



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:

Agenda Item Number: 16

Agenda Date: March 2, 2023

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Municipal Courts

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Carla Obledo

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Truancy Intervention & Prevention Program Grant Submission and Acceptance Upon award, up to \$355,823.00, from the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office

SUMMARY:

This ordinance approves the submission of a Truancy Intervention and Prevention Program grant application and acceptance of funds upon award, of up to \$355,823.00 from the Criminal Justice Division of the Governor's Office, for the period of September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024. This is a continuing grant, that is in the seventh year with the Municipal Court. Municipal Court, in accordance with the San Antonio/Bexar County Joint Committee on Truancy, recognizes the significance of intervention and prevention services for youth. Addressing the underlying challenges families encounter is the key to success.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Truancy limits students' educational opportunities, increases the likelihood of students engaging in harmful behavior and reduces the amount of funding that local school districts receive through the state's school financing system. In Bexar County, efforts to address truancy were complicated

by the large number of local jurisdictions, disparate filing methods and a high level of student mobility among school districts. Over fifteen independent school districts were filing truancy cases using different approaches and were filing cases with justice of the peace courts or with the San Antonio Municipal Court. In 2013, HB 1479 (83rd legislative session) was signed into law, which mandated the creation of a truancy committee to develop a uniform process for administering, tracking and reducing truancy for the fifteen school districts. Since its inception, The Uniform Truancy Program adopts an invariant, less punitive approach to truancy intervention and prevention.

ISSUE:

The demand for effective programming and services in the schools has increased as the number of challenges has increased. COVID-19 increased uncertainty in familial life. Juvenile Case Managers are assigned to work with school districts and are encountering new issues related to mental health, finances, isolation and a reluctance to return to school, resulting in additional challenges. Juvenile case managers work closely with schools and families, to address the issues and are helping school districts in engaging students and families. Case Managers have had to become more resourceful in their abilities to address these issues.

ALTERNATIVES:

An alternative would be for the City to take no action. However, this would prove to have a very negative impact on our students and families who desperately need the grant's additional juvenile case managers' support and resources.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance approves the submission of a Truancy Intervention and Prevention grant application and acceptance of funds, upon award, of up to \$355,823.00 for the Truancy Intervention and Prevention Program from the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Governor's Office, for September 1, 2023, to August 31, 2024, and authorizes a personnel complement of five positions. There is no impact to the City's General Fund in the form of a cash match.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this grant ordinance.