



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

File #: 25-333

Board Meeting Date: 4/22/2025

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Claire Cunningham, Director, Human Services Agency

Subject: **Measure K:** To Amend Agreements with Providers for The Big Lift Early Learning Initiative

RECOMMENDATION:

Measure K: Adopt a resolution authorizing amendments to the following agreements between the County of San Mateo and the listed school districts to increase funding to support the Big Lift early learning initiative that increases kindergarten readiness and third grade reading proficiency in San Mateo County:

- A) Pacifica School District to receive an increase in funding of \$35,725 for a revised total obligation not to exceed \$249,420; and
- B) Millbrae Elementary School District to receive an increase in funding of \$30,000 for a revised total obligation not to exceed \$219,818; and
- C) La Honda Pescadero Unified School District to receive an increase in funding of \$29,239 for a revised total obligation not to exceed \$367,473.

BACKGROUND:

In 2012, the Peninsula Partnership Leadership Council ("PPCL") - a coalition of government, education, nonprofit, foundation, and business leaders in San Mateo County - launched "The Big Lift" to significantly improve children's third grade reading proficiency through strategic, thoughtful, evidence-based investments in early learning and education. The Big Lift is a collective impact collaborative led by three agencies - the County of San Mateo ("County"), the San Mateo County Office of Education ("SMCOE"), and the San Mateo County Libraries ("SMCL").

The Big Lift focuses on San Mateo County communities where third grade reading proficiency scores are close to or below average. Communities are defined by school district boundaries and include the following school districts: Bayshore Elementary School District, Cabrillo Unified School District, La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District, Millbrae Elementary School District, Pacifica School

District, San Bruno Park School District, South San Francisco Unified School District, and Ravenswood City School District.

On June 25, 2024, this Board, through Resolution No. 080523 and 080524, entered Agreements with participating school districts to work towards the long-term goal of third grade reading success.

DISCUSSION:

In 2023, following a comprehensive strategic planning process, The Big Lift reaffirmed its commitment to improving third grade reading proficiency by prioritizing partnerships with school districts where proficiency rates fall below the county average. As a result, eight school districts, including Pacifica, applied for, and were awarded funding to support their early literacy efforts during Fiscal Years 2024-25 and 2025-26.

FY 2024-25 marks the first year of The Big Lift's formal expansion into the TK-3 school system. Each partner school district has developed a comprehensive early literacy action plan outlining long-term goals and identifying three focus areas for the year.

The one-time supplemental funding previously approved by The Big Lift leadership team, will support the implementation of the 2024-25 Literacy Action Plan in La Honda Pescadero Unified School District, Millbrae School District, and Pacifica Unified School District through targeted professional development on evidence-based reading instruction. This includes differentiated instruction, data-driven decision-making, and the integration of early literacy interventions. The funding will also strengthen family engagement by supporting literacy workshops, family literacy nights, and resources to help parents foster reading at home.

COMMUNITY IMPACT:

The Agreements advance equity by providing literacy support to districts where third-grade reading proficiency rates fall below the county average and state average.

Race and economic status continue to be strong predictors of educational outcomes in the U.S. public school system, including here in San Mateo County. The Big Lift and its partners are committed to breaking the link between academic success and factors such as race, gender identity, sexual orientation, income level, zip code, or immigration status.

Rooted in family engagement, kindergarten readiness, and third grade reading proficiency, The Big Lift is a critical driver of early academic success. Research shows that early academic success is a key predictor of long-term outcomes, including high school graduation, post-secondary attainment, economic mobility, improved health, and overall quality of life.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Measure	FY 2024-25 Target
Percent of TK-3 classrooms implementing instructional practices aligned with the Science of Reading.	60%
Percent of TK-3 students who are assessed using the common literacy screenings/assessments identified by The Big Lift, Brigance Kindergarten Readiness, DIBELS 8th/Lectura or FastBridge.	75%

The County Attorney has reviewed and approved the resolution and Agreements as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total combined amended amount of the three Agreements is \$94,964 for a new total obligation of \$836,711, all of which is **Measure K** funding. Sufficient **Measure K** funding is included in the Human Services Agency's FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget. There is no net county cost associated with these Agreements.