



Legislation Text

File #: 20-2088, Version: 2

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Government Performance and Financial Management

AGENDA DATE: November 11, 2020

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S): N/A

DEPARTMENT: Office of Equity and Inclusion

EXECUTIVE: M. Elizabeth Cedillo-Pereira

SUBJECT

Authorize four Interlocal Agreements, as part of the Operation Connectivity bulk order program to cover expenses incurred providing distance learning to students residing in the City of Dallas, with **(1)** Dallas Independent School District in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.00; **(2)** Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District in an amount not to exceed \$53,000.00; **(3)** Richardson Independent School District in an amount not to exceed \$260,000.00; and **(4)** Rylie Family Faith Academy, Inc. dba A+ Charter Schools, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$22,400.00 - Total not to exceed \$835,400.00 - Financing: U.S. Department of Treasury - Coronavirus Relief Funds

BACKGROUND

On June 24, 2020, the City of Dallas designated \$10M in CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) for bridging the digital divide. The City of Dallas recognizes that having access to the internet is critical for families and individuals during this time of crisis. While practicing social distancing and dealing with the closures of many businesses and social services, internet access will help families and individuals do a wide range of activities, from schoolwork to job searching to paying bills.

In response to the critical need that remote and distance learning become an essential part of a school's academic offering, Governor Greg Abbott and Texas legislative leaders have allocated \$200M in CRF to match \$200M in local school district funding. This combined \$400M in bulk buying power will be used to cover the purchases of internet solutions such as hotspots and e-learning devices for Texas' school districts, with the goal of providing connectivity technology for all students who would not otherwise have them.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has encouraged Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to work with their cities and counties to allocate some portion of their \$5B CRF allocation to reduce the overall cost of acquiring the tools to facilitate distance learning. LEAs are eligible for additional CRF fund matching if they are able to receive funding from their local city or county CRF for TEA's bulk order program, which is the purchase of devices and hotspots at steeply discounted rates that vendors

have made available specifically for orders placed through Operation Connectivity. TEA will increase its fund matching by \$1.00 for every \$1.00 of local CRF that LEAs receive, up to a maximum of 25% of the expenditure approved and allocated by TEA (based on the number of economically disadvantaged students). LEAs must submit required documentation by October 15, 2020 to be considered for local CRF reimbursement.

Of the ten independent school districts (ISDs) that overlap Dallas city limits, three school districts and one charter school have requested matching funds - Dallas Independent School District (DISD), Richardson Independent School District (RISD), Carrollton-Farmers Branch Independent School District (CFBISD), and A+ Charter Schools, Inc. following these requests, staff solicited the following information from the ten ISDs:

1. Number of school-age Dallas residents enrolled in the ISD/School
2. Number of school-age Dallas residents enrolled in the ISD/School eligible for free and reduced lunch program
3. Residential zip code of the school-age Dallas residents enrolled in the ISD/School
4. Campus location of school-age Dallas residents enrolled in the ISD/School

Of the ten ISDs, DISD, CFBISD, and DISD responded. A+ Charter Schools, Inc. submitted a separate request. With the data received, staff calculated recommended allocation amounts as follows:

$$\$21.00 \text{ (30\% of hotspot cost of \$70.00)} \times \# \text{ of Students on Free and Reduced Lunch Program}$$

Allocation recommendation:

School	Recommended Allocation Amount
Richardson ISD	\$260,000.00
Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD	\$ 53,000.00
Dallas ISD	\$500,000.00
A+ Charter Schools, Inc.	\$ 22,400.00
TOTAL	\$835,400.00

As a result of the other investments the City is making with Dallas ISD related to the digital divide, such as the strategic engineering consultant interlocal sharing agreement (\$250,000.00) and the private cellular network demonstration projects (\$2.5M), the recommended allocation for Dallas ISD is not calculated using the formula above, and instead is a flat amount.

PRIOR ACTION/REVIEW (COUNCIL, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS)

On April 22, 2020, City Council authorized the City Manager to spend funds in compliance with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and in accordance with guidance from the U.S. Department of Treasury for the Coronavirus Relief Fund take all necessary actions to

apply for and receive funds for which the City is eligible from state and federal sources; receive and deposit funds in an amount not to exceed \$234,443,127.60, by Resolution No. 20-0644.

City Council was briefed on the proposed uses of Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act, Coronavirus Relief Funds to facilitate assistance to eligible communities and households economically impacted by COVID-19 on June 17, 2020.

On October 1, 2020, the Ad Hoc Committee on COVID-19 Recovery and Assistance recommended this item to the full City Council.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Fund	FY 2020	FY 2021	Future Years
U.S. Department of Treasury - Coronavirus Relief Fund	\$0.00	\$835,400.00	\$0.00