## STAFF REPORT

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| **Agenda Item:** | 5 | **Name:** | Miranda Leskinen and Wendy Soo Hoo |
| **Proposed No**.: | 2021-0288 | **Date:** | October 13, 2021 |

**SUBJECT**

An Ordinance adopting the Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan for 2022-2027.

**SUMMARY**

Ordinance 19267, the legislation that placed the Best Starts for Kids renewal levy proposition on the ballot,[[1]](#footnote-2) required that the Executive transmit to the Council an implementation plan by July 31st that identifies the strategies to be funded and outcomes to be achieved with the use of BSK levy proceeds.[[2]](#footnote-3)

Proposed Ordinance 2021-0288 would adopt the Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan for the 2022-2027 levy period. The transmitted plan outlines the funding strategies, proposed programs and outcomes for levy investments consistent with Ordinance 19267.

The proposed ordinance was transmitted to the Council on July 28th and has been dually referred, first to the Regional Policy Committee, as a mandatory referral, and then to the Committee of the Whole. The Regional Policy Committee held an initial hearing on the proposed ordinance at its September 8, 2021 meeting, and the Committee of the Whole was briefed on the proposed plan at its September 15, 2021 meeting. Today is the second briefing on the proposed ordinance in the Regional Policy Committee.

Final action is requested by the end of November 2021, as indicated by Executive staff, to provide sufficient time for implementation of new contracts at the beginning of 2022.

**BACKGROUND**

Best Starts for Kids (BSK) is a levy-funded regional initiative that is aimed at supporting the healthy development of children and youth, families, and communities across King County through strategic investments in promotion, prevention and early intervention programs and services.

**2016-2021 BSK Levy.** The current Best Starts for Kids levy that was approved by King County voters in November 2015 is a property tax levied at an initial rate of $0.14 per $1,000 of assessed valuation in 2016, with an increase of up to three percent for each of the five subsequent years of the levy—2017 through 2021.[[3]](#footnote-4) The levy is anticipated to generate a total of approximately $404.8 million in revenues over the six-year levy period, based on the most recent July 2021 revenue forecast. Table 1 shows the projected annual revenues in dollars.

**Table 1. BSK Annual Revenues in Dollars[[4]](#footnote-5)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tax Year**  | **Value**  |
| 2016 | $59,455,206 |
| 2017 | $62,379,867 |
| 2018 | $65,652,750 |
| 2019 | $69,094,328 |
| 2020 | $72,426,449 |
| 2021 | $75,846,946 |
| **Total** | **$404,855,546** |

The BSK levy ordinance (Ordinance 18088) directed that out of the first year's levy proceeds, $19 million[[5]](#footnote-6) be set aside to fund the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative[[6]](#footnote-7) (YFHPI) as well as the amounts that were necessary to pay for election costs related to the levy. The ordinance directed all remaining levy proceeds to be disbursed as follows:

* **50 percent for the Invest Early Allocation**: *Focusing on children (ages 0-5) and families where they are to support healthy child development and family well-being.*
* **35 percent for the Sustain the Gain Allocation**: *Focusing on supporting positive development for children and young people (ages 5 to 24) as they progress into adulthood.*
* **10 percent for the Communities Matter Allocation** (Communities of Opportunity): *Focusing on strategies to create safe and healthy communities, building on a partnership between the County and The Seattle Foundation on Communities of Opportunity, which is based on the latest research regarding the impact of place on individual and population health and wellbeing outcomes. Includes local community supports in building their own capacity to create positive change.*
* **5 percent for the Outcomes-Focused and Data-Driven Allocation:** *Supporting evaluation, data collection and improving the delivery of services and programs under the levy.*[[7]](#footnote-8)

Table 2, provided by Executive staff, identifies the current spending breakdown for the 2016-2021 levy period.

**Table 2. BSK 2016-2021 Spending Breakdown**



BSK Implementation Plan. In September 2016, the Council passed Ordinance 18373 adopting the BSK Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan provides guidance on the goals, investments and implementation of the BSK Levy.[[8]](#footnote-9)

Since its inception, BSK has pursued three overarching results:

* Babies are born healthy and are provided with a strong foundation for lifelong health and wellbeing
* King County is a place where everyone has equitable opportunities to be safe and healthy as they progress through childhood, building academic and life skills to be thriving members of their communities
* Communities offer safe, welcoming and healthy environments that help improve outcomes for all of King County’s children and families, regardless of where they live

Levy Oversight. The BSK Levy is overseen by the Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB), which carries dual responsibilities tied to the Best Starts for Kids Levy and the Youth Action Plan, as well as the Communities of Opportunity-Best Starts for Kids Advisory Board, which is the advisory body for the COO portion of the levy.

The current COO-BSK Advisory Board, codified as K.C.C. 2A.300.520, expires December 31, 2021.

Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative (YFHPI). The BSK Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative (YFHPI) is aimed at preventing and diverting children and youth and their families from becoming homeless. The YFHPI program model includes mobile case management based on progressive engagement and flexible financial assistance aimed at homelessness prevention. Program eligibility is intended for youth and families who are at imminent risk of homelessness, whereas individuals who have already become homeless are served through the local homeless services system (HMIS).

BSK Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan.The BSK Implementation Plan set out the principles for the BSK evaluation, including requirements for the BSK Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan (EPMP) which outlines strategies, methods, and metrics to evaluate and measure the performance of the BSK initiative. The EPMP was accepted by Motion 14979 on October 17, 2017. The accepted EPMP did not contain any major divergences compared to the policy direction in the preliminary evaluation framework in the BSK Implementation Plan or in the YFHPI Implementation Plan. However, there were some key changes that were reflective of the initiative’s evolution as implementation roll-out continued.[[9]](#footnote-10)

**BSK Levy Renewal Planning.** Motion 15651, adopted by the Council in July 2020, requested the executive submit for the Council’s review an assessment report of the current levy funded goals, strategies, and programs. The intent of the assessment was to inform the Council’s deliberations regarding the potential for a levy renewal since the current levy expires at the end of 2021. Motion 15651 included a detailed list of reporting requirements covering both an assessment of the current levy and recommendations for any future levy. On October 15, 2020, the Executive transmitted the assessment report, as required by Motion 15651, and a proposed motion that would, if enacted, accept the report. In December 2020, the Council passed a motion to accept the report.[[10]](#footnote-11)

**Ordinance 19267: Renewal Levy Ballot Proposition.** In April 2021, the Council approved Ordinance 19267, which placed a BSK renewal levy proposition on the ballot. The six-year (2022-2027) renewal levy, approved by King County voters on August 3, 2021, entails an initial levy rate of $0.19 per $1,000 of assessed value in 2022 with a three percent annual limit (growth) factor. Based on the most recent July 2021 revenue forecast, the renewal levy is expected to generate approximately $884 million over the six-year levy period. Broadly speaking, the renewal levy will continue to provide funding for prevention and early intervention programs and services for children, youth, and young adults, ages 0 to 24, as well as their families and their communities. Additionally, the new levy will expand to add funding to support improved access to child care throughout King County as well as invest up to $50 million (subject to levy revenue projections) for a new capital grants program for facility/building repairs and expansion and to support the construction of new buildings/facilities that will serve children and youth.

Ordinance 19267 directs that levy proceeds shall be used to:

* Promote improved health and well-being outcomes of children and youth, as well as the families and the communities in which they live;
* Prevent and intervene early on negative outcomes;
* Reduce inequities in outcomes for children and youth in the county; and
* Strengthen, improve, better coordinate, integrate and encourage innovation in health and human services systems and the agencies, organizations and groups addressing the needs of children and youth, their families and their communities.

The levy ordinance further directs that of the eligible expenditures, an amount of each year’s levy proceeds must be allocated first toward the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative (YFHPI), a new affordable child care program, a new child care workforce demonstration project, and continuing technical assistance and capacity building programs – these programs will collectively be referred to as the “First Allocation” in this staff report. Allocated levy proceeds (to be described in the BSK Implementation Plan) must be used to plan, provide, fund, administer, measure performance and evaluate these programs.

In the levy’s first year, after accounting for attributable election costs, 22.5 percent of the first-year levy proceeds are to be allocated to the “First Allocation” programs. In the subsequent levy years (2023-2027), rather than specifying an annual percent allocation, it is broadly directed that the amount to be distributed to these programs be allocated so that the six-year levy investment for these purposes totals at least $240 million including $1M annually to go toward a grant program (to be described in the Implementation Plan) to support capacity building and developing infrastructure in areas lacking services/services infrastructure.[[11]](#footnote-12)

All remaining levy proceeds are to be disbursed as follows, to plan, provide and administer the following:

* 50 percent for Investing Early strategies (ages 0-5)
* 37 percent for Sustain the Gain strategies (age 5 or older)
* 8 percent for Communities of Opportunity
* 5 percent for performance measurement, evaluation and data collection; CYAB stipends; and pro-rationing mitigation (if authorized by ordinance) for applicable local metropolitan parks, fire and public hospital districts. These programs will collectively be referred to as the “Five Percent Allocation” in this staff report.

The renewal levy will also invest up to $50 million (subject to levy revenue projections) to establish a new capital grants program for facility/building repairs and expansion and to support the construction of new buildings/facilities that will serve children and youth. Program funding will be subject first to reduction (meaning reduced before reductions to other program funding) if total levy revenue projections fall below $872M. Ordinance 19267 identifies that buildings and facilities that serve children and youth “*shall include, but not be limited to, housing and child care, early learning and recreational facilities*”. Per Ordinance 19267, program details are to be described in the BSK Implementation Plan, as well as a policy for prioritizing capital investments in new buildings/facilities as compared to investments in existing buildings/facilities.

**Motion 15888.** Motion 15888, approved by the Council in June 2021, requested the Executive, in developing the proposed implementation plan, to identify in the transmitted plan strategies relating to prevention, outreach and early intervention to address mental health and substance use impacts, in children and youth 5 through 24 years old, that have been exacerbated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the motion requested the Executive, in developing the plan, to consider programs and services that provide, expand access to, or provide and expand access to substance use disorder supports for children and youth, including, but limited to, awareness campaigns on substance use.[[12]](#footnote-13)

**ANALYSIS**

This section provides staff analysis of the transmitted plan as follows:

* Implementation Plan overview
* Estimated funding distribution
* “First Allocation”
* Child Care Subsidies and Wage Demonstration Project
* Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative
* Technical Assistance and Capacity Building
* Capital Grants Program
* Investing Early Allocation
* Sustain the Gain Allocation
* Communities of Opportunity Allocation
* “Five Percent Allocation”
* Data and evaluation
* CYAB stipends
* Pro-rationing mitigation
* Procurement and Financial Policies
* Supplantation considerations in King County
* Potential policy issues
* Next steps and key dates

**Implementation Plan Overview.** Ordinance 19267 directed the Executive to transmit by July 31, 2021, a proposed levy implementation plan to the Council for its review and adoption by ordinance. The plan must identify the strategies to be funded and outcomes to be achieved with the use of the levy’s proceeds and include a framework to measure the performance of levy strategies in achieving their outcomes. Regarding plan development, the following is required of the Executive:

* Develop the proposed implementation plan in consultation with the CYAB and the COO-BSK Advisory Board.
* Consider and promote harmony with the current levy’s implementation plan, particularly regarding which of the current plan’s strategies will continue in the proposed new implementation plan; and
* To the maximum extent possible, take into consideration the Youth Action Plan.

Per Ordinance 19267, levy proceeds may not be expended until the effective date of the adopted implementation plan ordinance.

The executive transmitted the proposed BSK Implementation Plan for 2022-2027 on July 28, 2021 (Proposed Ordinance 2021-0288).

Community engagement. As indicated in the transmitted plan (Attachment A to PO 2021-0288), the CYAB and the COO Governing Group were consulted in the development of the proposed plan and both endorsed the plan in June 2021. Additionally, the transmitted plan notes that BSKpartnered with ten regionally based coalitions of community organizations and five community stakeholder groups to host 15 listening sessions, from August through November 2020, and that input from those sessions and a community survey informed the recommendations for a renewed and expanded levy.

King County Youth Action Plan Consideration. King County enacted Ordinance 17738 in 2014, establishing the youth action plan task force and providing policy direction regarding the development of a youth action plan. Motion 14378 adopted the Youth Action Plan. According to the transmitted Implementation Plan, the Youth Action Plan serves as a policy frame for BSK, including the proposed BSK Implementation Plan for 2022-2027.

**Estimated Funding Distribution.** Revenue estimates for the BSK renewal levy are based on an initial levy rate of $0.19 per $1,000 of assessed value in 2022 with a three percent annual limit (growth) factor. According to the most recent July 2021 revenue forecast, upon which the transmitted plan is based, the renewal levy is currently expected to generate a total of nearly $884 million (approximately $12 million higher than the March 2021 forecast).

Broadly speaking, the renewal levy will continue to provide funding for prevention and early intervention programs and services for children, youth, and young adults, ages 0 to 24, as well as their families and their communities. Additionally, the new levy will expand to add funding to support improved access to child care throughout King County as well as invest up to $50 million (subject to levy revenue projections) for a new capital grants program for facility/building repairs and expansion and to support the construction of new buildings/facilities that will serve children and youth. Table 3 shows the currently projected levy revenues, approximate spending breakdown by investment area (including capital investments), and reserves. This information is also provided in Table 8 and Appendix H of the Executive’s proposed plan.

**Table 3: BSK Projected 2022-2027 Financials**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** | **2025** | **2026** | **2027** | **TOTAL** ***(Millions)*** | **% of all Expenditures after 2022 set-asides per Ord. 19267** |
| **Child Care Subsidies & Wage Demonstration Project** | 23.26 | 31.14 | 32.12 | 35.15 | 38.49 | 39.14 | 199.3 | \* |
| **YFHPI** | 4.56 | 4.83 | 4.94 | 4.96 | 4.96 | 4.97 | 29.2 |
| **TA/CB** | 1.85 | 1.90 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 11.7 |
| **Investing Early** | 46.05 | 46.86 | 47.90 | 48.97 | 50.06 | 51.12 | 291 | **50%** |
| Home-Based Services | 10.00 | 10.20 | 10.45 | 10.68 | 10.91 | 11.15 | 63.39 |  |
| Community-Based Parenting Supports | 3.80 | 3.88 | 3.97 | 4.06 | 4.15 | 4.24 | 24.10 |  |
| Maternal and Child Health Services | 14.19 | 14.30 | 14.62 | 14.96 | 15.30 | 15.65 | 89.02 |  |
| Child care Consultation | 3.40 | 3.48 | 3.55 | 3.63 | 3.71 | 3.79 | 21.56 |  |
| ESIT | 4.50 | 4.60 | 4.70 | 4.80 | 4.91 | 5.02 | 28.53 |  |
| Universal Developmental Screening | 3.00 | 3.01 | 3.13 | 3.20 | 3.27 | 3.35 | 19 |  |
| Systems Building for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health | 1.50 | 1.53 | 1.57 | 1.60 | 1.64 | 1.67 | 9.51 |  |
| Innovation Supports | 1.00 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 1.07 | 1.09 | 1.12 | 6.34 |  |
| Workforce Development | 1.31 | 1.34 | 1.37 | 1.40 | 1.43 | 1.46 | 8.31 |  |
| Environmental Supports: Lead & Toxics | 0.75 | 0.77 | 0.78 | 0.80 | 0.82 | 0.84 | 4.76 |  |
| Help Me Grow | 2.60 | 2.66 | 2.72 | 2.78 | 2.84 | 2.90 | 16.50 |  |
| **Sustain the Gain** | 33.97 | 34.71 | 35.48 | 36.26 | 37.05 | 37.87 | 215 | **37%** |
| Liberation and Healing | 4.85 | 4.96 | 5.07 | 5.12 | 5.29 | 5.41 | 30.7 |  |
| Youth Development | 4.45 | 4.55 | 4.65 | 4.75 | 4.86 | 4.96 | 28.20 |  |
| Expanded Learning | 6.96 | 7.11 | 7.26 | 7.42 | 7.56 | 7.75 | 44.10 |  |
| Positive Family Connections | 1.40 | 1.43 | 1.46 | 1.49 | 1.53 | 1.56 | 8.87 |  |
| School Based Health Centers | 3.00 | 3.01 | 3.13 | 3.20 | 3.27 | 3.35 | 19.0 |  |
| Child and Adolescent Immunizations | 0.45 | 0.46 | 0.47 | 0.48 | 0.49 | 0.50 | 2.85 |  |
| Healthy and Safe Environments | 1.00 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 1.07 | 1.09 | 1.12 | 6.34 |  |
| SB: SBIRT | 2.48 | 2.53 | 2.56 | 2.64 | 2.70 | 2.76 | 15.6 |  |
| Transitions to Adulthood | 4.74 | 4.84 | 4.95 | 5.05 | 5.17 | 5.28 | 30.0 |  |
| Stopping the School to Prison Pipeline | 4.65 | 4.75 | 4.86 | 4.96 | 5.07 | 5.19 | 29.48 |  |
| **COO** | 7.34 | 7.50 | 7.67 | 7.84 | 8.01 | 8.18 | 46.5 | **8%** |
| **Results Focused and Data Driven** | 4.59 | 4.69 | 4.79 | 4.90 | 5.01 | 5.12 | 29 | **5%** |
| **Total Approx. Expenditures** | **121.6** | **131.6** | **134.9** | **140.1** | **145.6** | **148.4** | **822\*\*** |  |
| **Projected Approx. Revenues** **(As of 07/21)** | **132.0** | **137.9** | **143.9** | **150.1** | **156.6** | **163.3** | **883.8** |  |
| **90-Day Rainy Day Reserve\*\*\*** | **29.91** | **32.46** | **33.23** | **34.54** | **35.90** | **36.61** | **-** |  |
| **Capital Projects** | 5.00 | 7.50 | 5.00 | 8.75 | 9.50 | 14.25 | 50 |  |
| *\*Equals a levy total investment of approximately $240M for the First Allocation Programs**\*\*Rounded to nearest million* *\*\*\*Assumes beginning fund balance of approximately $25M in addition to new revenue* |

**Child Care Subsidies and Wage Demonstration Project: *$199.3 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** The transmitted implementation plan includes a new child care subsidy program, whereby BSK would partner with one or more intermediaries to administer subsidies to expand child care at licensed centers or family child care sites for approximately 3,000 children annually in King County ages 0-12 and their families. The program, as described in the plan, would aim to expand access for children and their families who are not eligible for existing federal, state, or local subsidy programs or for whom such programs are insufficient. The program would also aim to work toward advancing equity and eliminating disparities in accessing child care by prioritizing families who experience additional challenges to accessing care, such as families who live in areas without open child care slots, BIPOC [[13]](#footnote-14)families, and families whose children have disabilities or developmental delays.

The child care subsidy eligibility cap, per the plan, will prioritize families whose incomes are slightly too high to meet the state’s eligibility criteria and will be adjusted accordingly throughout the levy period to reflect changes in state and federal policy. The plan notes that BSK will coordinate closely with local and state partners to understand where gaps and needs exist, how to coordinate services, and how best to prioritize families who need access most. BSK would calibrate subsidies to ensure funding streams are aligned and leveraged to expand access and affordability and to ensure a seamless and easily accessible experience for families. According to Executive staff, the reimbursement rate will be determined in partnership with the Children and Families Child Care Task Force, DCYF and local partners. [[14]](#footnote-15)

Additionally, the plan proposes to allocate at least $5 million annually during the levy to establish a BSK Wage Boost Demonstration Project, whereby a salary supplement will be made available to project participants. Per the implementation plan, BSK will partner with an intermediary that will be responsible for distributing funds and data collection. Eligible project participants are proposed to include low-paid child care providers working with children ages 0-12 in King County.

The project is expected to take the form of an hourly wage boost or a retention bonus model based on length of service and is projected to reach at least 1,400 providers, prioritizing those working in areas with limited child care access or serving low-income families.[[15]](#footnote-16) Per the transmitted plan, BSKwill engage with child care providers and staff to design and refine the project’s specific eligibility parameters, priorities, and structure, and to minimize disparities in access to the program potentially experienced by smaller providers with limited infrastructure. Participating individual child care providers would be accepted on a rolling basis and will be able to remain in the project for the duration of their employment or through 2027, whichever comes first. The plan notes that BSK will ensure sufficient technical assistance to support child care providers, teachers, and staff in equitably accessing the program.

According to Executive staff, the Executive intends to partner with the Children and Families Strategy Task Force, the State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), Seattle and other community partners to develop specific criteria, including income eligibility, for both programs. Specific criteria for the Child Care subsidies and Wage Boost would be defined in the respective RFP processes based on priorities identified during that engagement. Currently, DCYF is still developing program details for the new Fair Start Act. As further noted, this engagement will allow King County to leverage state resources and serve the lowest income, most vulnerable households not otherwise served by state and other resources.

**Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative: *$29.2 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** The implementation plan proposes to increase funding for the YFHPI by approximately $8 million during the renewal levy period to a total of approximately $29.2 million in order to support equitable pay standards for case managers supporting YFHPI participants across all program contractors to positively impact workforce turnover and improve service quality. The program is anticipated to serve approximately 2,000 families each year during the renewal levy period.

**Technical Assistance and Capacity Building[[16]](#footnote-17): *$11.7 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** As described in the transmitted plan, BSK will continue to provide technical assistance during the renewal levy, such as to support the removal of linguistic, cultural and procedural obstacles that might prevent qualified organizations from seeking BSK funding. The plan further notes that capacity building support will continue to be available to organizations awarded BSK funding. Example areas of capacity support include financial management, human resources, data evaluation, IT, marketing, board governance, equity and social justice, legal services and organizational development. For context, capacity builders offer individualized, responsive coaching and training to support organizations’ capabilities. Additionally, BSK will offer free provision and co-creation of information, tools, resources to strengthen the infrastructure of organizations receiving BSK funding, and opportunities to build capacity for areas with service gaps.

Per Ordinance 19267, $1M annually must be dedicated during the levy toward a grant program to support capacity building and developing infrastructure in areas lacking services/services infrastructure. According to the transmitted implementation plan, BSK intends to:

* Use data to identify communities lacking services/services infrastructure;
* Partner with communities identified as lacking services/services infrastructure using data to inform decisions;
* Partner with local coalitions in identified communities to plan for enhanced capacity; and
* Complete outreach to areas identified as lacking infrastructure and services to best understands needs.

The plan notes that increased funding during the renewal levy will allow the addition of a new type of capacity building to help create new organizations where there are currently none serving a need, or to help organizations grow to serve a previously underserved area.

**Capital Grants Program: *$50.0 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** The transmitted plan proposes allocating $50 million to the new capital grants program. This amount is consistent with Ordinance 19267, which specified that levy proceeds projected above $822 million go to support capital grants for repairs or renovations to existing facilities serving children and youth and construction of new buildings and facilities to serve children and youth. For context, the levy ordinance set a maximum amount of $50 million for capital grants and specified that if proceeds were projected to fall below $872 million, then the capital grants program would be reduced first before reductions to any other levy purposes. As noted previously, the proposed implementation plan is based on the July 2021 revenue forecast of $884 million for the BSK levy, so the plan assumes the full $50 million allowed for capital grants.

Requirements for Implementation Plan Related to the Capital Grants Program. In relation to the grants program, Ordinance 19267 required the implementation plan to:

* *Identify a process for determining annually if a reduction to the capital grants program is needed (i.e., if the projected revenues were to fall below $872 million).* According to the proposed plan, capital grant funding will be offered on an annual basis through a competitive process. DCHS will review projections each year to determine the amount of funding available for the upcoming year and the capital grants program would be reduced accordingly if projections fall below $872 million. In addition, the projected annual amounts are proposed to fluctuate with larger amounts assumed later in the levy to ensure sufficient reserves in earlier years, as shown in Table 3.
* *Prioritize capital investments in new buildings or facilities as compared to existing buildings or facilities.* The transmitted plan identifies Priority 1 as investing in new or existing facilities to provide new community or recreational centers that prioritize BIPOC children, youth, and families, and low-income communities where there are limited to no other facilities available. Priority 2 would entail repairs and upgrades to existing multi-use community centers, early learning centers, child-care or recreational facilities to address health and safety issues. Priority 3 would entail expanding child-care and early learning facilities for multipurpose uses. Priority 4 would focus on creation of affordable family or youth housing that includes a child care or youth development component on site.

The proposed plan states that prioritization will also go to rural areas or low-income areas with lack of access and sites that are multi-use, intergenerational, or include covered outdoor spaces. Of note, all funded sites would need to provide programs for children and youth or child-care or early learning services and would be expected to host low-cost or free programming for low-income households.

The plan also indicates that only Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects would be funded in 2022 and 2023 to make it possible for new and improved facilities to host BSK programs sooner. Note also that the grants would be invested with no expectation of repayment unless the conditions of the performance term for use is not met (e.g., a change or use or sale of a facility). Exceptions would be made if a loan structure is required to leverage other financing, such as tax credits.

Note that the transmitted implementation plan does not specify any minimum or maximum grant awards, the types of organizations that are eligible or how to allocate funds among the identified priorities, as the Executive intended to provide flexibility.

**Investing Early Allocation (*formerly known as “Invest Early”*): *$291.0 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment*.** The Investing Early allocation, per Ordinance 19267, includes strategies[[17]](#footnote-18) focused on children and youth under six years old and their caregivers, pregnant persons and individuals or families concerning pregnancy. Table 4, excepted from the transmitted plan, identifies the individual strategies to be funded, and estimated funding, for this investment area.

**Table 4. Investing Early Strategies and Funding Estimates**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategy** | **2022-2027 Funding Estimate** |
| **Maternal and Child Health Services** provides a range of vital supports at home, clinic, and community settings to pregnant individuals and parenting families. | **$89,024,000**  |
| **Home-Based Services** provides relationship-based support to expecting parents and parents of children aged birth to five in the places they live. | **$63,398,000**  |
| **Community-Based Parenting Supports (CBPS)** provides community-centered, peer-based services to pregnant individuals, parents, and caregivers of children aged birth to five. | **$24,091,000**  |
| **Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT)** promotes equitable outcomes for families with children, aged birth to three, who have developmental delays or disabilities. | **$28,529,000**  |
| **Universal Developmental Screening** provides information, training, tools, and connections among providers to ensure all King County children receive culturally appropriate, high-quality developmental screening throughout early childhood. | **$19,020,000**  |
| **Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC)** promotes the health, safety, and development of children and caregivers in child care settings. | **$21,555,000**  |
| **Systems Building for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health** focuses on improving social and emotional outcomes of young children aged birth to five.  | **$9,510,000**  |
| **Workforce Development** provides training, technical assistance, and peer learning opportunities to build the knowledge and skills of early childhood practitioners [e.g., home visitors, child care providers, doulas, social workers, and mental health providers]. | **$8,305,000**  |
| **Innovation Supports** leverages the expertise and creativity of community to design, develop, and lead effective programs and interventions serving children aged birth to five and their families. [In terms of scope, the plan anticipates serving 10-15 organizations every two-to-three years during the levy]. | **$6,340,000**  |
| **Help Me Grow** empowers families to support their children’s health by connecting them to what they need, when and how they need it. | **$16,484,000**  |
| **Environmental Supports: Lead and Toxics** builds on this leadership to prevent childhood lead poisoning, identify and reduce exposures to environmental toxics, and equitably improve health outcomes. | **$4,755,000**  |

Proposed refinements for the renewal levy period. The transmitted plan includes the following notable proposed adjustments for the renewal levy period:

* ***Maternal and Child Health Services:*** Add a new program (Family Ways) beginning in 2022. This program, as described in the plan, will provide peer support, resource navigation, and pregnancy-related education and services grounded in anti-racist principles and cultural fluency. Additionally, stemming from a redesign in 2020 of Parent/Child Health Services[[18]](#footnote-19), the PCH program will increase mobile services during the renewal levy and embed teams within community partner organizations.
* ***Home-Based Services:*** Focus on funding supports for African American and LGBTQIA+ families (to address service gaps); add emergency funds for basic needs or items like utility payments into program budgets for providers to access; and pilot enhanced case management supports in a subset of grantees.
* ***Community-Based Parenting Supports:*** Combine two existing, related programs (Caregiver Peer Supports and Community-Based Parenting Supports) into one body of work.
* **Early Support for Infants and Toddlers *(ESIT):*** Recruit and build capacity of new CBOs[[19]](#footnote-20) to become ESIT providers; provide equity and capacity building supports to providers; and build workforce development pathways.
* ***Universal Development Screenings:*** Utilize findings from the Universal Developmental Screening Analysis, which was a community-driven participatory research project commissioned by the levy in 2019.
* ***Child Care Health Consultation* *(CCHC):*** Continue funding systems development work with a focus on developing a cohesive and accessible countywide system of child care health consultation that alleviates race and place-based inequities; and expand focus populations served by CCHC programs to reach new cultural, language and geographic communities not currently served.
* ***Systems Building for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health:*** Implement priorities that were identified by the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health workgroup in 2021. Of note, the County hosted the workgroup that included local providers and subject-matter experts.
* ***Workforce Development*:** Support alignment, integrated equity and inclusive methods of deliveries (adult learning) for all levy-funded programs; and co-design workshops with BIPOC communities.
* ***Innovation Supports:*** Contract with CBO leads to provide peer supports; and be responsive with timely and innovative investments to emergent needs.
* ***Help Me Grow (HMG):*** Convene stakeholders in early learning for greater collaboration and stronger early childhood development system coordination in King County; convene a CBO collaborative partnership for strengthening referral pathways and coordinated access regionally, increased language and cultural matches, and greater visibility of service delivery across the HMG county network; and integrate tools and resources for families and providers to better understand child development and available resources.
* ***Environmental Supports:*** Use data and program evaluation to inform policy and program activities and implement BIPOC community-driven priorities; partner with stakeholders to support all children receiving appropriate blood lead testing; deliver resources and consultation to eliminate and replace sources of toxic exposures, and develop public education materials and training resources; integrate program activities in other levy strategies (e.g., partner with ESIT to provide a model for assessing blood lead level testing status of children referred for developmental services); and develop and implement a medical legal partnership to address healthy housing and other policies, laws and systems at the root of health inequities affecting families.

**Sustain the Gain Allocation: *$215.3 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment*.** The Sustain the Gain allocation includes strategies focused on children and youth ages five or older. Table 5, excepted from the transmitted plan, identifies the individual strategies to be funded, and estimated funding, for this investment area.

**Table 5. Sustain the Gain Strategies and Funding Estimates**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategy** | **2022-2027 Funding Estimate** |
| **Expanded Learning** provideshigh-quality and culturally responsive programming to children and youth, including access to a range of activities from academic enrichment to cultural and social development activities, recreation, physical activity and health promotion, arts education, and leadership skills. | **$44,094,000**  |
| **Youth Development** invests in mentoring, leadership and positive identity development, and opportunities to learn how to develop healthy and safe relationships (including domestic violence prevention and peer to peer support). | **$28,212,000** |
| **SB: SBIRT School-Based Screening and Brief Intervention and for Referral to Treatment/Services** provides prevention, outreach, and early intervention to address mental health and substance use impacts during the critical middle school years. | **$15,691,000**  |
| **School-Based Health Centers** (SBHC) provides comprehensive medical, mental health, and dental services in school settings to children and adolescents who are often underserved by the medical community. | **$19,020,000**  |
| **Liberation and Healing** addresses community trauma and its impacts on young people by promoting strengths-based social and emotional supports. | **$30,748,000**  |
| **Positive Family Connections** strengthens parent-to-parent engagement, kinship care relationships, intergenerational and cultural heritage bonds, restorative practices, personal development for young people and parents/caregivers, and the connections among these family members. | **$8,876,000** |
| **Healthy and Safe Environments** funds community partners empowering youth to transform systems, environments, and policies to decrease and prevent continued inequity in their communities. | **$6,340,000**  |
| **Stopping the School-to-Prison Pipeline (SSPP)** invests in direct service programs as an alternative to harmful punitive legal measures, and drives policy and systems change work to shift the current juvenile legal system. | **$29,480,000**  |
| **Transitions to Adulthood** helps young people who face major barriers to meet their education and employment goals. | **$30,019,000** |
| **Child and Adolescent Immunizations** addresses systemic barriers to vaccine delivery, and communities’ emergent and changing basic healthcare needs by gathering key stakeholders and implementing quality improvement in pediatric healthcare. | **$2,853,000**  |

Proposed refinements for the renewal levy period. The transmitted plan includes the following notable proposed adjustments for the renewal levy period:

* ***Expanded Learning:*** Expand this strategy investment to reach licensed school-age providers[[20]](#footnote-21) serving youth ages 5-12 to build on the new child care investment for children under five years old; and restructure the Youth Program Quality Initiative experience to better respond to an organization’s level of experience.
* ***Youth Development:*** Combine four strategy areas from the current levy (Positive Identity Development, Healthy and Safe Relationships, Youth Leadership, and Mentoring) to create the new Youth Development for the renewal levy. The plan notes that this new strategy will prioritize applicant organizations that clearly demonstrate a focus on at least one of these four areas.
* ***School-Based Screening and Brief Intervention and for Referral to Treatment/Services*** ***SB: SBIRT:*** Update screening tools to be able to work with high school students.
* ***School-Based Health Centers[[21]](#footnote-22)(SBHC):*** Add up to four new SBHCs, including capital investments and vision/dental services; implement comprehensive data management tools and evaluation of student and program outcomes to identify areas for improvement; increase funding for training providers to make SBHCs more welcoming and accessible for BIPOC students; increase equitable access to services through increased behavioral health options, and connecting youth to effective community-based services; and strengthen SBHC systems and services delivery by intentionally leading with anti-racism and creating culturally-competent medical practices using trauma-informed, person-centered care to increase the use of services by youth of color.
* ***Liberation and Healing:*** Incorporate two programs within this strategy. The first program is TRACE[[22]](#footnote-23) (Timely Response to Adverse Community Events), which helps individuals who have experienced an adverse community event and/or are experiencing symptoms of trauma because of childhood experiences. The second is the CWI (Community Well-Being Initiative), which works to build community capacity to share resources and deliver culturally relevant programming on emotional health and well-being and reducing stigmas relating to mental health.
* ***Positive Family Connections:*** Launch family-focused leadership and resource workgroup to center youth and family voices in BSK programming; and co-design authentic family engagement strategies in partnership with communities/families.
* ***Healthy and Safe Environments:*** No planned refinements.
* ***Transitions to Adulthood:*** Increased funding to ensure young adults can participate in COVID-19 economic recovery.
* ***Child and Adolescent Immunizations:*** Include a new focus on engaging youth in South King County; engage youth in program design and development and build on the Peer-to-Peer Youth Engagement and Education group to raise awareness about, and improve confidence in, adolescent health issues and all vaccinations.

Behavioral Health Supports and Implementation Plan Response to Motion 15888. As noted previously, Motion 15888 requested that the proposed implementation plan identify strategies related to behavioral health needs in children and youth ages 5-24 and to consider programs that provide and/or expand access to substance use disorder supports for children and youth.

The transmitted plan identifies three specific programs that are consistent with Motion 15888. First, the School-Based Screening and Brief Intervention and for Referral to Treatment/Services (SB: SBIRT) and school-based health centers (SBHCs) strategies are identified as providing direct prevention, outreach and early intervention to address mental health and substance use impacts among children and youth. Additionally, the Liberation and Healing strategy addresses community trauma and its impacts on young people by promoting strengths-based social and emotional supports. Third, the plan states that the Community Well-Being Initiative (CWI) will convene and coordinate BSK efforts related to mental health and well-being and would be implemented in response to Motion 15888. Specifically, the CWI intends to connect with other related County efforts such as community behavioral health services and interventions administered by DCHS’ Behavioral Health and Recovery Division. This includes connection with services supported by the MIDD behavioral health sales tax fund, prevention services provided by the Children, Youth and Young Adult Division of DCHS, as well as addressing behavioral health impacts of the pandemic within Public Health’s COVID-related response.

**Communities of Opportunity: *$46.5 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** The plan proposes to increase funding for Communities of Opportunity (COO) by approximately $10 million during the renewal levy period from $36.6 million (2016-2021 levy investment) to approximately $46.5 million. Note that in 2019, the Seattle Foundation continued its commitment to COO through 2023 and intends to propose to its board extending its commitment through the levy period.[[23]](#footnote-24)

The plan proposes to continue the existing COO strategies as follows and discussed in more detail below:

* Place-based and Cultural Community Partnerships: 45 percent to 50 percent of total COO funding ($20.9 million to $23.3 million).
* Systems and Policy Change: 40 percent to 50 percent of total COO funding ($18.5 million to $21.0 million); and
* Learning Community: 10 percent to 15 percent[[24]](#footnote-25) of total COO funding ($4.7 million to $7.0 million).

Executive staff indicate that the proposed implementation plan includes percentage ranges for funding to allow for flexibility.

Place-based and Cultural Community Partnerships: This strategy is eligible to geographic areas that rank in the highest 20th percentile of a composite index that measures indicators of poor health and well-being[[25]](#footnote-26) and cultural communities most adversely affected by inequities based on composite index scores. (See a map displaying the census tracts and composite index in Attachment 5.) The transmitted plan indicates that at least nine place-based and/or cultural community partnerships are anticipated to be funded. Executive staff indicate that the intent is to extend funding in 2022 to continue existing geographic and cultural partnerships[[26]](#footnote-27) and issue an RFP for 2023 that would be open to all eligible tracts.

Systems and Policy Change: This strategy supports community-led projects and campaigns to transform systems and policies to decrease and prevent inequity in communities. For example, during the initial BSK levy, COO funded an effort to build and support a coalition across ten separate health boards. The proposed plan indicates that at least 15 organizations are anticipated to receive funding and COO plans to release an RFP in late 2021 for funding from 2023 through 2027.

Learning Community: This strategy funds shared learning for community stakeholders through, for example, cohort learning, speaker series, and group coaching. The implementation plan anticipates serving at least 750 individuals through this strategy on an ongoing basis during the life of the renewal levy.

**Data and Evaluation: *$29.1 Million Total Estimated Levy Investment.*** The renewal levy evaluation and performance measurement framework, as proposed in the plan, would build on the existing framework[[27]](#footnote-28) established for the initial levy. BSK staff expect to refine the approaches in areas relating to data and evaluation requested by communities such as: expanding data and evaluation partnerships, especially between community partners and school districts; expanding technical assistance and capacity building supports for data collection, reporting, and evaluation; improving communication of BSK data and evaluation findings and impacts; and streamlining reporting across strategies.

The plan also intends for BSK to expand the ways in which BIPOC communities are visible in data and are involved in decisions about what data are gathered and how it is interpreted. This may include expanding the ways the initiative disaggregates data by race and ethnicity, developing new methods for data collection, continuing to value and report on numbers and stories, and increasing opportunities for community reflection and feedback on data analysis.

Framework to Measure the Performance of Levy Strategies in Achieving Their Outcomes. The theoretical framework and intended results for BSK identified in the proposed plan are summarized in three graphics that illustrate the relationship between promotive and protective factors, risk factors, and intended outcomes - whereby levy interventions drive toward the intended dynamic outcomes in the middle of the graphics, which are consistent with those identified in Ordinance 19267.

Note that the Investing Early, Sustain the Gain and Communities of Opportunity (COO) investment areas are each aligned to a single application of the framework (Figure, 1, 2, or 3), whereas the YFHPI, new child care investments and capital grants program (which span age ranges) are informed by all three applications of the framework (Figures 1, 2, and 3). According to the plan, applications of this framework assist in identifying levy investment areas and strategies, and the development of performance measures and evaluation plans for all the selected levy strategies.

**Figure 1: Promotive and Protective Factors (Investing Early: Ages 0-5)**



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**Figure 2: Promotive and Protective Factors (Sustain the Gain: Ages 5-24)** 

**Figure 3: Promotive and Protective Factors (COO)**



Results-Based Accountability. Consistent with the current levy, BSK would continue to evaluate its results beginning with Results Based Accountability (RBA)[[28]](#footnote-29), and supplement RBA with additional evaluation activities. Altogether, the plan indicates the evaluation framework will include population indicators*[[29]](#footnote-30)*, performance measurement and in-depth evaluation.

* Population indicators, as the name suggests, use population-level measures to identify needs, understand baseline conditions and track trends over time. *BSK strategies intend to contribute to population-level results over the long term.* ***Updated for 10/13 staff report:*** *A list of population-level headline and secondary indicators is provided in Appendix E to the transmitted plan.[[30]](#footnote-31)*
* Performance measures are regular measurement of program outcomes to assess how well a levy investment or strategy is working. *BSK is accountable for performance of the levy’s strategies.[[31]](#footnote-32)* Per the proposed plan, performance measures for each investment area would be included in the RFPs and finalized with grantees; the timeline for developing and reporting measures will be distinct for each program.
* Additional (in-depth) evaluation activities are expected to complement performance measurement to further learning during the renewal levy in some program areas. (i.e., two or three programs for in-depth evaluation)[[32]](#footnote-33) The plan expects that the timeline for completing in-depth evaluations will be distinct for each program.

Annual Reporting.The Executive, in accordance with Ordinance 19267, will file annual reports to the Council on levy implementation throughout the levy. These reports, due no later than July 15 each year from 2023 through 2028, will cover levy expenditures, services and outcomes for the levy for the prior calendar year, and provide performance data for Investing Early, Sustain the Gain, COO, YFHPI, Child Care, Capital Grants, and Technical Assistance and Capacity Building investments. The proposed implementation plan indicates the ZIP code-level[[33]](#footnote-34) geographic detail required by Ordinance 19267 will be phased into the reports beginning in the 2022 Annual Report.

**Children and Youth Advisory Board Stipends.** The proposed implementation plan does not specify the amount of the stipends anticipated to be provided to Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB) members. Executive staff indicate that the governance update report required by Ordinance 19627 and accompanying legislation to implement proposed changes currently anticipate monthly stipends of $125 per youth member. In addition to participating in monthly meetings, CYAB members often also complete other assignments and tasks in their role as board members and the monthly stipend is intended to provide compensation for all board-related activities.

**Pro-rationing Mitigation: *Up to* *$1 Million Allowable Levy Investment*.** State law establishes a maximum aggregate property tax rate of $5.90 per $1,000 of assessed valuation for counties, cities, fire districts, library districts, and certain other junior taxing districts. Under state law, if a taxing district reaches its statutory rate limitation, reductions are made in accordance with a district hierarchy established under RCW 84.52.010. In general, countywide levies (such as the BSK Levy) are the most senior taxing districts and would be the last to be reduced, or pro-rationed, under state law.

The transmitted implementation plan states that current modeling, as of mid-2021, suggests that no pro-rationing is projected for applicable metropolitan park districts, hospital districts, or fire districts during the renewal levy period given current levy rates countywide. In terms of monitoring for pro-rationing, each year after the King County Department of Assessments certifies levy rates, the plan notes the County will calculate whether and how much any eligible districts are pro-rationed. Should pro-rationing occur, the plan indicates that BSK would partner with impacted jurisdictions to identify eligible services to fund (subject to the Council’s authorization by ordinance) that improve health and wellbeing outcomes of children, youth, families, and communities.

**Procurement and Financial Policies.** Levy proceeds would be distributed consistent with requirements in Ordinance 19267 for each of the investment areas. The plan notes that BSK offers a combination of strategies that are designed to be more universal in approach, while some are focused within specific communities, to target resources to reduce disproportionalities that exist within the County.[[34]](#footnote-35)

Like the current levy period, most levy proceeds allocated to the community will require competitive procurement processes, such as through RFPs, RFAs and RFQs.[[35]](#footnote-36) The transmitted implementation plan indicates that, responsive to community feedback, BSK is working with community partners to identify recommended procurement process refinements through a Community-Focused Grant Making workshop so refinements can be made by January 2022.

Appendix I to the Implementation Plan. Appendix I to the proposed plan provides a full list of procurement and financial policies for the renewal levy. Included in the list are the following policies, consistent with the current levy, that may be of particular interest to councilmembers:

* *No new contract may be awarded unless the Executive has invited all councilmembers to designate council district staff to participate in the workgroups that have been or will be assembled to develop the implementation approach for the strategies outlined in approved the Implementation Plan, except that invitation to a workgroup is not required for those strategies for which the Executive determines no workgroup will be established.*
* *For each new contract that is competitively procured, the Executive shall invite all councilmembers to designate council district staff to participate in the procurement process. The participation shall include the opportunity for any designated council district staff to be included as nonvoting members of the selection panel for each contract to be competitively procured. As a nonvoting member of a selection panel, any designated council district staff shall have access to all materials received by proposers or bidders as part of the procurement process or created as part of the selection process, the authority to attend and participate in all selection panel meetings, including those at which proposers or bidders are interviewed and the authority to participate in the selection panel's deliberations regarding award of any competitively procured contract.*
* *No new competitively procured contract may be awarded unless, before notifying the selected contractor of its award, the Executive notifies each councilmember by email of the impending award, including the name of the contract and the selected contractor. The email notice to councilmembers must occur no less than one business day before the executive notifies the selected contractor of the award.*
* *For any change to strategy-level budgets more than $500,000, Best Starts leadership will consult the CYAB for approval and send a letter to the King County Council with notification of the final change.[[36]](#footnote-37)*

**Supplantation Considerations in King County.** Under state law[[37]](#footnote-38), levy lid lift proceeds may only be used for the specific limited purpose of the levy, as identified in the levy ordinance. Levy proceeds in King County, prior to a recent change in state law (see below), could be used to provide for existing programs and services, provided the levy proceeds supplement, but not supplant existing funds – with the determination of existing funds being based on actual spending in the year in which the levy was approved by the voters. Existing funding, however, excluded lost federal funds, lost or expired state grants or loans, extraordinary events not likely to reoccur, changes in contract provisions beyond the control of the taxing district receiving the services, and major nonrecurring capital expenditures.

Change for King County, effective May 13, 2021. A House bill introduced and passed by the State Legislature during its 2021 Session removes the supplantation restriction for levies in counties with a population over 1.5 million (i.e., King County) approved in calendar years 2015 through 2022.[[38]](#footnote-39)

**Potential Policy Issues.** Staff have identified some potential policy issues as summarized below.

1. *Capital Grants Program Grant Amounts and Eligibility*. The transmitted plan does not specify minimum or maximum amount for capital grant awards, leveraging requirements, the types of organizations that would be eligible for program grants, or how to allocate funds among the various priorities, other than limiting 2022 and 2023 grants to Priority 1 and Priority 2 projects. Executive staff indicate that the intent was to allow for flexibility in implementation or to allow for Council to provide policy direction. Whether or not to specify grant award thresholds, how to allocate funds among the various priorities, or organizations that would be eligible presents a policy choice
2. *Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan*. The transmitted legislation does not require transmittal of an updated evaluation plan, though the proposed implementation plan indicates that BSK will build on the framework (EPMP) established for the initial levy. An example program evaluation plan for the current levy is included as an appendix to the transmitted plan (Appendix K). The plan notes that the evaluation plan template is planned to be updated for 2022-2027. Additionally, proposed performance measures for each levy investment area are planned to be included in the RFPs, making the timeline for developing and reporting measures distinct for each program. Whether or not to require an updated EPMP presents a policy choice.
3. *CYAB stipends and Pro-rationing Mitigation Set Asides*. Per Ordinance 19267, the Five Percent allocation is intended to include performance measurement and data and evaluation, CYAB stipends, and pro-rationing mitigation (up to $1 million). However, the transmitted plan does not delineate a specific set-aside out of the estimated $29.1 million for the Board stipends or pro-rationing mitigation. Rather, any such expenditures would be deducted from the overall allocation’s funding. Whether or not to delineate a specific set aside for each program presents a policy choice.
4. *Notification to Council regarding Budget Changes*. The plan indicates that the Council would be notified by letter of changes to strategy-level budgets of more than $500,000. The threshold amount for requiring notification presents a policy choice.
5. *Annual Report Motion Requirement*. Annual reports during the levy renewal period would not require an accompanying motion to accept the report, unlike annual reports during the current levy period. This change presents a policy choice.

**Next Steps and Key Dates.** Proposed Ordinance 2021-0288 was transmitted to the Council on July 28th and has been dually referred, first to the Regional Policy Committee, as a mandatory referral, and then to the Committee of the Whole. The Regional Policy Committee held an initial hearing on the proposed ordinance at its September 8, 2021 meeting, and the Committee of the Whole was briefed on the proposed plan at its September 15, 2021 meeting. Following the RPC’s action on the proposed ordinance, the Committee of the Whole would then take up the legislation.

***Updated for 10/13 staff report:*** *Assuming the Committee of the Whole passes the legislation to the full Council for consideration and that either the Committee of the Whole or the full Council amends the legislation (creating a new version), the legislation would need to be re-referred to the Regional Policy Committee for its consideration before possible final action by the full Council.*

Attachment 4 to this staff report provides the distributed amendment deadlines schedule for the proposed ordinance.

Final action is requested by the end of November 2021, as indicated by Executive staff, to provide sufficient time for implementation of new contracts at the beginning of 2022.

In addition to the implementation plan for BSK, two other timely pieces of BSK renewal-related implementation legislation are anticipated to be transmitted to the Council this fall. These items include the following:

* Supplemental appropriation request for 2022 BSK spending authority, reflecting the BSK renewal levy approved for 2022-2027, which is expected to be included in the forthcoming mid-biennial omnibus ordinance transmittal *(Proposed Ordinance 2021-0372).* It is important to note that the 2021-2022 biennial budget adopted by the Council in November 2019 (Ordinance 19210) only included sufficient BSK spending authority for 2021 given the expiration of the current BSK levy period at the end of this year; and
* Governance update report (per Ordinance 19267[[39]](#footnote-40)) and accompanying legislation to effectuate the recommendations in the report *(Proposed Ordinances, 2021-0366, 0364 and 0367).* Per Ordinance 19267, the report and accompanying legislation must be transmitted to the Council by October 1, 2021. Note that Executive staff have requested that Council consider the governance update package before the end of 2021 if possible.

**AMENDMENTS**

At the direction of the Chair of the Regional Policy Committee, staff has prepared a technical striking amendment to make needed technical corrections in the proposed ordinance and replace Attachment A with an updated version that would make various technical corrections and clarifications in the proposed Implementation Plan. The technical striking amendment will be distributed to members prior to the committee meeting, in accordance with Attachment 4 to this staff report.

Any additional amendments will be distributed at or prior to the committee meeting.

**INVITED**

* Sheila Capestany, Division Director, Children, Youth and Young Adults, and Strategic Advisor for Children and Youth, King County Department of Community and Human Services
* Marcy Miller, Policy Manager, Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC)
* Jessica Cafferty, Child Care Policy Lead, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS)
* Kelly Rider, Government Relations Manager, DCHS

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed Ordinance 2021-0288
2. Best Starts for Kids Implementation Plan, Dated July 2021
3. Transmittal Letter
4. Fiscal Note
5. PO 2021-0288 Amendment Deadlines Schedule
6. Communities of Opportunity Composite and Underlying Indicators Map
1. King County voters approved a renewal six-year property tax levy to fund Best Starts for Kids (BSK) on August 3, 2021. The results of the election were certified on August 17, 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ordinance 19267, Section 7 (Implementation Plan). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Ordinance 18088 and Motion 14673. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Values are total levy amounts and have not been adjusted for undercollections. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Increased by $2M through a supplemental appropriation in 2017 to support additional program needs. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The BSK Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative (YFHPI) is intended to prevent and divert children and youth and their families from becoming homeless. Programming for the YFHPI is outlined in its Implementation Plan, which was approved by Ordinance 18285 and subsequently updated by Ordinance 18373. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. As identified in Ordinance 18088, a portion of this allocation may also be used for eligible services provided by pro-rationed fire and parks districts, subject to certain limitations. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The BSK YFHPI Implementation Plan, which outlines programming specifically for BSK Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative, was approved by Ordinance 18285 in May 2016 and later updated by Ordinance 18373. In addition, further Council direction on BSK expenditures was provided in a budget proviso in the 2017-2018 Biennial Budget (Ordinance 18409) that directed development of policies for investments through the Innovation Fund. Ordinance 18569 was adopted in September 2017 appropriating $2.8 million for the Innovation Fund and specifying investment processes for these proceeds. As indicated in the 2020 BSK Annual Report, $7,858,252 have been invested in the Innovation Fund, including current (through 2020) and previous years expenditures and amounts awarded in contracts. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. The King County Auditor's Office's 2017/2018 biennial work plan included an audit of the BSK EPMP. That audit was conducted in 2017 and generated recommendations for the Executive, including: 1) develop performance measures that adhere to the results-based accountability model for all programs receiving BSK funding; 2) develop, document, and apply a plan with detailed criteria for selecting the appropriate types of evaluation for different programs; 3) modify the existing criteria to identify programs for program evaluations to include the applicability of existing evidence; 4) document and communicate data quality control procedures for the current data system; 5) update quality control practices for the new data collection system, including service provider training, before the new system is implemented; 6) require that all individuals conducting BSK evaluation identify potential conflicts of interest and document their mitigation strategies as early as possible in order to increase transparency; and 7) put procedures in place to protect the independence of the evaluation team. The most recent follow-up report from the Auditor’s Office, released on August 2, 2021, indicates that all the recommendations have been fully implemented. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. Motion 15769. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Per Ordinance 19267, the grant program to support capacity building must include the development of new organizations and expansion of existing organizations. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. As described in Section 4.B.2. of Ordinance 19267 (regarding eligible levy expenditures), investments in prevention and early intervention on negative outcomes include, but are not limited to: poor birth outcomes, developmental delays, chronic disease, social emotional isolation, mental health challenges, substance abuse, dropping out of school, homelessness, domestic violence and effects of systemic racism and incarceration. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. BIPOC is an acronym for Black/African American, Indigenous, People of Color. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Executive staff note the partnership would secure alignment and expansion upon existing efforts rather than duplication, inconsistency, and confusion. Additionally, this engagement would work through the best way to balance interests in equitably supporting quality care and serving the greatest number of families possible. As further indicated, Best Starts would work with the Task Force to monitor levy needs each year of the levy, which would entail continued partnership with the state and City of Seattle to understand their subsidies programs and any changes to those programs, and to monitor emerging data and landscape with funded partners. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. In a retention bonus model, as described in the transmitted plan, participating providers receive bonuses at set periods in their employment. Bonuses are tiered to increase with longer periods of retention. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Ordinance 19267 defines *technical assistance and capacity building* to mean “assisting organizations seeking or receiving levy proceeds to enable the organizations to apply for, implement and improve delivery of a strategy or strategies for which expenditures of this [BSK] levy are eligible”. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. *Strategy* is defined in Ordinance 19267 to mean “a program, service, activity, initiative or capital investment intended to achieve the purposes described in subsection 4.B. [regarding eligible expenditures] of this ordinance”. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. PCH programs include Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Maternity Support Services (MSS), and Infant Case Management (ICM). [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. Community-based organizations. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Per the plan, licensed child care providers would be folded into the Expanded Learning portfolio. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. The RFP for the new sites is expected to be released in Q2 2022, with contracts starting in Q3 2022 (capital and operations investments would be included at this time). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. This program is based in the Snoqualmie Valley. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Executive staff indicate that The Seattle Foundation is contributing $600,000 annually plus in-kind support. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. Note that the proposed plan indicates that estimated funding for the Learning Community would range from 10 percent to 20 percent of total COO funding; Executive staff indicated that the correct range should be 10 percent to 15 percent. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. The indicators are: life expectancy at birth, current smokers, obesity, diabetes diagnosis, frequent mental distress, below 200% poverty, unemployment, poor housing conditions, and uninsured (ages 18 to 64). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. White Center, Rainier Valley, SeaTac/Tukwila, Snoqualmie Valley, Seattle Central Area, and Kent are the existing place-based partnerships. Seattle Urban Native Nonprofits Collaborative, Comunidad Latina de Vashon, and the Transgender Economic Empowerment Coalition are the existing cultural community partners. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. Motion 14979 (BSK Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is a national model whose framework starts with ends- namely, the difference trying to be made, and then works backwards, towards means- namely, the strategies for getting there. Appendix A to Motion 14979 (BSK Evaluation and Performance Measurement Plan) provides additional background on RBA and its influence on the BSK framework. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. The plan indicates that BSK Health Survey would continue to be implemented to help fill gaps in population data (i.e., in areas where there are no existing population-level data). [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. According to Executive staff, applying the RBA evaluation framework, *Best Starts* uses these county-wide, population level headline and secondary indicators in Appendix E to identify needs, understand baseline conditions, and track trends. As further indicated, *Best Starts* renewal levy implementation strategies intend to contribute to population level results in the long term, while also understanding that the whole community across multiple sectors is responsible for county-wide conditions, and many additional factors influence these indicators. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. These measures cover each of the three domains defined by RBA: *How much did we do?; How well did we do it?; and Is anyone better off?* [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. Consistent with Ordinance 19267, funding for the “First Allocation” will cover performance measurement and evaluation of the new child care investments, YFHPI and TACB. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. Including total expenditures of levy proceeds by program area by ZIP code in King County and the number of individuals receiving levy-funded services by program area by ZIP code in King County of where the individuals reside at the time of service. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. Consistent with the current BSK Implementation Plan, the transmitted plan states that BSK’s targeted universalism approach considers communities and populations experiencing rapidly increasing challenges facing children and families, and ensures that opportunitiesare available in the communities where they are needed the most. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. Organizations awarded levy funds, per the plan, will contract with the County for up to three years, with a possible option to extend if they are in good standing. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. Per the Plan, such changes must be made within the same investment category, consistent with expenditure requirements in Ordinance 19267. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. RCW 84.55.050. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. 2021 Laws of Washington, Chapter 296, Section 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. The report must describe and explain necessary and recommended changes to sections of the King County Code and applicable ordinances that describe the composition and duties of the CYAB and the COO-BSK Advisory Board. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)