



Boston City Council Committee on Ways and Means

Dockets #0524-0531 FY21 Budget

Office of Health and Human Services

Working Session: Friday, May 14 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Hearing: Thursday, May 27, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

The following is a collection of questions that were asked by the Committee regarding the FY22 budget for Boston Public Schools at the Working Session on Friday, May 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNkRo2Yo8kc>

The Administration is requested to respond to all questions in one of three ways:

1. Verbally at the hearing on Thursday, May 27th, at 2PM.
2. For factual questions, through written responses supplied prior to May 27th, including budget book page numbers or other references where appropriate.
3. By deferring to a specific scheduled departmental budget hearing.

Please annotate and return this information request before May 27th, indicating how each question will be answered.

OHHS Budget Questions

Councilor Kenzie Bok, Chair asked:

- It's great to see special attention and resources directed to youth and young adult homelessness. What are the resources in place for the specific needs of LGBTQ+ homeless youth and young adults? In general, how to OHHS policies and services meet the needs of LGBTQ+ residents? Specifically, how are shelters and other environments made safe and welcoming for these individuals?
- What is the latest plan for getting 24/7 public bathrooms throughout the city? As it has discussed these issues, has OHHS been in touch with PFD about the street furniture public bathrooms across the city?
- Questions on alternative response model:
 - What will the response team look like? After speaking with several municipalities, we've been told that the best practice is to avoid having a police member on the response team for these types of calls.
 - What are the anticipated credentials for the crisis workers?
 - What kind of training will the crisis workers receive?
 - Under the pilot, how many crisis workers will be employed?
 - What will be the hours of service for the program?
 - How will dispatch be trained to triage calls to this new service?



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- o Beyond mental health crises, what will be the types of calls this alternative response program can respond to?
- o Will the program be piloted in all of Boston or start in certain neighborhoods?
- o How will community stakeholders be involved in the development of this program?
- o How will data be tracked to identify how many calls are being deferred from 911?
- o Will service providers and community partners be able to call the alternative response teams directly, rather than calling 911? In Olympia, Washington, the number that folks call is 911, and then it's dispatched to the mental health/crisis team, but community partners are also able to call directly.

Councilor Julia Mejia asked:

- How will the new Director of Youth & Young Adult Homelessness Initiatives work with local organizations who are already plugged into the work of providing services to our area's unhoused youth? I'm thinking particularly about BAGLY and the Trans Emergency Fund
- What does moving the Office of Returning Citizens do functionally to help our formerly incarcerated loved ones? Have any of the office's responsibilities changed as a result of the move?
- What role is OHHS playing to improve harm reduction around the area of Massachusetts Avenue and Melnea Cass Boulevard?

Councilor Michael Flaherty asked:

- How can the City of Boston work to provide chiropractic care for employees?

Councilor Ricardo Arroyo asked:

- Can OHHS explain and give a little context for the new \$1.75 million investment for alternative policing planning? Who will HHS be partnering with, if anyone? When does OHHS expect the alternative policing model to be ready? When can we expect implementation? What will the rollout look like?



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- OHHS is expecting \$4.175 million in contracted services for FY22: Can OHHS explain what specifically the office will be contracting out? What will be the breakdown of these contracts across OHHS, OFA, and OPS?
- OHHS has no contracts with minority business enterprises, women business enterprises or small locally owned business enterprises (MBE, WBE, SLBE): how is the office working to change this, especially with \$4.175 million in new contracts expected?