

RESOLUTION NO.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, COUNTY OF SAN MATEO, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

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RESOLUTION: A) APPROVING A \$3,500,000 ALLOCATION OF CORONAVIRUS AID, RELIEF, AND ECONOMIC SECURITY (CARES) ACT FUNDS TO EXPAND THE “PUBLIC INTERNET CONNECTIVITY PILOT PROJECT” TO IMPROVE HIGH-SPEED INTERNET ACCESS AND PROVIDE TECHNOLOGY TOOLS FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS, AND B) AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MANAGER, OR DESIGNEE, TO NEGOTIATE, ENTER INTO, AND/OR AMEND AGREEMENTS TO EXPAND THE “PUBLIC INTERNET PILOT PROJECT” TO ADDITIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS UP TO A TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$3,500,000 WHICH AMOUNTS MUST BE INCURRED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 30, 2020

RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo, State of California, that:

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2020, and pursuant to Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code, the San Mateo County Health Officer (the “Health Officer”) declared a local health emergency throughout San Mateo County related to the novel coronavirus (“COVID-19”) and the Board of Supervisors has ratified and extended this local health emergency, which remains in effect throughout San Mateo County; and

WHEREAS, on March 3, 2020, and pursuant to Section 8630 of the California Government Code and Chapter 2.46 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, the San Mateo County Director of Emergency Services proclaimed a local emergency throughout San Mateo County related to COVID-19 and the Board has ratified and extended the proclamation of a local emergency (“Local Emergency”), which remains in effect; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, Governor Newsom issued a Proclamation of State of Emergency related to COVID-19 (“State of Emergency”), effective throughout the State of California; and

WHEREAS, on March 14, 2020, the Health Officer prohibited all public or private gatherings of 50 or more people and urged the cancelation of all gatherings of 10 or more people in a single confined space; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2020, the Health Officer issued an order that, among other things, directed all individuals living within San Mateo County to shelter in their place of residence (“Original Shelter-in-Place Order”), and authorized individuals to leave their residences only for certain “Essential Activities,” Essential Governmental Functions,” or to operate “Essential Businesses,” all as defined in the Original Shelter-in Place-Order; and

WHEREAS, several times since March 16, 2020, and most recently, on June 4, 2020, the Health Officer issued revised Shelter-in-Place Orders extending the Original Shelter-in-Place Order due to evidence of continued significant community transmission of COVID-19 within the County and throughout the Bay Area; and

WHEREAS, on March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20, which, imposed a Statewide Shelter-In-Place Order requiring individuals to remain in their places of residence except as needed to maintain continuity of operations of critical infrastructure, access necessities such as food, prescriptions and healthcare, or engage in other authorized activities; and

WHEREAS, on May 8, 2020, Governor Newsom announced a plan to allow the limited reopening of some businesses beyond those in the category of essential critical infrastructure, which is part of the "Resilience Roadmap" for California, the multiphase plan to modify the Statewide Shelter-In-Place Order; and

WHEREAS, on June 16, 2020, the State approved the County's request for a variance allowing the County to align with the Resilience Roadmap for California; and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 2020, the Health Officer rescinded the June 4, 2020 revised Shelter-in-Place Order and replaced it, effective immediately, with a new order aligning the County with the Statewide Shelter-in-Place Order/Resilience Roadmap, emphasizing individual behavior and the practices that businesses must follow as they resume operations, including limiting gatherings to no more than 50 people, outlining social distancing and face covering requirements, allowing for social bubbles, and requiring businesses to implement a social distancing protocol and written health and safety plans, based on evidence of continued significant community transmission of COVID-19 within the County and throughout the Bay Area and the Health Officer will continue to update San Mateo County orders to align with State guidelines; and

WHEREAS, as the State and County continue with reopening, the number of identified COVID-19 cases continues to grow; in fact, as of October 13, 2020, there were 855,072 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in California and 10,622 confirmed positive COVID-19 cases in the County, as well as 155 deaths in the County, and, as COVID-19 cases continue to increase, the Governor has ordered the closure of some businesses that had been permitted to reopen; and

WHEREAS, some experts have predicted a possible spike in COVID-19 cases in the coming months; and

WHEREAS, according to the United Nations, the COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, County school districts resorted to distance learning conducted virtually over video conferencing platforms; and

WHEREAS, the proliferation of students engaged in distance learning revealed significant internet connectivity challenges for school districts, especially those serving students in vulnerable communities; and

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that County school districts will continue to implement distance learning until the risk of COVID-19 has been abated; and

WHEREAS, it will likely take time before County schools are able to fully reopen and even if they do reopen, there is no guarantee they will remain open for the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year; and

WHEREAS, the effective implementation of distance learning requires access to reliable and fast internet service, which not all County students currently have; and

WHEREAS, in June 2020, the County Office of Education conducted a countywide survey of all school districts to determine the extent of the internet connectivity need and found that 4,411 elementary and high school students did not have access to laptops and/or WIFI connectivity in their homes; and

WHEREAS, on August 4, 2020, the County Board of Supervisors approved an allocation of \$2,879,010 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to establish an internet connectivity pilot project to help students in the following four school districts effectively engage in distance learning: La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District, Ravenswood City School District, Redwood City School District, and Sequoia Union High School District (“Project”); and

WHEREAS, the goal of the Project is to improve high-speed internet access for disadvantaged students and provide internet access for more than 1,200 students living in East Palo Alto, Redwood City, and unincorporated San Mateo County in the communities of La Honda, Loma Mar, Pescadero, and San Gregorio through mobile “Hotspots”, Comcast internet, in-home connectivity support when other connectivity solutions are not available; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the County’s efforts in addressing student connectivity issues during the COVID-19 pandemic, the San Mateo County Libraries, which are governed by the San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority, have purchased over 900 mobile hotspots and over 70 laptops/Chromebooks for free check-out to members and is also expanding access to free public WIFI at their facilities to include parking lots and exterior spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to allocate an additional \$3,500,000 in CARES Act funds to expand the Project to additional school districts with students who have significant connectivity needs through technological improvements to facilitate distance learning in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, the goal of this new phase will be to improve internet connectivity and the effectiveness of distance learning for an additional 1,500 disadvantaged students, and the expanded connectivity effort will involve the distribution of mobile hotspots, free public WIFI in selected neighborhoods, and, potentially, the distribution of laptops/Chromebooks, as needed; and

WHEREAS, based on existing student connectivity data gathered by the County Office of Education, the Board desires to initially assist with this new phase of the Program students in Daly City, the City of South San Francisco and the City of San Mateo; and

WHEREAS, the County Office of Education is currently updating its student connectivity survey and, once received, the updated data will be overlaid with neighborhood equity measures to prioritize the inclusion of students potentially in other cities up to the available funding; and

WHEREAS, given its role in expanding student connectivity and its existing vendor contracts, the San Mateo County Libraries have agreed to potentially partner with the County in the procurement and distribution of mobile hotspots and laptops/Chromebooks; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors recognizes that, because expanding connectivity for County students now is critical and because expenses for use of CARES Act funds must be incurred by December 30, 2020, time is of the essence, and, therefore, granting the County Manager, or designee(s), the authority to amend current consultant and/or equipment vendor agreements and to potentially enter into a new agreement with the San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority will allow the work necessary to expand the proposed Project to begin immediately.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY DETERMINED AND ORDERED THAT the Board of Supervisors allocates \$3,500,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds to expand the Program to improve high-speed internet access and provide technology tools for disadvantaged students, in accordance with the terms and intent of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Manager, or designee(s), is authorized and directed to negotiate, enter into, and/or amend agreements to expand the Project to additional school districts in accordance with the terms and intent of this resolution up to a total amount not to exceed \$3,500,000 which amount(s) must be incurred no later than December 30, 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Manager, or designee(s), is hereby authorized to execute amendments to the agreements referenced above which modify the County's maximum fiscal obligation by no more than \$25,000 (in aggregate) for each agreement, and/or modify the agreement term and/or services so long as the modified term or services is/are within the current or revised fiscal provisions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Manager, or designee(s), shall periodically report back to the Board of Supervisors regarding the status of the efforts called for by this resolution, including at the Board's next meeting on November 10, 2020.

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