



Legislation Text

File #: 0455-2020, **Version:** 1

Mayor Ginther's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that every 4-year-old has access to a high-quality prekindergarten education. Addressing early childhood learning means bringing awareness and resources to a critical learning stage in childhood development. Children who come to school ready to learn are more likely to succeed academically and in life.

Children who participate in high-quality early childhood education experiences significantly improve their early literacy, language, and math skills. Ample evidence shows that children who enter school unprepared fall further and further behind. Students who get a poor start in their earliest years are likely to struggle in high school and, subsequently, fail to graduate.

Unfortunately, there are too few high-quality preschool providers in Columbus, especially in the Greater Hilltop Area. To address this gap, the City is working on the design and construction of a new state-of-the-art early learning facility in the Hilltop. When open, this new facility will provide a high-quality early education to approximately 240 Hilltop children.

To succeed however, we know that our children need more than just classroom instruction; we must focus on serving the overall needs of the whole child. Regardless of the quality of an early learning program, children will neither learn nor develop if they are exposed to toxic stresses and trauma in their home and community. For children and families that have experienced trauma and toxic stresses, mental and behavioral health, and counselling services are necessary. And 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 2019, the Department of Education contracted with Mollard Consulting to assist us in determining what wraparound programs and services were needed for Hilltop children to be successful. Their thorough, data-driven analysis provided the Department with the information needed to make informed programming decisions.

The Department of Education is now requesting the authority to contract with Mollard Consulting for a second phase of this work. In this next phase, Mollard Consulting will assist the Department of Education in operationalizing the recommendations of their report.

As this next contract builds on the work that Mollard Consulting led in 2019, the Department requests to waive competitive bidding.

FISCAL IMPACT: This ordinance authorizes an expenditure of \$30,376.00 from the 2020 Department of Education's General Fund operating budget.

EMERGENCY DESIGNATION: Emergency designation is requested as design work is scheduled to conclude in March 2020.

To authorize the Director of Education to enter into a contract with Mollard Consulting to assist the Department in operationalizing Mollard's 2019 program needs assessment recommendations for the new early learning facility in the Hilltop; to waive the competitive bidding provisions of the Columbus City Codes; to authorize the expenditure of \$30,376.00 from the general fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$30,376.00)

WHEREAS, children who have the opportunity to attend a high-quality early learning program are better prepared for school and for life; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all 4-year olds have access to a high-quality prekindergarten program; and

WHEREAS, there are far fewer children enrolled in a quality early learning program in the greater Hilltop area than anywhere else in the City; and

WHEREAS, the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership recommended the creation of a new early learning facility to increase capacity; and

WHEREAS, wraparound services are an important part of early learning, are critical in the development of children and are standard in successful educational programs; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 Mollard Consulting provided the Department of Education data-driven recommendations on what programs and services Hilltop children needed to succeed; and

WHEREAS, a new contract with Mollard Consulting is being requested by the Department of Education to assist them in operationalizing the recommendations from Mollard's report; and

WHEREAS, as this next contract builds on the work that Mollard Consulting led in 2019, Department requests to waive competitive bidding; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the Department of Education in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Director to enter into a contract with Mollard Consulting and to expend such funds in time for the start of the program, all for the preservation of public health, peace and property and safety; NOW, THEREFORE,

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of Education is authorized to enter into a contract with Mollard Consulting to assist the Department in operationalizing the recommendations from Mollard's 2019 report.

SECTION 2. That the expenditure of \$30,376.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized to be expended from the General Fund as follows:
(see attachment 0454-2020)

Div.: 42-01 | **Fund:** 1000 | **SubFund:** 100010 | **Obj. Class:** 03 | **Main Acct:** 63050 | **Program:** ED001 | **Amount:** \$30,376.00

SECTION 3. 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 4. That this Council finds it is in the City's best interest to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329.

SECTION 5. That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, 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 10 days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.