

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 4, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER *me RMY*

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A GRANT APPLICATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES FOR A ONE-TIME BLOCK GRANT AWARD BY THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES TO STRENGTHEN SCHOOL-AGE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT TEAM PROGRAMMING

ISSUE: Consideration of application to the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) for a one-time Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant award to strengthen School-Age Youth Development Team programming.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- 1) Authorize the submission of a grant application, not to exceed \$25,000; and
- 2) Authorize the City Manager to execute all the necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: On December 5, 2011, the State Commissioner of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, James W. Stewart III, announced the availability of one-time federal substance abuse block grant funds. In order to implement a fair method of allocating the unspent funds, DBHDS announced that “eligible non-profit mental health and substance abuse organizations may apply to DBHDS” at any time during or after the second quarter of the state fiscal year. While there is no specific due date for applications, funding is limited and must be expended by September 30, 2012.

The highest priority one-time need is expanding programming offered by the School-Age Youth Development Team, which provides services that promote positive youth development and prevent alcohol and drug use, teen pregnancy, school drop-out, emotional problems and violence. Evidence-based programs and practices include: AI’s Pals, Too Good for Drugs, LifeSkills Training, Girls Circle, Teen Outreach Program (beginning 1/12), Student Assistance Programs, Untouchables, Peer Advisors, Young Stars Success, Kids are Terrific Camp and Decisions 101.

The team also provides skills-building groups, school-wide campaigns, parent outreach and education, mediation, counseling and the weekly Youth Topics eNewsletter.

The team is in need of FY2012 funds in support of programming:

- Teen Outreach Program pilot (\$7,995): In an effort to build capacity in addressing high rates of teen pregnancy and school drop-out, the team has partnered with the school system to pilot the evidence-based Teen Outreach Program (TOP). TOP is licensed through its developer, Wyman, and funds will be used for program monitoring.
- College tours for high school students (\$6,500): The team plans to partner with First AME Church of Manassas, VA and its contracted, licensed vendors in providing college tours for high school students during spring break. The proposal estimates sending 20 students on this tour, plus one youth development counselor as a chaperone.
- College tours for middle school students (\$2,166): The purpose of this field trip is to take a group of approximately 30 middle school students to area post-secondary institutions to increase their exposure to the requirements needed to attain admittance to a college/university and observe an actual college course.
- Resource library materials - elementary school students (\$1,913): The Peer Advisor program is a highly successful after-school leadership program for students in secondary school based at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. The program serves 10 peer leaders who mentor or tutor nearly fifty elementary school children. A reading specialist from the school system volunteers to supervise the Peer Advisors in the tutoring activity. Last year every child who had a Peer Advisor as a reading buddy went up at least one reading level. This program is in need of books and other materials to support it.
- Resource library materials - secondary school students (\$1,400): Programs that serve middle and high school students are in need of more compelling youth development materials, especially quality books and videos that are by and for teens. The books and videos would be used in programming. The books would also be borrowed by teens to support reading for pleasure, an important protective factor.
- Decisions 101 field trip to see *The Black List* at National Portrait Gallery (\$344): Decisions 101 is a successful program for seventh through ninth grade male students who are at risk for academic failure. It provides the role modeling, skills building and information they need to make healthy decisions and have positive futures. One of the group themes is the importance of diligence and focus in the face of adversity. In support of this theme the Team proposes a field trip to the National Portrait Gallery to view "The Black List." This photography exhibit by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders chronicles the life experiences of over 50 African Americans in their determination to persevere in the face of adversity.

The Alexandria Community Services Board approved the grant application request at its January 5, 2012 meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT: The maximum grant available is \$25,000 and is a one-time award. No City match is required. If the programming proves successful, staff may explore additional grant opportunities or transfer funds from lower-priority programs to sustain the programming in future years.

ATTACHMENT:

None.

STAFF:

Debra R. Collins, Assistant City Manager

Michael Gilmore, Director, Department of Community and Human Services

Deborah Warren, Director, Center for Children and Families / DCHS