



Legislation Text

File #: 0572-2022, Version: 1

This legislation authorizes the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Education to enter into a contract with Future Ready Columbus to develop and implement a public relations campaign to recruit students for enrollment in the new Hilltop Early Learning Center. Future Ready Columbus, a public/private organization focused on supporting a prenatal to age five approach to education in Franklin County, has much experience in community engagement.

Mayor Ginther's vision for America's Opportunity City is that every child in Columbus enters kindergarten ready to learn. Becoming kindergarten-ready is about so much more than participating in a quality early learning program. Children who come to school ready to learn are more likely to succeed academically and in life. Ample evidence shows that children who enter school unprepared and who get a poor start in their earliest years are more likely to struggle throughout school and subsequently, fail to graduate. An investment in early childhood development helps prevent achievement gaps, reduces the need for special education, increases the likelihood of healthier lifestyles, lowers the crime rate and reduces overall social costs.

Strategies that assist children to successfully transition to kindergarten focus on serving the needs of the whole child and their families. Screenings that identify developmental delays early, along with referrals and rehabilitative services, are crucial in meeting educational goals. Home-visitation or center-based education and advocacy programs provide important information to family members on the early developmental needs of their child. For children and families that have experienced trauma and toxic stresses, mental and behavioral health, and counselling services are necessary. In addition, meeting the basic needs of the family, such as having access to fresh fruits and vegetables, stable housing, employment, childcare, and transportation are important for the success of the entire family.

In 2017 Mayor Ginther created the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership (HECP) and charged the partnership with doubling the number of Hilltop children enrolled in quality early programs in this community. At that time, a review had showed that there were far fewer children enrolled in quality early learning programs in the Hilltop than anywhere else in the city. One of the recommendations in the HECP's 2018 report was to build a new early learning center in the Hilltop to increase capacity and provide quality programming.

Ordinance 0441-2022, recently passed by City Council, authorizes the City to contract with Columbus Early Learning Centers to serve as master tenant of the new Hilltop center and provides funds for start-up work. This ordinance builds on that work.

This contract is being awarded pursuant to Chapter 329 of the City Code, which allows for the City to negotiate not-for-profit service contracts. This organization was selected due to their experience in early education initiatives and community engagement. This contract is being awarded to Future Ready Columbus as the Office of Education has neither the expertise nor the capacity to execute this work.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funding for this contract (\$150,000.00) is available within the 2022 Mayor's Office of Education general fund budget.

EMERGENCY ACTION is requested so that this contract can be entered into immediately to allow Future Ready Columbus to develop and implement a public relations campaign to recruit students for the new center in time for this coming school year.

To authorize the Mayor's Office of Education to enter into a non-for-profit service contract with Future Ready Columbus to develop and implement a public relations campaign to recruit students for enrollment in the new Hilltop Early Learning

Center; to authorize the expenditure of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000.00) from the General Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$150,000.00)

WHEREAS, the Mayor's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all children enter kindergarten ready to learn; and

WHEREAS, data shows that children who participate in quality early education programs, notably in Columbus' Early Start Columbus program, are better prepared to start school; and

WHEREAS, the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership recommended a new early learning center be constructed in the Hilltop to increase the availability of quality pre-kindergarten programs for Hilltop children; and

WHEREAS, the Center, with a capacity of 240 children, is being constructed at 45 Clarendon Avenue, Columbus, Ohio 43223; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the City and the Hilltop community to enroll as many children as possible at the Center; and

WHEREAS, towards the goal of reaching maximum enrollment, it is in the best interests of the City to enter into contract with Future Ready Columbus, an Ohio non-profit corporation, to secure expertise in the field of public relations to develop and implement a public relations media campaign and recruitment plan to insure that families in the Hilltop area are aware of available programs at the Center to ensure enrollment of as many eligible children as possible; and

WHEREAS, this contract is being awarded pursuant to City Code Chapter 329, which allows for the City to negotiate not-for-profit service contracts; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Mayor's Office of Education in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Future Ready Columbus to develop and implement a public relations campaign for the Hilltop Early Learning Center to recruit students as soon as possible, for the preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; **NOW, THEREFORE:**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Education is authorized to enter into a not-for-profit service contract with Future Ready Columbus for the development and implementation of a public relations campaign to recruit students for enrollment in the Hilltop Early Learning Center.

SECTION 2. That the expenditure of \$150,000.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized to be expended from the General Fund as follows: (**See attachment 0572-2022 EXP**)

Div.: 40-06 | **Fund:** 1000 | **SubFund:** 100010 | **Obj. Class:** 03 | **Main Acct:** 63050 | **Program:** ED001 | **Amount:** \$150,000.00

SECTION 3. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 4. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this legislation.

SECTION 5. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part thereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval

by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.