



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:19-7978

Agenda Item Number: 21.

Agenda Date: 11/14/2019

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: Health

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Jennifer Herriott, MPH

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

Authorizing an agreement with the University of Texas at San Antonio for the provision of epidemiological services for the Preventing Adolescent Alcohol and Substance Abuse project

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and authorizes the acceptance of compensation from UTSA in the amount of \$37,500.00 for the period November 30, 2019 through September 29, 2024, for San Antonio Metropolitan Health District's (Metro Health's) activities supporting the Preventing Adolescent Alcohol and Substance Abuse (PAASA) project.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Alcohol remains widely used by adolescents, teens, and young adults in the US. Although drinking in middle and high school has been declining since the 1990s (showing the efficacy of public health campaigns), some 8% of American 8th graders reported drinking an alcoholic beverage during the past month (Johnston et al., 2019), with the percentage increasing with age. These numbers are larger in Texas with 15% and 20% of 7th and 8th graders, respectively, reporting drinking alcohol in the past month, and 34% and 43% of these students reporting ever using alcohol.

Tafolla Middle School, located just west of downtown San Antonio and comprised primarily of economically disadvantaged (95.1%) and Latino students (96.5%), is no exception. The possession, sale, and use of marijuana are ongoing problems; according to the SAISD Discipline Report by Campus, these accounted for an annual average of 12 offenses from 2016-2018. There is a clear need for improvement in addressing underage alcohol

use and abuse in Texas schools. In addition to risky behaviors like drunk driving, alcohol use can affect adolescent health at a biological level, including neural development and brain architecture (Squeglia and Gray, 2016). Longitudinal studies have found that heavy substance use in adolescence affects cognitive abilities in early adulthood (Hanson et al., 2011), and there may be dose-dependent relationships between alcohol use and cognitive function declines even within adolescence (e.g., Winward et al., 2014). Thus, alcohol and substance use/abuse interventions during adolescence could lead to persistent benefits throughout the lifespan.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has funded the PAASA project that proposes to build the capacities and infrastructure necessary to address alcohol and substance use/abuse at Tafolla Middle School in SAISD. This will be achieved through direct involvement with school district officials, teachers, and community stakeholders. This program also proposes to initiate this long-term, community-driven response to alcohol and substance use/abuse by serving 1,760 middle-school students over the duration of the funding period using evidence-based interventions. Researchers from UTSA are the Principal Investigators for this project.

ISSUE:

Alcohol and substance abuse are major public health concerns in San Antonio and Bexar County, particularly among adolescents. The PAASA project proposes to build the capacities and infrastructure necessary to address alcohol and substance use/abuse at Tafolla Middle School in SAISD. Metro Health will provide epidemiological support by assisting with assessing pressing substance use/abuse needs at Tafolla Middle School; building capacity to address substance use/misuse; formulating a strategic plan to ensure efficacy of intervention(s); implementing selected intervention(s) and evaluating intervention(s) to continually improve results.

Metro Health is requesting City Council authorization of an agreement with UTSA to support the PAASA project and assist the UTSA researchers with epidemiological requirements of this program.

ALTERNATIVES:

Without the proposed agreement, Metro Health would not be able to provide the required epidemiological support to the UTSA researchers for the PAASA project.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and authorizes the acceptance of compensation from UTSA for epidemiological services provided by the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District for the Preventing Adolescent Alcohol and Substance Abuse (PAASA) project. UTSA will reimburse the City for services provided under this Contract in the amount of \$7,500.00 each year of the agreement for a total amount of \$37,500.00. The agreement is for a term beginning November 30, 2019 and ending September 29, 2024. There is no impact to the City's General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of an ordinance authorizing an agreement with UTSA to provide epidemiological support for the PAASA project to address alcohol and substance use/abuse at Tafolla Middle School in SAISD.

