

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Behavioral Health Division Administration
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: January 7, 2013

TO: Supervisor Marina Dimitrijevic, Chairperson – Milwaukee County Board

FROM: Héctor Colón, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by B. Thomas Wanta, Administrator, Delinquency and Court Services Division

SUBJECT: Report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, Requesting Support from the County Board to implement system reform strategies within the Milwaukee County juvenile justice system through participation in the Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative

Issue

DHHS recently reported to the Board on various efforts to engage in data-driven decision-making and juvenile justice system reform strategies. DHHS is now returning to the Board to request a Resolution in support of the overall principle of safely reducing reliance on confinement of youth while maintaining or improving public safety and to support DCSD's participation in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI), including receiving technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to implement system reform strategies.

Discussion

The Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) is a national juvenile detention reform effort that has been implemented in over 150 jurisdictions in 32 states. JDAI has successfully reduced the number of youth in confinement while maintaining or improving public safety in other states across the country. Milwaukee County was chosen by the Annie E. Casey Foundation to participate in JDAI as one of three Wisconsin counties, along with Manitowoc and Racine Counties, as part of a statewide roll-out through the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance. Through this program, DCSD would receive technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation designed to:

- Reduce reliance on confinement
- Improve public safety
- Utilize best practice programs
- Save taxpayers' dollars
- Reduce racial disparities & bias
- Stimulate overall juvenile justice reforms

As reported to the Board over the last several months, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) - DCSD is taking steps towards data-driven decision-making, including the adoption of a new validated risk and needs assessment instrument. A June 2011 report by the Public Policy Forum, *Milwaukee County Detainee Populations at Historic Lows: Why is it happening and what does it mean*, documented the decline in the secure juvenile detention center population in Milwaukee County and

urged consideration of the effectiveness of justice system policies and programming that may have contributed to the decline. In addition, a July 2012 report by the Public Policy Forum, *Milwaukee County Juvenile Recidivism – Metrics and Trends*, encouraged continued progress by DCSD in data collection methodologies and standardization across programs to help articulate system performance and improve services provided to Milwaukee County youth. Most recently, in October 2012 the Milwaukee County Board authorized acceptance of grant funds (File No. 12-831) from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention for the Delinquency and Court Services Division (DCSD) to serve as a demonstration site for the Juvenile Justice Reform and Reinvestment Demonstration Program. This grant will allow DCSD to implement and evaluate a systematic protocol of evidence-based and cost-measurement tools with the goal of better juvenile justice outcomes and cost-savings at the local level.

DCSD is now coming to the Board to ask for support in these efforts. Participation in JDAI will complement and enhance existing system improvement efforts. Successful participation in JDAI requires the commitment of a broad range of system and community stakeholders. A local governance structure for JDAI will be established, to include an Advisory Board comprising key system and community stakeholders to guide the initiative, and sub-committees to study specific topics and make recommendations on system reform strategies. DHHS is asking for support of the Board because the assistance offered through the JDAI program will enhance the overall system in Milwaukee County and will greatly benefit DCSD.

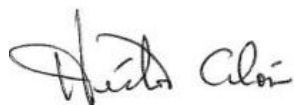
Fiscal Effect

The program is entirely provided by the Annie E Casey Foundation. There is no tax levy effect. A fiscal note form is attached.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors supports the overall principle of safely reducing reliance on confinement of youth while maintaining or improving public safety and Milwaukee County's participation in the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative to receive technical assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to implement system reform strategies, as detailed in the attached resolution.

Respectfully Submitted,



Héctor Colón, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

cc: County Executive Chris Abele
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