



**Date:** September 7, 2021

**To:** Wanda S. Page, City Manager  
**Through:** Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager  
**From:** Reginald J. Johnson, Director  
**Community Development**  
**Subject:** Interlocal Agreement with the Durham Public Schools Board of Education to support the Promoting Academic Learning Program (PAL)

### **Executive Summary**

The City of Durham was allocated Community Development Block Grant Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDBG-CV Program is designed to help communities prepare, prevent, or respond to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The activities must be most critical to their locality and primarily for their low- and moderate-income residents.

The impact of COVID-19 and remote learning significantly limited effective teaching and learning practices and in many cases negatively influenced school, family, and community relationships which has been shown to have a direct correlation on student learning outcomes. The increase in student absences is expected to yield significant learning loss, especially for the most vulnerable students, which ultimately broadens the learning opportunity between racial and socio-economic subgroups.

Under the proposed Interlocal Agreement (ILA), the City of Durham, through its Community Development Department (CDD), will provide \$539,000 in CDBG-CV funds to Durham Public Schools Board of Education (DPS) to support the implementation of the Promoting Academic Learning (PAL) Program in four elementary schools: Burton, Fayetteville Street, Eastway, and W.G. Pearson. The schools were selected based on their location in low-income census tracts and the Bull's Eye area, a two square mile low-income area where the City has previously targeted resources. The PAL Program is designed to accelerate student learning and provide targeted, supplemental instruction for student mastery of grade level content. PAL will offer an academically integrated approach wherein students who experienced a learning delay/setback due to COVID-19 will receive site based, targeted interventions, small group instruction, personalized learning, enrichment (arts integration), and social-emotional learning from highly effective educators during the school day and afterschool beginning September 27, 2021 and ending June 1, 2022.

### **Motion**

To resolve that the City Manager be authorized to execute an Interlocal Agreement with the Durham Public Schools Board of Education to support the Promoting Academic Learning (PAL) Program with Community Development Block Grant-Coronavirus (CDBG-CV) funding in the amount of \$539,000.

### **Background**

The CARES Act, Public Law 116-136, was signed into law on March 27, 2020, to provide additional funding for communities in their efforts to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic. In response to COVID-19, the U.S. Congress has authorized HUD to provide supplemental formula allocations for HUD's Community Planning and Development programs, including CDBG-CV funding to the City of Durham. In total, the City of Durham received \$2,716,217 in CDBG-CV funding. On December 7, 2020, a Public Hearing was held for a substantial amendment to the 2020-2021 Annual Action Plan. Following the public hearing City Council Approved the substantial amendment which was subsequently approved by HUD.

The impact of COVID-19 and remote learning significantly limited effective teaching and learning practices and in many cases negatively influenced school, family, and community relationships which has been shown to have a direct correlation on student learning outcomes. The increase in student absences is expected to yield significant learning loss, especially for the most vulnerable students, which ultimately broadens the learning opportunity between racial and socio-economic subgroups.

The CDD contacted DPS in May 2021 to discuss how CDBG-CV funds could be used to address COVID-19 learning impacts, specifically for low-income students. These discussions resulted in the development of a new program and new partnership between the City and DPS. Under the proposed ILA, the City will provide \$539,000 in CDBG-CV funds to Durham Public Schools (DPS) to support the implementation of the PAL Program.

The PAL Program is designed to mitigate academic learning loss, accelerate student learning by providing supplemental instructional support for student mastery of grade level content in reading and mathematics, and promote family and community engagement. PAL will offer an academically integrated approach wherein students who experienced a learning delay/setback due to COVID-19 will receive site based, targeted interventions, small group instruction, personalized learning, enrichment (arts integration), and social-emotional learning from highly effective educators. To ensure the success of program participants, both intervention (during the school day) and afterschool programs will be offered. The program will run from September 27, 2021 to June 1, 2022.

City CDBG-CV funding will be used to support the implementation of the PAL Program in four elementary schools: Burton, Fayetteville Street, Eastway, and W.G. Pearson. The schools were selected based on their location in the Bull's Eye area and low-income census tracts. A total of 200 students will be served with each site serving approximately 50 students. CDBG-CV funding support staffing and program expenses.

PAL will operate four days per week, from 10:00 a.m. until 5:30 pm. Between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., identified students will receive intensive, targeted intervention and support. Immediately following the dismissal of the regular school day, students will receive additional tutoring and enrichment in the afterschool program from 2:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. Students will receive a snack during the afterschool program. The program will not operate on student holidays, early release days, or inclement weather days.

### **Issues and Analysis**

Federal requirements prohibit the duplication of benefits with CDBG-CV funding. A duplication of benefits (DOB) occurs when a person, household, business, government, or other entity receives financial assistance from multiple sources for the same purpose within the same time period, and the total assistance received for that purpose is more than the total need for assistance. DPS also received an allocation of CARES funding for children that have been negatively affected by

COVID-19. To comply with the DOB requirements, schools chosen to receive City of Durham CDBG-CV funding for the PAL Program have been instructed to not utilize CARES funding to support PAL Program activities. The City will also utilize existing monitoring policies and practices to ensure a DOB does not occur.

**Alternatives**

The City could elect to not enter into this ILA. This option would result in re-starting the process of determining how CDBG-CV funding should be utilized in the community and may potentially require a public hearing and submission of a substantial amendment to HUD. This would significantly delay the distribution of CDBG-CV funding to the communities most in need.

**Financial Impact**

CDBG-CV funds in the amount of \$539,000 are available for this ILA.

**Equal Business Opportunity Summary**

This is a contract that was not reviewed by the Department of Equal Opportunity/ Equity Assurance for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting as it is made up of federal funds.

**Contractor Workforce Diversity & Hiring Practices**

Due to the nature of this agenda item, obtaining Contractor Workforce Diversity & Hiring Practices information is not applicable.

**Attachments**

Durham Public Schools Interlocal Agreement  
Durham Public Schools Attachment A Scope of Work