-school program investments on “services that address the achievement gap, that serve low income families and children or those who otherwise could not afford to participate in after-school programs, and on culturally competent and culturally specific services.” The SUN program at Alder meets all of these targets.