

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 3.1
(ID # 13554)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, September 29, 2020

FROM : SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND SUPERVISOR KEVIN JEFFRIES :

SUBJECT: SUPERVISOR KAREN SPIEGEL AND SUPERVISOR KEVIN JEFFRIES:
Establishment of Educational Device Support Program for Riverside County
Public Adult Schools, CEQA EXEMPT, ALL Districts [\$1,000,000 - 100% Federal
CARES Act Funds] (4/5 Vote)

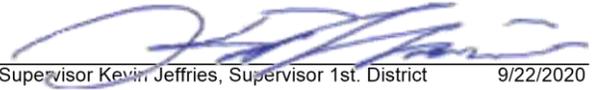
RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Find that the project is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3);
2. Authorize the allocation of \$1,000,000 in federal funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (Section 5001, Public Law 116-136; CARES Act) to establish the Educational Device Support Program for Riverside County Public Adult Schools (the Project) which will provide computer devices and hotspots to students to facilitate access to online learning and educational support services;
3. Approve the form of the attached Subrecipient Agreement Between the County of Riverside and the Member School District of the ABOUT STUDENTS Regional Consortium for Adult Education for the Use of Riverside County Relief Funds (CARES Act) for the Educational Device Support for Public Adult Schools Program (Agreement); and
4. Authorize the Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions, or designee, to execute the finalized Agreement, subject to County Counsel approval, and execute any and all related agreements and documents necessary to implement and administer the Project including, but not limited to, non-substantive amendments, subject to County Counsel approval.
5. Authorize the Director of Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Workforce Solutions to repurpose any unspent funds to support approved HHPWS CARES programming including, but not limited to, homeless sheltering, rental assistance, workforce interventions and distance learning initiatives;
6. Approve and direct the Auditor-Controller to make budget adjustments as shown on Schedule A.

ACTION:4/5 Vote Required, Policy

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Supervisor Karen Spiegel, Vice-Chairman 9/22/2020


Supervisor Kevin Jeffries, Supervisor 1st. District 9/22/2020

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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BACKGROUND:

Summary

On July 17, 2020, Governor Newsom announced new statewide rules for private and public schools. These provisions included specific requirements for schools located in counties on the state's COVID-19 watch list. Thirty-two counties are on the state's watch list, including Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Orange, and Ventura. All schools, public and private, in those counties must begin the 2020-21 school year with distance learning.

On August 04, 2020, the Board of Supervisors took action to address the needs of kindergarten through high school (K-12) public schools in the rapid transition of students to full time distance learning through the appropriation of \$10 million in local CARES funding. The \$10 million dollar allocation will support the Riverside County Office of Education's "One for All" campaign which was established to close the gap in providing a device for each K-12 public-school student. There are currently 510 public K-12 schools in Riverside County which serve over 400,000 students daily.

Providing a similar program for public adult schools would ensure that all underserved students in Riverside County have the tools necessary to succeed in a distance learning format. There are 20 public adult schools in operation in Riverside County, which serve over 15,000 students. Each school is a member of one of three consortia: The ABOUT STUDENTS Regional Consortium for Adult Education, the Southwest Riverside County Adult Education Regional Consortium, and the Desert Regional Adult Education Consortium. Similar to their K-12 counterparts in the public-school system, the consortia and their member schools are governed by the California Department of Education.

Unlike their K-12 counterparts in the public-school system, adult schools did not receive a direct allocation of CARES Act funds, yet their students face significant barriers. On average, 73% of consortia students contend with low levels of literacy, 41% are low income, 53% are English language learners, and the overwhelming majority face multiple barriers.

In order to effectively deliver full-time online learning to students countywide, the consortia estimates that 13,485 computer devices at an approximate cost of \$4,218,871 and 12,265 hotspots at an approximate cost of \$2,191,398 are needed for a combined total dollar amount of \$6,410,269 in required funding. The public adult schools do not currently have financial resources to acquire these devices.

Staff recommends establishing the Educational Device Support Program for Public Adult Schools (Project) and allocating \$1,000,000 in CARES Act funds for the purchase of needed devices and hotspots. The ABOUT STUDENTS Regional Consortium for Adult Education, by and through one of its member school districts, has agreed to coordinate funding under the proposed Project and disperse funds among all three consortia members based on need. Staff further recommends that the Board approve the form of the attached Subrecipient Agreement

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Between the County of Riverside and the About Students Regional Consortium for Adult Education for the Use of Riverside County Relief Funds (CARES Act) for the Educational Device Support for Public Adult Schools Program.

Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Project and the Subrecipient Agreement were reviewed and determined to be categorically exempt from CEQA under State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule of “Common Sense” exemption. The Project provides funding to public adult schools to purchase devices for students to facilitate online learning. It can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the Project may have a significant effect on the environment, as the aforementioned activities will have purely financial and social-welfare benefits and will not lead to any direct or reasonably indirect physical environmental impacts.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

The proposed funding allocation will provide digital devices and hotspots to underserved students and will expand access to online service. This will ensure that all Riverside County students have the necessary tools to continue their education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Attachment

- Subrecipient Agreement
- Schedule A