



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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September 24, 2021

The Honorable Claudia Balducci  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

As required by Ordinance 19267, this letter transmits a Best Starts for Kids Governance Update Report, and a proposed Ordinance adopting the report. Concurrently, I am transmitting a proposed Ordinance to update the composition and duties of the Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB) and a proposed Ordinance to update the composition and eligibility requirements, and extend the existence of, the Communities of Opportunity (COO) Best Starts for Kids Advisory Board, commonly known as the COO Governance Group, as directed by Ordinance 19267.

As required, the report provides a description and explanation of necessary and recommended changes to King County Code and ordinances governing the CYAB and the COO Governance Group as needed. Both boards recommended updates reflected in this report and the accompanying proposed Ordinances.

The renewal of the Best Starts for Kids levy by King County voters in August 2021 presents this need and opportunity to update the governing boards' composition and duties in the new cycle of levy investments. It also requires an extension of the existence of the COO Governance Group to coincide with the renewed levy.

Recommended updates to the governing boards' composition and duties will enhance youth representation on the CYAB, and community member representation on the COO Governance Group, in the new cycle of Best Starts levy investments. The CYAB recommends increasing the number of board seats for youth 24 years old and younger, from at least three positions to at least five positions. In alignment with Ordinance 19267, the CYAB also recommends providing youth on the board with a monthly stipend and support to earn service-learning or community service hours when their service on the board qualifies for such hours. The COO Governance Group recommends updating eligibility requirements for board members to include a proactive commitment to dismantling racism and building anti-racist processes. They also recommend increasing the overall size of the board from between 14 to 18 members to 20

to 24 members, increasing the number of community-designated seats on the board, and adding one non-voting seat for the COO Program Director or designee.

The CYAB and the COO Governance Group include an array of community members who bring diverse content and context knowledge to inform the activities of the boards. Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) staff partnered with the co-chairs of CYAB and members of the CYAB's Young Leaders Subcommittee to hold board meetings to formulate recommendations on changes to board composition and duties. Likewise, Public Health Seattle-King County (PHSKC) staff partnered with the COO Governance Group to hold board meetings to make recommendations on changes to board composition. The governing boards have recommended that youth and community voices play an even stronger role in the governance and oversight of the levy funds.

*Best Starts* advances commitments in King County's Strategic Plan to address the root causes of inequities and improve all King County residents' health and well-being. As citizen oversight bodies for *Best Starts* investments, the CYAB and COO Governance Group provide strategic guidance on furthering these goals, while contributing to the Strategic Plan's objective that government be accountable to the public. Overarchingly, this work furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal to improve the health and well-being of all people in our community.

*Best Starts* is at the forefront of the County's equity work, and the CYAB was an essential partner in the development of the Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan. The CYAB and COO Governance Group are committed to assuring that *Best Starts* is designing and implementing policies and practices that reduce the role a person's race or identity plays in whether they benefit from society and feel like they belong. By elevating the voices of Black, African American, Indigenous, and other People of Color in governing board decisions, King County advances the policies and practices that will undo inequities and promotes comprehensive well-being for communities.

The CYAB furthers recommendations of the Youth Action Plan by serving as an advisory body for King County policies and investments related to children, youth, and young adults, and by intentionally including diverse youth voices, and voices of people affected by policies and services in meaningful ways.

This report required approximately 164 staff hours to prepare, costing approximately \$13,490.

Thank you for your continued support of *Best Starts for Kids*, and for your consideration of this report and the accompanying proposed Ordinances. I look forward to continuing to work with you and our many community partners to achieve our shared vision that every baby born and child raised in King County reaches adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving.

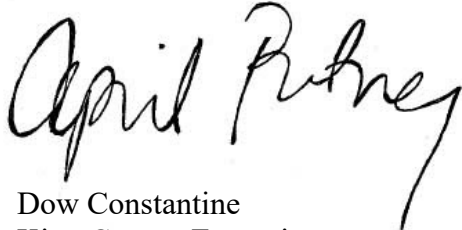
The Honorable Claudia Balducci

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If your staff have any questions, please contact Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services, 206-477-4384, or Dennis Worsham, Interim Director, Public Health Seattle-King County, at 206-263-8158.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Janine Weihe, Interim Chief of Staff  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Shannon Braddock, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive  
Karan Gill, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive  
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget  
Leo Flor, Director, Department of Community and Human Services  
Dennis Worsham, Interim Director, Public Health Seattle-King County