



Legislation Text

File #: 1762-2020, Version: 2

Mayor Ginther's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all children are ready for kindergarten. 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 learning experiences significantly improve their early literacy, language, and math skills. Ample evidence shows that children who enter school unprepared fall farther and farther behind. Students who get a poor start in their earliest years are likely to struggle in high school and subsequently, fail to graduate.

Child care and early learning programs also fulfill a critical need for our community's workforce. The availability of safe, nurturing environments for children, provides parents, family members, and caregivers the opportunity to attend their jobs or pursue their education.

However, in Ohio and nationwide, the child care industry is neither adequately nor equitably funded. Most providers, both center-based and home-based, are small, minority-owned business and many teachers earn poverty-level wages. Most providers who serve low-income children survive on state child care subsidies and struggle to meet the expenses incurred in operating a center.

These difficulties have been further exasperated by new child-to-teacher ratios and maximum class sizes required to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. To support child care programs in Ohio, the state is providing subsidies to eligible providers from their CARES Act funding. Even with this additional funding however, child care providers are having difficulty in sustaining their businesses.

FISCAL IMPACT: This ordinance authorizes an expenditure of up to \$6,200,000.00 from funding provided to the City of Columbus from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act passed by Congress and signed into law March 27, 2020.

EMERGENCY DESIGNATION: Emergency designation is requested to ensure the funding can be provided to child care centers as soon as possible.

To authorize and direct the Director of Education to enter into a contract with the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services to provide monthly grants to eligible childcare providers in Franklin County that will assist them to sustain their operations; to waive the competitive bidding provisions of the Columbus City Codes; to authorize the expenditure of up to \$6,200,000.00 from the CARES Act Fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$6,200,000.00)

WHEREAS, Mayor Ginther's vision for Columbus, America's Opportunity City, is that all children are ready for kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, children who participate in high-quality early learning experiences significantly improve their early literacy, language, and math skills; and

WHEREAS, child care and early learning programs also fulfill a critical need for our community's workforce; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in child care centers in Columbus and Franklin County, already under

and inequitably funded, being in danger financially due to recent requirements necessary to reduce the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS, expenditure of CARES Act funding to provide grants to child care providers in Franklin County is necessary to address the loss of revenue and support caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency; 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 Franklin County to provide crucial support to child care centers as soon as possible, all for the preservation of public health, peace, property, and safety; and

WHEREAS, such expenditure of funds has not been previously accounted for in the 2020 Budget; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

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

SECTION 1. That the Director of Education is hereby authorized to enter into a contract with the Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services to provide monthly grants to eligible child care centers in Franklin County.

SECTION 2. That this Council finds it is in the best interest of the City of Columbus to waive the competitive bidding provisions of the Columbus City Codes, Chapter 329, to enter into this contract.

SECTION 3. That the expenditure of up to \$6,200,000.00 be and is hereby authorized as follows (**see attachment 1762-2020**):

Dept/Div: 42 | **Obj Class:**03 | **Main Account:** 63050 | **Fund:** 2207 | **Sub-fund:** 220702 | **Program:** CW012 | **Amount:** \$6,200,000.00

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 ordinance.

SECTION 5. 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 6. That for the 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.