

TO: Juvenile Welfare Board Members

FROM: James E. Mills, Executive Director  
Krista I. Winn, Director, Quality Management and Evaluation. *KWI + mg*

**Requested Action**

The Board is requested to allocate up to \$56,000 to Dr. Michelle Watts, working in collaboration with Drs. Pansy Houghton and Jan Schwartz, to conduct a three year research project titled "21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Evaluation: Planning and Implementation."

**Options**

- 1. Approve the request.
- 2. Deny the request.
- 3. Any other action as determined by the Board.

**Recommended Action**

Allocate up to \$10,000 in FY 98-99, up to \$23,000 in FY 99-00, and up to \$23,000 in FY 00-01 to Dr. Michelle Watts, working in collaboration with Drs. Pansy Houghton and Jan Schwartz, for a three-year project titled "21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Evaluation: Planning and Implementation."

**Source of JWB Funds**

FY 98-99 – FY 00-01 Research & Evaluation Unallocated Funds, subject to the TRIM (Truth in Millage) process.

**Fiscal Impact**

The FY 1998-1999 Research & Evaluation Unallocated Fund would be reduced by \$10,000 from \$22,100 to \$12,100. The FY 99-00 Research & Evaluation Unallocated Fund would be reduced by \$23,000 to \$77,000. \$23,000 would be budgeted in FY 00-01 for this project.

**Narrative**

At a regular Board meeting on April 8, 1999, the JWB approved the release of an RFP (Request for Proposals) to select a consultant to conduct this project. The consultant will work with JWB staff and representatives of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) to identify appropriate indicators of effectiveness and establish a

system of collecting and analyzing data relevant to tracking outcomes. This is in accordance with the JWB strategic plan's emphasis on accountability and measuring results.

JWB's Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to provide services to an underserved population (middle school aged youth, 10-14) and the need to focus on results. In keeping with these emphases, the Board committed matching funds (\$150,000) to the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance (IMA) in February 1998 to pursue a federal grant for the purpose of establishing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) on the site of John Hopkins Middle School in St. Petersburg. The United States Congress established the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Program to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, or consortia of such schools, to enable them to plan, implement, or expand projects that benefit the educational, health, social services, cultural, and recreational needs of the community. The federal grant and the IMA proposal call for an evaluation component. According to the Department of Education, school-based community learning centers can provide a safe, drug-free, supervised, and cost-effective after-school, weekend, or summer haven for children, youth, and their families. Federal funding was received in September 1998 and will extend for three fiscal years. Total funding for this program is \$300,000 per year.

Because of the scope and complexity of this initiative, JWB staff and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC representatives recommended that a researcher with relevant experience be identified to assist with the development of a study design to track long term outcomes. This led to the development of the RFP by a committee composed of JWB staff and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC representatives released in April 1999. Details of the RFP were included in the April 1999 Board packet.

The RFP committee outlined expectations for the project and identified criteria for selecting a consultant. An RFP was issued on April 12, 1999. A bidder's workshop was held at JWB on April 19, 1999 to answer questions regarding the project outlined in the RFP. Although JWB staff received inquiries regarding the project, no responses to this RFP were received. In order to fulfill the grant requirement for an evaluation component in a timely fashion, JWB staff sought to find a qualified research consultant with an interest in and availability for conducting this evaluation project. Staff identified such expertise and availability in Drs. Michelle R. Watts, Pansy Houghton, and Jan Schwartz, based upon discussions, references, and a written proposal. A proposal review team comprised of both JWB staff and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC representatives reviewed the proposal. The review team found that the consultants were highly qualified and that the proposal was responsive to the RFP and consistent with research literature about measuring effects of community initiatives. The review team reached consensus with regard to the selection of Drs. Michelle R. Watts, Pansy Houghton, and Jan Schwartz, as the candidates to recommend for the award of this contract. The consultants will work with JWB staff and representatives of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center to identify appropriate indicators of effectiveness and establish a system of collecting and analyzing data relevant to tracking outcomes. Because the selection process for finding a qualified researcher required three months of additional time, the timeline for

conducting all three phases of the evaluation has been extended an additional three months (through August 2001).

The following products will be completed during this project:

- A descriptive report December 1999 on the existing and emerging program and activities implementation, efforts at public awareness, and issues of partnership and collaboration. In addition, researchers will provide an analysis of what data currently exists that could be used in an outcome study.
- A research design that specifies short term and long term indicators to measure effectiveness of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program and a plan to collect and analyze related data.
- Measurement tools and methods for data collection and analysis.
- An interim report during FY 1999-2000 on preliminary findings about effectiveness, based on a review of existing data, observations, key-informant interviews, and piloting of the research design. This report will also include copies of all data collection instruments and analysis protocols.
- A report at the end of FY 1999-2000 that includes findings and recommendations as well as revisions to the research plan, recommendations for the dissemination of results and recommendations for research modification.
- A final report at the end of FY 2000-2001 describing the evolution of the program, the long-term impact on students including their career aspirations and goals, and the impact on the community.

Staff resource persons:

Judith Simpson  
Patricia Davis  
Julie Pelle

Representatives of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC; RFP Committee:

Elder Martin Rainey, IMA  
Sheila Keller, Pinellas County Schools  
Jim Dean, Pinellas County Schools  
Irene Seybold, Program Coordinator, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC  
Kathy Walker, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Advisory Council  
Michael Clarke, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Advisory Council