



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0364, **Version:** 1

Item:

Contract Renewal for County Funded Early Literacy Initiative-Reach Out and Read

Date of BOCC Meeting: August 10, 2020

Request for Board Action:

The Board is requested to approve a contract for continued funding for the Reach Out and Read literacy initiative, budgeted at \$50,000 for FY 21.

Supporting access to educational enrichment is critical as COVID continues to disrupt learning for many young and school-aged children in Durham. Reach Out and Read (ROR) deepens efforts to support early literacy by using co-location to meet families where they are already gathering. ROR promotes literacy through co-location in pediatric practices, training providers in early literacy and providing books for children and parents at well-child visits birth-five.

Also funded in FY 20 at \$50,000, ROR made a significant change to their practice, integrating the initiative into all well-child visits from 0-5, rather than just certain well-child visits, increasing model fidelity at participating clinics.

ROR has pivoted to serve families in physically distanced ways, including training providers on how to use ROR curriculum in telehealth visits. The program is evaluating additional methods to provide children and families with literacy resources as COVID persists. For the reasons listed, and because books and reading can be a stress-reducing and connective activity for children and parents during times of crisis, we are recommending the ROR initiative be continued in FY 20-21. Board contract approval is sought for ROR, budgeted at \$50,000. See the summary document provided for additional information.

Alignment with Strategic Plan: Early childhood literacy initiatives most closely align with Goal 1 (Community Empowerment and Enrichment), Objective 1.1 (Provide and support learning an enrichment opportunities that support educational achievement and life success), Strategy 1.1A (Early Childhood Education: Provide support for children from birth-5 with early childhood educational outreach programming and services).

Resource Persons: Cate Elander, Early Childhood Coordinator; Donna Rewalt, County Extension Director; Drew Cummings, Chief of Staff

County Manager's Recommendation: The County Manager recommends that the Board authorize the County Manager to enter into a contract to continue the Reach Out and Read program in the amount of \$50,000 for FY 21.

County Manager: _____