



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

2021 FEB 22 PM 12: 35

CLERK OF THE BOARD  
OF SUPERVISORS

# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

### AGENDA ITEM

**DATE:** March 2, 2020

12

**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**SUBJECT: A SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVE TO UPLIFT BOYS AND MEN OF COLOR  
(DISTRICTS: ALL)**

#### OVERVIEW

This Board Letter continues to redress harms endured by the most vulnerable in our society, young boys of color. Our young boys of color face barriers to opportunity at every point in their development, from childhood to adulthood. From the beginning of their education, boys of color face significantly higher rates of suspension compared to their peers.

San Diego County has a moral imperative and obligation to identify and remove barriers for our youngest and most at-risk constituents by collaborating closely with all the entities currently doing work to help young men of color succeed. As an entity responsible for the well-being and safety of our communities, San Diego County must prioritize doing its part in breaking down the School to Prison Pipeline and ensuring a prosperous future for all San Diegans, irrespective of their zip code. Unfortunately, an individual's zip code can determine your access to quality health care, healthy food, presence of law enforcement, or access to superior schools. Poverty and self-sufficiency programs in San Diego are often stigmatized and criminalized, and this Board Letter will guide the County to continue removing unnecessary barriers and strengthen our implementation of a holistic approach to assisting those in need.

This Board Letter includes action for the Board of Supervisors to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to create an initiative to Uplift Boys and Men of Color under the Office of Equity and Racial Justice to allow the County to have a more centralized role in connecting at risk youth to existing services. The intent of the initiative is to work with the appropriate stakeholders to develop an initiative that will bring together wrap around services and trauma support systems for the most at risk students and their parents/legal guardians. The development of this initiative is meant to create a space in the County to support the ongoing work of schools and community organizations. The initiative should take into consideration community feedback and receive input from the various organizations that have been doing the work in our communities over the years.

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The intent of this action is to target the most at risk students, including those participating in free and reduced lunch programs, and their legal guardians to support them in accessing healthy food, housing, job training, tutoring assistance, mental health counseling, and related case management that impacts the overall well-being and development of young boys and adults. In addition to all the existing partnerships, the County should develop this initiative to connect all the work often happening independently from each other through a unified goal that will provide our most at-risk students and their legal guardians with the necessary tools to thrive in San Diego County.

Another component of the initiative is focused on developing and integrating a workforce development program targeting youth and young adults. This program should focus on youth and incarcerated young adults including components centered on obtaining education (GED or higher education), employment, housing, and further case management. The intent of this program is to assist at-risk youth and incarcerated youth and provide them with the necessary resources and support to be successful and contributing members in society. It is imperative for the County of San Diego to take deliberate and aggressive action to immediately lower the rate of recidivism for our incarcerated youth and young men. The top three barriers surrounding recidivism include 1) education, 2) employment, and 3) housing. In order to be effective in providing at-risk youth and incarcerated youth and adults the tools to be successful, the program should have components addressing education, employment, and housing.

I strongly urge your support for the recommendations in this letter to ensure the Board of Supervisors and all subsequent County operations are intentionally dismantling and removing barriers from the most vulnerable in our communities.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**CHAIR NATHAN FLETCHER AND VICE CHAIR NORA VARGAS**

1. Direct Chief Administrative Officer to create an initiative seeking input from affected groups including but not limited to: San Diego County Office of Educations, individuals school district superintendents, behavioral health, juvenile justice providers, and Workforce Partnership, among others, to uplift Boys and Men of Color under the Office of Equity and Racial Justice addressing (a) wrap around services and trauma support systems for the most at risk students, including those participating in free and reduced lunch programs, and their legal guardians, (b) workforce development opportunities for at-risk youth and young adults and report back to the Board of Supervisors in 180 days
2. Direct the CAO report back to the Board of Supervisors in 180 days.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action. There may be future fiscal impacts associated with final recommendations which would need to be approved by the Board including allocation of resources in future budgets to achieve the outcomes.

**BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT**

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N/A

**ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT**

N/A

**BACKGROUND**

On January 21, 2021, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors unanimously declared and affirmed systemic racism as a Public Health Crisis. Through this declaration, the County of San Diego acknowledged that throughout its history systemic racism has had generational effects on specific groups, including Black/African Americans, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian American & Pacific Islander and all other people of color. Moreover, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors committed to work to end racism and be intentional in its efforts to heal the harms perpetuated on communities of color in San Diego County.

This Board Letter continues to redress harms endured by the most vulnerable in our society, young boys of color. Our young boys of color face barriers to opportunity at every point in their development, from childhood to adulthood. From the beginning of their education, boys of color face significantly higher rates of suspension compared to their peers.

The highest level of disparity occurs in early childhood education (K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) where Black boys are 2.5% more likely to be suspended than their peers based on the countywide average. The previous statistic is extremely concerning given that the first four grades of school play a vital role in a child's long-term academic success and they develop basic attitudes toward learning, school, and their intellectual capabilities. In addition, the highest suspension rate occurs in grades 7 and 8, where 13.6% of Black boys are suspended. Unfortunately, Black (6.8%), Native American (5.5%), and Latino (3.4%) boys all have been disproportionately affected due to the current use of suspensions in San Diego County. As a result, boys of color have unintentionally been exposed to exclusionary practices that further perpetuate the School to Prison pipeline. We must also acknowledge that young male identified people of color face additional obstacles in their pursuit of success and obtaining higher education due to external societal norms.

San Diego County has a moral imperative and obligation to identify and remove barriers for our youngest and most at-risk constituents by collaborating closely with all the entities currently doing work to help young men of color succeed. As an entity responsible for the well-being and safety of our communities, San Diego County must prioritize doing its part in breaking down the School to Prison Pipeline and ensuring a prosperous future for all San Diegans, irrespective of their zip code. Unfortunately, an individual's zip code can determine your access to quality health care, healthy food, presence of law enforcement, or access to superior schools. Poverty and self-sufficiency programs in San Diego are often stigmatized and criminalized, and this Board Letter will guide the County to continue removing unnecessary barriers and strengthen our implementation of a holistic approach to assisting those in need.

This Board Letter includes action for the Board of Supervisors to direct the Chief Administrative Officer to create an initiative to Uplift Boys and Men of Color under the Office of Equity and Racial Justice to allow the County to have a more centralized role in connecting at risk youth to existing services. The intent of the initiative is to work with the appropriate stakeholders to develop

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an initiative that will bring together wrap around services and trauma support systems for the most at risk students and their parents/legal guardians. The development of this initiative is meant to create a space in the County to support the ongoing work of schools and community organizations. The initiative should take into consideration community feedback and receive input from the various organizations that have been doing the work in our communities over the years.

The intent of this action is to target the most at risk students, including those participating in free and reduced lunch programs, and their legal guardians to support them in accessing healthy food, housing, job training, tutoring assistance, mental health counseling, and related case management that impacts the overall well-being and development of young boys and adults. In addition to all the existing partnerships, the County should develop this initiative to connect all the work often happening independently from each other through a unified goal that will provide our most at-risk students and their legal guardians with the necessary tools to thrive in San Diego County.

Another component of the initiative is focused on developing and integrating a workforce development program targeting youth and young adults. This program should focus on youth and incarcerated young adults including components centered on obtaining education (GED or higher education), employment, housing, and further case management. The intent of this program is to assist at-risk youth and incarcerated youth and provide them with the necessary resources and support to be successful and contributing members in society. It is imperative for the County of San Diego to take deliberate and aggressive action to immediately lower the rate of recidivism for our incarcerated youth and young men. The top three barriers surrounding recidivism include 1) education, 2) employment, and 3) housing. In order to be effective in providing at-risk youth and incarcerated youth and adults the tools to be successful, the program should have components addressing education, employment, and housing.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Today's proposed actions support the Live Well San Diego Initiative in the County's Strategic Plan, and its vision for San Diego that is Building Better Health, Living Safely, Thriving, by supporting and empowering communities of color.

Respectfully submitted,



**NATHAN FLETCHER**

Chair, Fourth District



**NORA VARGAS**

Vice Chair, First District

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

none

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**AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET**

**REQUIRES FOUR VOTES:**      Yes    No

**WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED**  
 Yes    No

**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:**  
N/A

**BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:**  
N/A

**MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:**  
N/A

**ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):**  
N/A

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT:** First and Fourth Supervisorial Districts

**OTHER CONCURRENCE(S):** N/A

**CONTACT PERSON(S):**

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