



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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May 8, 2007

Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #428

Services for Children and Families - Early Childhood Initiative in Dane County (DHFS -- Children and Families)

Bill Agency

[LFB 2007-09 Budget Summary: Page 319, #6 (part)]

CURRENT LAW

The Allied Drive early childhood initiative currently provides a variety of social services, through home visits, to women who are pregnant or have one child who is 12 months or younger in the Allied Drive neighborhood in the City of Madison. The program, which was initiated by Dane County in July, 2004, currently serves approximately 50 families at a time, most of whom remain in the program for many months.

The annual budget for the program is \$396,000, which is supported by a combination of county and state funds and private grants.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$500,000 PR annually from revenue the state collects from vital records fees to fund comprehensive early childhood initiatives in Dane County that provide home visiting and employment preparation and support for low-income families. Although the grant recipients are not named in the bill, the Governor's intent is to provide the funding to Dane County to replicate the initiative in two other sites in Dane County, at an estimated cost of approximately \$250,000 per site, while maintaining support for the Allied Drive site, should funding be needed for that purpose.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. The initiative provides a variety of services with long-term goals of: (a) improving parent-child relationships; (b) improving child and parent health, mental health and safety; and (c) improving family economic well-being. The services provided by the initiative include: (a) home visits; (b) assessment of child and parent health, mental health, and safety; (c) assessment of child development; (d) assessment of child-parent relationship; (e) assessment of parent job skills and parenting strategy; (f) assessment of family social and economic contexts; (g) education about home safety, nutrition, and parenting; (h) assisting families in access to medical assistance, FoodShare, W-2, and childcare benefits; (i) development of a community employer pool; (j) recruitment of families; and (k) organizing and engaging families in community events.

The attachment to this paper depicts a model, provided by Dane County Department of Human Services, which shows both inputs and intended outcomes of the initiative.

2. A progress report from October of 2006, indicates that the program was serving 44 families, which included 118 children, 26 of whom were under the age of 12 months. 14 clients were first-time mothers, and six were pregnant. Of the 44 families in the program, 38 were in compliance with their family plans, meaning that the family was meeting most of their goals, objectives, and outcomes as they relate to their individual plan and the initiative's home visitation protocols. According to the report, 24 families were linked to some form of employment as a direct result of collaborative efforts between the families and their economic support caseworker. Most families enrolled in the program consistently received pre- and post-natal health care, immunizations, and nutrition services. 11 parents received mental health consultations and 16 families received developmental assessments and parent/infant relationship assessments.

The report also recognizes several continuing challenges, including, family planning, domestic violence, depression, alcohol and other drug abuse, and the lack of bilingual caseworkers.

3. The \$500,000 annual amount would be provided to two other neighborhoods in Dane County to replicate the Allied Drive Initiative. Each site would be provided \$250,000 to fund 4.0 family support specialists, 0.2 economic support specialist, 1.0 employment and training specialist, and 0.25 social work supervisor and related administrative costs

The administration indicates that the funding may also be used to support the current initiative in the Allied Drive neighborhood. The Allied Drive initiative received \$50,000 per year from 2004 through 2007 from the Madison Community Foundation. 2007 is the last year for which these funds are available. Additionally, Blue Cross/Blue Shield provided \$150,000 per year from 2004 through 2007 for the project. Dane County is seeking, and expects to receive, continued funding from Blue Cross/Blue Shield to support the initiative.

4. In addition to improving the lives of program participants, programs such as the Allied Drive early childhood initiative may produce long-term savings through decreased future publicly-funded costs associated with violence and crime, inadequate health care, and

unemployment.

If the Committee adopts the Governor’s recommendations by providing state funding for the initiative, and additional private funding is not secured for the Allied Drive neighborhood, Dane County would reallocate some of the funding to maintain the initiative in this neighborhood.

In order to continue this initiative and replicate it in other neighborhoods, the Committee may wish to approve the Governor’s recommendation and provide \$500,000 from vital records fees for this purpose, as recommended by the Governor. Alternatively, the Committee could: (a) reduce funding by one-half to provide funding for Dane County to replicate the initiative in one, rather than two neighborhoods; or (b) require Dane County to match the amount of state funding that would be provided, either with county funds or private funds, or some combination of the two.

5. The Committee could determine that it is inappropriate to use vital records fees, to fund this program, since: (a) the priority use of the fee revenue should be the state’s vital records program; and (b) while vital records fees are paid by all Wisconsin residents, the program’s benefits would primarily accrue to a single geographic area (Dane County). For these reasons, if the Committee wishes to provide state support for these activities, it could provide GPR funding for the initiative, rather than support from vital record fee revenue.

6. On the other hand, in 2007, Dane County will receive an estimated \$19 million in community aids and \$4.2 million in shared revenue payments. Dane County could allocate a portion of these funds to support the Allied Drive expansion.

7. Finally, the Committee must weigh its desire to support this initiative with state funds with the Governor’s proposed increases in vital records fees, which are discussed in another paper. The Committee’s decision regarding the Governor’s proposed increases in vital records fees would determine the availability of vital records fee revenue to support this initiative.

ALTERNATIVES TO BILL

A. Funding -- Source and Amount

1. Approve the Governor’s proposal to provide \$500,000 PR annually in vital records fee revenue to support the program.

ALT A1	Change to Bill Funding	Change to Base Funding
PR	\$0	\$1,000,000

2. Provide \$250,000 PR annually, from vital records fee revenue, for the program.

ALT A2	Change to Bill	Change to Base
	Funding	Funding
PR	- \$500,000	\$500,000

3. Delete PR funding from vital records fee revenue in the bill. Instead, provide \$500,000 GPR annually for the program.

ALT A3	Change to Bill	Change to Base
	Funding	Funding
GPR	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
PR	<u>- 1,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$0	\$1,000,000

4. Delete PR funding from vital records fee revenue in the bill. Instead, provide \$250,000 GPR annually for the program.

ALT A4	Change to Bill	Change to Base
	Funding	Funding
GPR	\$500,000	\$500,000
PR	<u>- 1,000,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	- \$500,000	\$500,000

5. Delete provision. (If the Committee selects this option, no options need be chosen under "B" or "C.")

ALT A5	Change to Bill	Change to Base
	Funding	Funding
PR	- \$1,000,000	\$0

B. Earmark Funding for Dane County

1. Adopt the Governor's recommendations to earmark funding for the early childhood initiative for services in Dane County.

2. Delete the reference in the bill to Dane County, and direct DHFS to issue a competitive request for proposal to permit all counties to compete for funding that would be provided for this purpose.

C. Match Requirement

1. Adopt the Governor's recommendation not to require the grant recipient to provide an equal amount of matching funds as a condition of receiving the state grant amount.
2. Require the grant recipient to provide an equal amount of matching funds as a condition of receiving the state grant amount.

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ATTACHMENT

Early Childhood Initiative Logic Model

