



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: COUNTY EXECUTIVE

File #: 23-367

Board Meeting Date: 5/23/2023

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Michael P. Callagy, County Executive
Connie Juarez-Diroll, Chief Legislative Officer

Subject: Amendment to the Agreement with Live in Peace to provide educational support services and case management

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing an amendment to the agreement with Live in Peace to provide educational support and case management services, extending the term through June 30, 2024, and increasing the amount by \$1,491,504, to an amount not to exceed \$4,241,504.

BACKGROUND:

On September 12, 2019, the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) awarded the County Executive Office \$3,136,875 in Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Grant (JAG) Program funding for the Students With Amazing Goals (SWAG) program.

The JAG Program (34 U.S.C. §§10151-10158) is a key provider of federal criminal justice funding to state and local jurisdictions. The JAG Program provides critical funding necessary to support State and local initiatives, including technical assistance, strategic planning, research, data collection, and training. Based on statewide public input, the State of California issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) focused on the following areas: prevention and education programs, law enforcement programs, prosecution, courts, defense, and indigent defense.

DISCUSSION:

The SWAG program is a comprehensive community-based multi-disciplinary juvenile diversion and education program designed to reduce chronic absenteeism, increase high school graduation rates, and produce long-term pathways for success for at-risk youth in East Palo Alto (EPA) and the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park. The SWAG model uses a three-pronged approach: 1) building meaningful relationships with at-risk youth, including setting high expectations, holding youth accountable, and providing a positive peer environment that supports academic achievement; 2) goal setting and plan development and skill building; and 3) culturally responsive programming, including pro-social activities that help youth develop positive behaviors and habits of mind.

The County has received two rounds of JAG Program funding. The first three-year allocation of \$2,548,291 was awarded in 2015 for a partnership that included the County Manager's Office, the Probation Department, the Sequoia Union High School District (SUHSD), and the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and their Communities at Stanford University (Gardner Center), and Live in Peace (LIP), an EPA-based community organization that provides supportive services to at-risk youth. The grant ran from March 1, 2015, through December 31, 2017, receiving a no-cost extension for program operations through December 31, 2018. As part of its application for JAG monies, the County committed \$350,000 per year in Measure K funding to the program during the grant period and has continued to fund it at this level after the grant ended. Over the course of this first JAG grant, the SWAG program served over 300 at-risk youth.

The second three-year allocation of \$3,136,875 to the SWAG program was awarded in 2019 for a partnership that included the County Executive's Office, SUHSD, the Gardner Center, and LIP. The 36-month grant cycle was from October 1, 2019, through September 30, 2022. As with its first application, the County committed \$350,000 per year in Measure K funding to the program during the grant period. In addition, in June 2022, the BSCC provided all Byrne JAG recipients with a 6-month no-cost extension to June 30, 2023, due to delays in program implementation as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Unfortunately, the SUHSD, which had allocated \$1,170,000 to partner with the County of San Mateo and LIP to implement the SWAG program during the second round of funding, could not continue as a partner beyond the first twelve months of the program. As a result, the County Executive's Office requested and secured approval from the BSCC to reallocate \$780,000 of the Byrne JAG funding as follows: \$696,000 to LIP for expanded services to the youth and \$84,000 to the Gardner Center for an extended analysis of the program. Because discussions and dissolution of the partnership with the SUHSD were delayed due to the pandemic and staffing factors, the County Executive Office is seeking a retroactive extension of the expired contract to October 1, 2022, to allow for the use of all of the awarded funds before the June 30, 2023, no-cost extension deadline.

A June 2018 evaluation of the program by the Gardner Center found that SWAG youth had more credits and higher graduation rates than students who did not participate. Moreover, these improvements were both substantial in magnitude and statistically significant. For example, school data for 2016-17, the most recent official graduation numbers analyzed in this first program report, show that more than 90 percent of SWAG seniors graduated (72 of 78), compared to a 67 percent graduation rate of students from EPA and Belle Haven who did not participate in the program. Unofficial data collected by LIP staff, and reported to the BSCC in quarterly reports, continue to indicate high completion levels for seniors enrolled in the program. Gardner Center researchers are currently examining official SUHSD high school completion rate data for SWAG seniors as part of the required Byrne JAG program Local Evaluation Report due June 2023. They are also examining how SWAG participants' graduation rates compare to normative graduation rates in the neighboring school district. It is expected that the second program evaluation will continue to demonstrate the program's effectiveness in helping at-risk youth in EPA and Belle Haven graduate high school.

Given its success, the County is committed to providing \$795,504 in Measure K funding (i.e., \$397,752 per year for Fiscal Years 2022-23 and 2023-24) to LIP to continue operating the SWAG program as the Byrne JAG funding ends. Live in Peace staff will raise needed funding through other sources and possibly Measure K if the Board's revised funding priorities align with the intent of the

SWAG program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Measure	FY 2022-23 Estimated	FY 23-24 Projected
Percent of participants graduating high school, including 5th-year seniors	90%	90%
Percent reduction of chronic absenteeism or increased attendance in school	50%	50%

FISCAL IMPACT:

The term of the agreement is from October 1, 2022, through June 30, 2024. The amendment increases the contract amount by \$1,491,504 to an amount not to exceed \$4,241,504, of which \$696,000 is a reallocation of Byrne JAG funding and \$795,504 is funded through Measure K and is included in the County Executive Office's FY 2023-24 Recommended Budget.