
Sponsor: Public Health

Meeting Date: 9/21/2021

Title: School Waste Reduction and Recycling Grant Program for 2022-2023

File Number: 2021-500

Background and Rationale:

The Ramsey County Solid Waste Management Master Plan ("Master Plan") guides public and private activities related to waste management for the period of 2018-2038 and outlines county actions over the current six-year period, 2018-2024. The Master Plan provides for the continuation of technical assistance and grant funding to schools focused on waste reduction and recycling.

Schools are required by state statute to have recycling programs. The Master Plan contains several strategies related to waste reduction and recycling in schools including a strategy that all public K-12 schools have robust and stable recycling and organics programs. Specifically, the School Waste Reduction and Recycling Program addresses the current Master Plan strategy to "continue a grants program to provide funds to schools and other local public entities (excluding the University of Minnesota, Metropolitan Council and the State of Minnesota) for the purpose of starting and/or improving recycling and organics management programs."

Ramsey County has long supported opportunities for waste reduction, recycling, and organics management in schools, including school recycling programs that educate future generations about the importance of waste reduction, recycling, and overall environmental stewardship. Recycling can also help schools save on disposal costs and taxes associated with solid waste disposal.

In 2020, Public Health, through the Environmental Health Division, developed a solid waste reduction and recycling program for all county public K-12 independent school districts and charter schools with student enrollment of 250 and above. Private schools and charter schools with less than 250 students are not eligible for the program but may apply for funding through the BizRecycling grant program, administered through Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy (R&E), which includes coordinating school recycling programs as a joint activity between the two counties. By agreement with the two counties, R&E joint activities funding is used to provide consulting services to private schools and charter schools with fewer than 250 students, while the individual counties work directly with the independent school districts and larger charter schools.

This request is for approval to continue the School Waste Reduction and Recycling program as approved by the board in 2020 for another two-year period, 2022-2023. The purpose of the program is to provide technical assistance with outcome goals of increasing recycling and organics diversion, supporting food waste prevention and donation program participation, launching targeted reuse campaigns, and implementing end of year school clean-outs

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the Ramsey County School Waste Reduction and Recycling Grant Program for the years 2022-2023.
2. Authorize the County Manager to execute grant agreements and amendments with eligible school districts and charter schools as required for the grant program, in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner MatasCastillo.

Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

Absent: - 1: Carter

By: 

Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board