

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Shetter and members of the Burleson City Council

From: Kellye Cunningham, Assistant to the City Manager

Date: April 20, 2009

Subject: Resolution R-1152-09, declaring the support and participation of the City of Burleson in the Mayors' Action Challenge for Improving Outcomes of Burleson Children, Youth, and Families.

Council Action Requested:

Approve or deny Resolution R-1152-09 declaring the support and participation of the City of Burleson in the Mayors' Action Challenge for Improving Outcomes of Burleson Children, Youth, and Families.

Background Information:

January 25, 2007, City Council approved Resolution R-1078-07 which resolved that the Mayor and Councilmembers of the City of Burleson adopted the National League of Cities' Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth. It also resolved that the City of Burleson would seek to establish the essential infrastructure for a sustained community effort to achieve the Platform's objectives.

Since adopting the Strengthening Families platform the City Council has continued to support strong families through approving the establishment of our participation with a Mayors Youth Council, a Burleson Teen Court, the Burleson Opportunity Fund, as well as other programs. Supporting the Mayors' Action Challenge is the next step in continuing City of Burleson efforts to build strong families and community.

The Mayors' Action Challenge is a program that calls upon mayors and their city councils to create measurable, definite goals to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families in their particular city. The areas for local action are as follows:

1. Opportunities to Learn and Grow

Key areas for action include: Parent education and support; early literacy and preschool programs; after-school programs and other enrichment activities during out-of-school time; dropout prevention and recovery initiatives; scholarship programs and other postsecondary access and completion efforts.

Examples of local targets to consider: Number or proportion of children attending pre-kindergarten or after-school programs; high school graduation rates; number of scholarships provided for postsecondary education and training; and postsecondary enrollment and completion rates.

2. A Safe Neighborhood to Call Home

Key areas for action include: Mentoring and other initiatives that connect young people to trusted and caring adults; early intervention at the first sign that youth are at risk of violence; juvenile reentry and rehabilitation efforts that restore young people who have gone down the wrong path; and public education campaigns that involve a broad range of youth and community leaders to unlearn the culture of violence.

Examples of local targets to consider: Number of children and youth with adult mentors; number of successful truancy interventions; youth homicide rates; juvenile and neighborhood crime rates; number of youth leadership opportunities and community service projects; and number of juvenile offenders participating in rehabilitation or reentry programs.

3. A Healthy Lifestyle and Environment

Key areas for action include: Transportation and land use policies that encourage biking and walking; neighborhood park and playground development; sports and recreation programs; food stamp, school lunch and school breakfast outreach campaigns; incentives for supermarkets and farmers' markets to open in low-income neighborhoods; collaborations with schools to educate youth about healthy food choices and expand access to nutritious foods; and community-wide fitness and wellness campaigns.

Examples of local targets to consider: Miles of bike routes and walking paths; number of neighborhood parks and playgrounds; proportion of eligible families enrolled in the federal food stamp and child nutrition programs; number of supermarkets or farmers' markets in low-income neighborhoods; childhood obesity rates; levels of physical activity among children and youth; and removal of snack foods and unhealthy food choices from schools.

4. A Financially Fit Family in Which to Thrive

Key areas for action include: EITC and other benefit outreach campaigns targeting low-income working families; efforts to open low-cost checking or savings accounts for "unbanked" residents; financial literacy, education, and coaching programs; measures to curb predatory lending and avoid foreclosures; homeownership incentives and counseling; transitional employment initiatives for parents facing barriers to work; and other strategies to help families build financial assets.

Examples of local targets to consider: Number of eligible families claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit and other federal or state benefits; proportion or number of families with access to mainstream financial services; poverty rates; foreclosure rates; number of check-cashing operations and predatory lenders in low-income neighborhoods; and number of transitional jobs available to hard-to-employ residents.

On April 21, 2009, the Mayors' Summit for North Texas Children & Families, hosted by Burleson in conjunction with the National League of Cities Institute for Youth Education and Families, the Texas Municipal League, and the North Central Texas Council of Governments, will take place at the Hill College at Burleson campus. The summit is intended to foster awareness about the Mayors' Action Challenge Program, our region's related issues, and to encourage cities to define definite, measurable goals in order to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families.

Speakers will include:

Cheryl Charles (President of the Children & Nature Network)
Kathleen Hicks (Mayor Pro Tem, City of Fort Worth)
Ann Horton (Councilmember, City of Bryan)
Victoria Sykes (Congressman Chet Edwards Office)
Rachel Chutchian (Crime Stoppers Director, Safe City Commission)
Kyle Dishko (Arlington PD)
Lana Perkins (Burleson ISD, BOF Coordinator).

Approximately 30 elected officials, management staff, and departmental staff from neighboring Metroplex cities will be in attendance to learn about the four action areas and potentially to sign-up for the challenge. In addition to learning about national best practices this summit will provide an opportunity to compare notes about effective efforts already happening in North Texas.

Board/Citizen Input:

None.

Financial Considerations:

There is no expenditure of municipal funds associated with this item.

Attachments:

Resolution R-1152-09

Staff Contact:

Kellye Cunningham, Assistant to the City Manager
817-447-5400 ext. 245
KCunningham@BurlesonTx.com

RESOLUTION R-1152-09

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF BURLESON, TEXAS DECLARING
SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION IN THE MAYORS' ACTION
CHALLENGE FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR BURLESON
CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES**

WHEREAS, the Burleson City Council believes strongly that Burleson is and should continue to be a family-friendly community; and

WHEREAS, the Burleson City Council believes strong families form the backbone of strong communities; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to realize positive outcomes, the City has already committed itself to creating and sustaining strong families through adoption of the National League of Cities Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burleson considers the health and well-being of its children, youth, and families to be a top priority; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burleson recognizes that public safety, economic development, fiscal stability, a strong workforce, and an educated citizenry all depend on the investments and efforts made to help families and children succeed; and

WHEREAS, municipal leaders can play a decisive role by taking action on behalf of children, youth, and families; and

WHEREAS, the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education, and Families supports participation of mayors and municipal leaders in the Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families; and

WHEREAS, the City of Burleson is committed to implementing concrete actions steps, including: (a) Identifying needs, opportunities and priorities for future action; (b) Promoting effective city-school collaboration; (c) Encouraging and supporting youth voice, engagement and leadership; and (d) Measuring progress over time through use of a community scorecard; and

WHEREAS, the new Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families calls on mayors and city leaders from across the nation to set at least one bold, measurable, locally defined goal in each of the following areas in order to ensure every child has: (1) Opportunities to learn and grow; (2) A safe neighborhood to call home; (3) A healthy lifestyle and environment; and (4) A financially fit family in which to thrive.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Councilmembers of the City of Burleson, that the City of Burleson shall participate in the Mayors' Action Challenge, by promoting and defining measurable goals in all four areas to improve the outcomes of children, youth, and families in the City of Burleson and across North Texas.

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2009.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Secretary