



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:
{{item.tracking_number}}

Agenda Item Number: {{item.number}}

Agenda Date: December 4, 2023

In Control: Community Health Committee

DEPARTMENT: Department of Human Services

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Melody Woosley

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Briefing on COSA Programs Empowering and Supporting San Antonio Youth.

SUMMARY:

Staff will provide a briefing and overview of the Department of Human Services (DHS) programs for youth. Additionally, staff will include information regarding internship opportunities for college students and next steps in seeking internships for non-student youth.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The San Antonio area serves over 327,000 students in the fifteen independent school districts. While 88% of students graduate high school in four years, only 48% of these students are considered 'college-ready.' For students who are considered at-risk and/or economically disadvantaged, this percentage drops to 33% and 38%, respectively.

In July 2023, a report issued by the Northwest Evaluation Association found that student

achievement gains during the 2022-2023 academic year fell short of pre-pandemic trends. The report stated students will need the equivalent of 4.1 additional months of schooling to catch up in reading and 4.5 months in math.

These are some of the challenges that have also contributed to number of opportunity youth in San Antonio—youth who are 16 to 24 years old who are not working nor in school. Based on American Community Survey data, San Antonio had 35,432 opportunity youth in 2021 and 33,671 in 2022. While the number of opportunity youth has decreased by 1,761, San Antonio still has one of the highest percentages of opportunity youth compared to other metropolitan areas in the country.

Despite these challenges, there are examples of youth resiliency and thriving in San Antonio. Bucking national trends of communities seeing decreases in college enrollment, San Antonio area higher education institutions have seen record fall enrollments. Other examples of youth thriving include the San Antonio Youth Commission and the Ambassador Summer Internship Program. Both continue to have strong youth participation.

ISSUE:

In FY23, DHS allocated \$10 million in ARPA funding to address the negative impacts on San Antonio youth caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to providing funding to nonprofits to support youth, DHS manages several initiatives to empower and support San Antonio youth, including the San Antonio Youth Commission (SAYC), the Ambassador Summer Internship Program, and the NXT Level Youth Opportunity Center.

In FY24, DHS allocated \$7,656,752 to nonprofits through the consolidated funding process to support children and youth. Funding supported the work in five areas: after school challenge, child abuse intervention and prevention, college/career readiness, kinder readiness, and youth success.

With the increased portfolio of youth programming, DHS coordinates the work among nonprofits and within COSA departments that provide youth programming. The goal is to build out successful pathways for young adults to receive life supports, education/career support and improve data collection to better measure impact.

DHS is also working to identify all youth leadership opportunities hosted by COSA departments and work to market to youth, teachers, and counselors. DHS will begin organizing meetings with all COSA departments with youth programming.

FISCAL IMPACT:

For briefing purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES:

For briefing purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION:

For briefing purposes only.