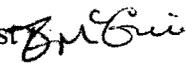


ED COMMITTEE #1
July 28, 2014
Briefing

MEMORANDUM

July 24, 2014

TO: Education Committee

FROM: Essie McGuire, Senior Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Briefing from the Chief Innovation Officer Regarding Current Education Projects**

Today the Education Committee will receive a briefing from the County's Chief Innovation Officer, Dan Hoffman, about current projects in his office related to education. Attached at circles 1-3 is an Innovation Program Status Report provided to the Government Operations Committee earlier in July. Mr. Hoffman will focus his briefing to the Education Committee today on three projects outlined in the attached memo:

- Autism Communication and Technology Pilot
- Wheaton High School Innovation Lab
- Food Data Jam – Part of the National Day of Civic Hacking

Chrisandra Richardson, Associate Superintendent, Office of Special Education and Student Services, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), will also participate in today's discussion about the Autism Communication and Technology Pilot.

Mr. Hoffman provided the update information below regarding the Wheaton High School Innovation Lab, in addition to the description on circle 2.

This spring the Innovation Program selected seven new students for the Innovation Lab via a competitive process. Three of the seven students in the Lab are working on the Food Truck Project, in which the students are collaborating with the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services and County Council to draft regulations to manage the growing number of food trucks in Montgomery County. Within the project, the students must use their analytical and communication skills to manage key stakeholder groups within the community. Furthermore, the students are gaining a closer look into the legislative process of Montgomery County by working directly with government officials. Everyday tasks include: identifying risks and constraints, scheduling meetings with professionals, and drafting communications to key stakeholder groups.

Four other students in the Wheaton High School Innovation lab are collaborating with a small start-up social media company, yAPPer. yAPPer is a hyperlocal chat application that enables nearby users to connect and share their ideas on common topics. The high school students are working to create a list of youth-friendly hubs in the Montgomery County area that can be tested during the developmental stages of the app. Students are learning lean start-up methodologies and getting exposure to the realities of entrepreneurship.

Beyond the project deliverables, students participating in both projects are acquiring project management skills based on the Project Management Institute standard. The Lab is also a precursor to a new course being offered this fall at Wheaton High School called Innovation Leadership. This course will be a true project based learning environment for students as the school prepares for a transition to a project based approach to instruction.



OFFICES OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Timothy L. Firestine
Chief Administrative Officer

Innovation Program Status Report GO Committee, July 7th, 2014

This report is divided into two categories project-based innovations and support provided to ongoing programs. Project-based innovations are pilots, prototypes and proof of concept projects initiated by the Innovation Program in partnership with another department, agency, or external stakeholder. Supports for ongoing programs are situations in which the Innovation Program is acting as a consultant or partner to an existing or new initiative.

Project-based Innovations

- *Autism Communication and Technology Pilot:* As reported in the previous status update, the pilot intends to use new methods, some of which are highly reproducible, as well as new tablet applications to improve the educational outcomes of non-communicative students diagnosed with autism. The pilot has completed a full year and has been tremendously successful. The students are operating at or near grade level in an inclusive setting. The pilot has even sought and gained approval for the students to take their Maryland State Assessments via their tablet devices, something that had not been previously planned. Moving the pilot into a new stage has been an obvious choice and in the past several months the project has faced a decision regarding what to accomplish in the next stage. The pilot currently consists of five students at two elementary schools and rather than add additional students we have decided to focus the next stage on transitioning the current students to middle school. The Innovation Program will help fund the additional training needed for paraeducators and seek opportunities to add afterschool supports through the Department of Recreation.
- *The SCALE Project, part of the SmartAmerica Challenge:* The Innovation Program has successfully led a demonstration project as part of the SmartAmerica Challenge and in the process garnered national attention and White House recognition. The project was called the Safe Community Alert Network, or SCALE for short. The Challenge was organized by the Presidential Innovation Fellows program and the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The team that put together the County's entry in the Challenge includes IBM, SigFox, MIT, UC-Irvine, BioBright, and Senseware. The Innovation Program also received assistance and support from DTS and MCFR. A full description of how SCALE works and a video that was produced for the project is available here: <http://mcinnovationlab.com/project-update-the-results-of-the-smart-america-challenge/>. The project was one of a small handful that presented at the White House on June 10th prior to a larger expo on June 11th. At the Expo on June 11th the SCALE project was presented along with the other 22 projects in the

Challenge. The keynote address at the Expo was given by White House Chief Technology Officer Todd Park who identified SCALE as one of his two favorite projects in the Challenge because of the potential benefits it could provide to vulnerable populations.

- *Food Economy Innovations*: Working with the Department of Economic Development, the Innovation Program has secured funding for the first stages of a kitchen incubator in Montgomery County. The first stage, which will begin this summer, includes the establishment of programmatic requirements, site selection, and a plan for staging.
- *Innovation Highlighted at MML and MACo*: The Innovation Program produced a 20 minute video highlighting a sample of the most innovative projects going on right now in Montgomery County. This video was presented and well received at the Maryland Municipal League conference the week of June 10th and will again be presented at the MACo conference later this summer. The Chief Innovation Officer will also present one of projects during workshop at the conference.
- *Innovation Week*: Innovation Week was held the week of March 10th and featured workshops to help build the capacity for innovation within Montgomery County departments. The workshops covered a range of topics including 3-D printing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), managing millennials, and prototyping. The event was well received and plans are being made to enhance it for next year.
- *Wheaton High School Innovation Lab*: A new group of students has been selected for the coming year at WHS following the graduation of the prior group of Fellows who worked in the lab last year. This group will take part in an expanded lab program at WHS which will include a full project-based learning environment throughout the school year rather than just the summer.
- *The Food Data Jam – Part of the National Day of Civic Hacking*: As a follow-up to our first hackathon last summer, the Innovation Program held a second event as part of the National Day of Civic Hacking. This year the event focused on three challenges associated with food data. A complete recap of the event can be found here: <http://mcinnovationlab.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/FDJ-Recap.pdf>
- *MakerSpace/FabLab Prototype at Davis Library*: The Innovation Program is working with MCPL to identify and test concepts for 21st century libraries. On June 19th the Innovation Program helped to kick off a MakerSpace/FabLab at the Davis library in cooperation with the KIDMuseum. The space will be a resource for not only residents and students, but the Innovation Program as well since it will serve as one of the Innovation Labs the program helps to operate around the County. Multiple County departments came together to help make this happen including MCPL, the Department of Recreation, OCP and DGS. A blog post about the kickoff is available here: <http://mcinnovationlab.com/?p=1147>

Ongoing Program Support

- *Text to Give*: This program is under review and may potentially be altered or cancelled in the near future. Donations have lagged significantly in the past six months and are no longer keeping up with operating costs. The Innovation Program will conduct a review and present recommendations to HHS and PIO on how to move forward. This technology, although not new, is a first for the County. As part of a County campaign to reduce panhandling and increase funding for homelessness prevention and outreach, the Innovation Program has set up the ability for residents to donate via their mobile device. The campaign seeks to raise funds for homelessness prevention and outreach. The

campaign idea comes from multiple sources, but the text to give component was guided by the Innovation Program.

- *dataMontgomery Dataset Inventory and Prioritization*: Working with CountyStat and DTS, the Innovation Program has helped develop an inventory of datasets and rank them using a dataset scorecard. This scorecard helps provide an apples to apples comparison of the value of datasets. This is the first time prioritization has been attempted in this manner in the country and has been lauded by the Sunlight Foundation as a model for others. The prioritized inventory is part of the Open Data Implementation Plan that will be submitted to the County Council in September 2014.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our Chief Innovation Officer, Dan Hoffman.