


M E M O R A N D U M

April 22, 2022

TO: Education & Culture [E&C] Committee

FROM: Carolyn Chen, Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **FY23 Recommended Operating Budget Worksession:
Non-Departmental Account [NDA] – Montgomery Coalition for Adult
English Literacy [MCAEL]**

PURPOSE: Review and make recommendations for Council consideration – vote expected.

Expected Participants:

- Kathy Stevens, Executive Director, MCAEL
- Stacy Parkinson, Board Chair, MCAEL
- Deborah Lambert, Senior Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

SYNOPSIS: [FY23 Recommended Operating Budget
NDA – Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy \[MCAEL\]](#)

About MCAEL. In 2002, County elected officials and community leaders convened a task force to develop strategies to support the growing limited English proficient (LEP) population and to respond to the demand for an English-literate workforce. As a result of the task force’s recommendations, a community coalition was formed in 2005 and later incorporated as MCAEL in 2006. MCAEL supports a network of adult English class providers and provides program administrators and instructors professional development opportunities. MCAEL provides \$1,190,000 annually in grants funding to support community-based adult English literacy classes.

Summary analysis of FY23 changes. The FY23 recommended budget for MCAEL includes a 6% inflationary increase to the NDA base budget in the amount of \$117,424 bringing the MCAEL FY23 recommended budget from \$1,957,058 to \$2,074,482. MCAEL is facing increased demand in Community Learning Groups, instructor shortages and grant funding. MCAEL projects this need to be in the range of \$150,000 to \$200,000 for FY23 and is requesting an additional \$33,000 to \$83,000 from the E&C Committee, closer to a 7-10% increase from FY22’s approved budget.

Pipeline to workforce development programs and employment. On October 21, 2021, the E&C/PHED joint committee received a briefing on career pathways post-pandemic and talent pipelines in the County with Montgomery College, MCPS, Universities at Shady Grove, [WorkSource Montgomery](#) and MCAEL to strategically align funding and outcomes for the County’s workforce development efforts. [MCAEL’s October 19, 2021 memo](#) outlines workforce development programs that MCAEL’s adult English literacy programs feed into.

Council staff recommends approval of NDA-MCAEL’s FY23 Recommended Operating Budget as submitted by the County Executive and to explore racial equity and social justice metrics related to English literacy and gainful employment.

This packet contains: _____ © Page #

[FY23 Recommended Operating Budget: NDA – MCAEL](#).....©1-2
April 22, 2022 Memo: FY23 Budget - Additional Increase Requested by MCAEL.....©3-4
December 2021 Memo: MCAEL FY23 Budget Request to OMB.....©5-15

General) to inform constituent communities of issues that directly affect them and to ensure that these communities' concerns are effectively taken into account. Communications efforts supported by this NDA include expanded outreach in Spanish and other languages, greater use of web and social media resources, Open Government initiatives, and improved management of constituent requests.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	1,435,295	9.00
Increase Cost: Operating Expenses	250,370	0.00
Add: Funding for Two Public Information Officers	192,863	2.00
Add: Funding for Two Information Technology Positions	172,044	2.00
Increase Cost: FY23 Compensation Adjustment	13,871	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	77,709	0.00
FY23 Recommended	2,142,152	13.00

Metro Washington Council of Governments

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is a voluntary association of major local governments in the Washington Metropolitan Area. COG seeks to provide regional answers to, and coordination of, area-wide issues such as air and water pollution, day care, housing, crime, water supply, land use, and transportation.

This NDA reflects Montgomery County's share of the organization's operation plus special COG initiatives. Additionally, the contribution supports the Cooperative Purchasing Program and the Regional Environmental Fund.

As in previous years, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission will provide Montgomery County's contribution to support the Water Resources Management Planning Program and the Blue Plains Users Program.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	1,684,519	0.00
FY23 Recommended	1,684,519	0.00

Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy

This NDA provides funding for the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL). MCAEL's mission is to strengthen the Countywide adult English literacy providers' network with resources, training, collaborations, and advocacy to support a thriving community and an effective workforce. Funding for MCAEL supports grants to approximately 20 community organizations for 27 programs that provide adult English classes. Additionally, MCAEL receives operating funding to fully support the network by: providing technical assistance, coordinating new program initiatives, and developing training and networking opportunities for over 60 community organizations. MCAEL convenes the ESOL community, connects with businesses and other organizations, and leverages funding to improve program quality and coordination. MCAEL also provides critical information for the community to educate and engage them about the need for and benefits from adult English classes. The County's contribution is implemented by a contract between the Department of Public Libraries and MCAEL.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	1,957,058	0.00

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
Increase Cost: MCAEL Operating and Grant Expenses	117,424	0.00
FY23 Recommended	2,074,482	0.00

☀️ Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation

This is the private non-profit corporation established by Council Bill 25-15 that serves as Montgomery County's lead economic development organization. The Economic Development Corporation is responsible for implementing the County's economic development strategic plan and related programs that include marketing, business retention and attraction, entrepreneurship, and promoting the development of the County's economic base.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	5,007,750	0.00
Increase Cost: Funding for Activities and Outcomes	1,192,250	0.00
FY23 Recommended	6,200,000	0.00

☀️ Montgomery County Employee Retirement Plans

The mission of this NDA is to manage prudent investment programs for the members of the Employee Retirement Plans and their beneficiaries. Expenditures associated with this program are funded from the Employees' Retirement System (ERS), Retirement Savings Plan (RSP), and the General Fund on behalf of the Montgomery County Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) trust funds and are, therefore, not appropriated here. This NDA manages the assets of the ERS through its investment managers in accordance with the Board's asset allocation strategy and investment guidelines. The Board also administers the investment programs for the RSP and DCP. The Board consists of 13 trustees including the Directors of Human Resources, Finance, and Management and Budget; the County Council Executive Director; one member recommended by each employee organization; one active employee not represented by an employee organization; one retired employee; two members of the public recommended by the County Council; and two members of the general public.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	0	0.00
FY23 Recommended	0	0.00

☀️ Montgomery County Green Bank

The Montgomery County Green Bank seeks to leverage public and private investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and is funded with both County and private money. Residents and businesses can obtain financing for things like weatherization, high efficiency HVAC systems, and renewable and clean energy projects. Bill 44-21 requires the County to appropriate 10 percent of the revenue received by the County from the fuel energy tax each year to the Montgomery County Green Bank. The amount reflected below represents 10 percent of the estimated energy tax revenue to be collected in FY23.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	0	0.00
Increase Cost: Montgomery County Green Bank	18,647,957	0.00
FY23 Recommended	18,647,957	0.00



To: Craig Rice, Chair, Education and Culture Committee
Cc: Gabe Albornoz, President, County Council

From: Kathy Stevens, Executive Director, MCAEL

RE: FY23 Budget - Additional Increase requested by MCAEL

MCAEL is respectfully requesting an additional \$33,000- \$83,000 to the proposed County Executive budget. The executive has proposed a \$117,424 increase to MCAEL's budget for FY23. We are reiterating our original ask to the executive branch which was a budget request of a total \$150,00 - \$200,000 increase for FY23. MCAEL appreciates that, yet we are facing increased demand in three areas: Community Learning Groups, Instructor Shortages and increased grant application asks, and we request additional funding to meet all three areas of demand adequately.

Issues

1. Increased demand for Community Learning Groups
 - a. Community learning groups have 2 goals
 - i. Expand entry opportunities for learners; curriculum includes information on how to access additional ESL classes as well as citizenship, workforce development and other services
 - ii. Expand cadre of trained instructors *from within the community that is being served and/or instructors who have been ELL's themselves (this is part of MCAEL's Racial Equity Strategic Plan)*
2. Shortage of trained ESOL instructors
 - a. Through data gathering and communication with a variety of coalition partners, there is a shortage of trained and available ESOL instructors
 - b. Programs are anticipating increased shortages for Fall 2022
3. Increased request from MCAEL grant recipients for FY23
 - a. Grant applications were due last week and show an increase in requests over FY22

- b. Instructors will be due pay increases since the last coalition wide assessment of instructor pay was in 2019

How MCAEL would use the increase:

- **Community Learning Groups**
 - MCAEL has successfully piloted Community Learning Groups (even in an online environment) to bring classes to groups that have not accessed other established learning opportunities
 - Current classes with the Ethiopian Community Center of MD, a Chick-Fil-A Restaurant and a Landscaping Company (for employees)
 - Classes to begin soon – a Portuguese community church, group of parents at Rolling Terrace Elementary School and a few other community groups
 - Ongoing work with child care works through the Latino Childcare Assoc. of MD
 - 160 individuals have expressed interest in CLG's this Spring (more than doubling interest from last fall)
 - Goal for FY23 – 20 CLG Groups (4-5 /quarter), serving 480-600 learners
 - Average cost for a CLG group is about \$2,000
 - Increased funding would support a 15-18 hour /week new MCAEL employee to coordinate additional CLG groups (assessments, etc.)
- **Recruitment and training for ESOL instructors**
 - Add additional cohorts to MCAEL's Foundations Course which is offered through our Learning Management System
 - Add additional modules to respond to needs identified through instructor surveys
 - Coordinate recruitment and training with partners
 - Continue to train and place CLG instructors as they gain experience
- **Increased Grant Funding**
 - Increase grant funding after analysis of recently submitted grant applications
 - Continue to support and build the diverse network of ESOL programs

I appreciate the budget challenges that I know the council is facing and I look forward to discussing our request with the Education and Culture Committee and other council members.



To: Deborah Lambert, Management and Budget Specialist, Montgomery County
From: Kathy Stevens, Executive Director, MCAEL
Date: December 2021

Thank you for the support you provide to MCAEL. As you requested, here is data, successes and plans from MCAEL, which will inform the Montgomery County Executive Proposed FY23 Operating Budget Process regarding the work that MCAEL and its network of ESOL programs do. MCAEL's budgeting and budget request for FY23 ties to our strategic plan and the County Executive priority area of A More Affordable and Welcoming Community Priority Outcome, as well as the signature initiative Advancing Racial Equity and Social Justice.

MCAEL – Coalition for a Connected Community- continues to build a strong, coordinated network of adult English literacy providers that is thriving and able to deliver quality classes to those in need. Additionally, we have identified growth areas to reach increasing numbers of adults. Our plans are grounded in MCAEL's role as a coordinating entity and our ability to leverage resources, partners, and technology.

As a separately incorporated 501(c)(3) nonprofit, MCAEL is now in its 15th year. We are celebrating this milestone focusing on the theme of "People Power and Potential" based on our success and future plans which will inform additional outreach and fundraising work over the coming months. The work of MCAEL staff and providers continues to support our mission, **"to strengthen the countywide adult English literacy network to support a thriving community and effective workforce."**

This Memo responds to your requests as follows:

Part 1 – Montgomery County FY22 Funding Allocation, MCAEL Staffing, FY 21 & FY22 Accomplishments and Continued Adjustments to the Pandemic

Part 2 – Comparative Data – Three Year History, Census Data

- a. Classes offered and learners served (FY 19, 20, 21) – projections for FY22
- b. Updated Census Data
- c. Data analysis of learner groups served

Part 3 – Outcomes Data FY21

- a. Learners
- b. Programs

Part 4 – Funding Scenarios for FY23 to meet MCAEL's Goals and County Priorities



PART 1 -FY 22 MCAEL Montgomery County Funding Allocations, Staffing & Accomplishments and Continued Adjustments to the Pandemic

FY22 Funds Allocation

In FY 22, MCAEL received funding of \$1,957,058 from Montgomery County. That funding was divided as follows:

MCAEL Grants	\$1,285,000
<u>MCAEL Operating</u>	<u>\$672,058</u>
Total County Funding FY22	\$1,957,058

MCAEL's FY22 budget reflects an increase of \$100,000 from Montgomery County. MCAEL invested the increase in both infrastructure and programs to create new pathways and increased reach. MCAEL has planned additional fundraising of about \$150,000 to supplement county funding for its operating budget and we are continuing to adjust to the shifts in philanthropic support as we enter new stages of the pandemic.

MCAEL also continues to leverage in-kind support through volunteers and this past year that support was valued at over \$35,000. Park & Planning also has provided staff and technical ability to help analyze our FY21 data and we will, as usual, be updating our on line story map with their assistance (exact value to be determined, but typically 80 hours of work) Additionally, with the investment the county makes through the \$1 million+ in grant funding, the grant funded partners reported that they raised/spent over \$1,769,000 in non-MCAEL funding and used \$501,882 in in-kind contributions for their FY21 classes. This again shows that the County funding is a catalyst to support other fundraising that the ESOL programs leverage

The MCAEL staff has changed in FY22 after some routine turnover and restructuring. MCAEL staff is currently comprised of an Executive Director, Director of Programs, Assistant Director of Programs (promotion), Manager of Network Learning & Development (renamed position and new hire), and Manager of Administration and Grants (conversion of a part-time position and new hire). We have also been able to restructure and add to our communication's team and are currently recruiting for a Communications and Content Director (P/T, senior level) and Digital Communications Specialist (Full-time) to create a more robust communications team. *(Note: Recruiting and hiring staff is proving to be more time consuming in order to build a diverse pool of qualified candidates in the current economic circumstances; thus we are finding longer lead times are necessary to fill positions so positions are staying open longer than we would prefer).*

MCAEL continues to use contractors to fill some critical functions as we increase our coordination of new initiatives to support more learners and more programming options. We are continuing to expand the scope of our coordinated programming to reach more

learners with evidence-based teaching and ESOL instruction. (see subsequent memo sections)

In FY22, MCAEL Grants are being distributed to 28 programs implemented by 20 organizations. Additionally, MCAEL is running a new, mid-year small grant program to focus on new programs at small organizations to increase ESOL availability in areas of need.

FY21 Accomplishments

In general, the accomplishments of the last fiscal year center around the fact that the network and the MCAEL staff were able to continue our work, implementing lessons learned from the early pandemic months, and continuing to support staff, instructors and learners who continue to deal with the effects of the pandemic – health issues, job loss, death, and many other daily life challenges.

FY21 (July 2020-June 2021) continued to be unusual with in-person classes still not possible due to the pandemic. For the most part, grant partners were able to effectively provide classes online via Zoom, Facebook, and Google Meet, putting to good use lessons learned providing virtual classes the previous spring. Some observations and notes about this year:

- Overall, in FY21 MCAEL grant partners were able to serve 91.1% of the number of duplicated learners and 89.8% of unique learners they planned to and held 90% of the number of planned classes.
- Program Grant partners reported that 2,157 learners passed the classes they attended, out of a total of 3,572 enrolled, or 60%. (These are managed enrollment classes where learners are expected to attend all class meetings.)
- Continued to implement MCAEL's Equity Strategic Plan
- Continued to refine and increase support for digital literacy

Notes on learners and classes FY21 - While targets and actuals for # of learners were lower in FY21, the projected and actual number of classes increased. A number of organizations reduced the maximum number of learners per class in order to have better instructor/learner engagement. At the same time, some organizations did away with having a minimum number of learners to start a class, since there is less cost incurred (no classroom rent involved) to hold online classes. While the number of actual FY21 classes (577) did not reach the target of 641 classes, this represented a significant increase over the actual number of classes in FY20 (537).

Some additional notes on learners (FY21)

- Majority of learners (53%) enrolled in MCAEL-funded programs were in the 25-44 age range, with 24% in the 45-64 age range. This is very similar to FY20 figures.

- 73% of learners in FY21 were female; up from 65% in FY20. Possible reasons could be 1) more women could attend online classes because they did not need to seek childcare, and/or 2) more women were not working outside of the home and had the time to take classes
- While the numbers of learners declined in at all class levels, the greatest decline is seen in the Beginning Literacy level – from 1,086 in FY20 to 647 in FY21, a difference of 439.

FY22 Q1 & Q2 Accomplishments

- Community Learning Groups (CLG) – MCAEL introduced this approach to learning over the last year in order to 1) expand the pipeline of learners in high-need areas of the county, 2) in line with our race equity plan identify, train, and employ new ESOL instructors who have experience as ESOL learners themselves and/or are in the communities where classes are needed, and 3) expand access points for learners to move on to other ESOL and/or work force development programs in the county
 - MCAEL has held 5 Community Learning Groups since Feb. 2021
 - Organizations participating – Identity (pilot program), Kings and Priests Court International Ministries (pilot), Ethiopian Community Center in Maryland, and the Latino Childcare Association of Maryland
 - 7 new ESOL instructors have been trained in the first cohort – all from immigrant communities and 5 have already taught CLG classes
- Mid -Year Grant cycle – MCAEL is implementing a smaller, mid-year grant opportunity for new programs and includes organizations that might not have 501c3 status in order to broaden opportunities to serve adult learners. This grant making approach is grounded in our equity plan and as of Dec 16 the grant panel has selected three organizations to receive grants – truly planting the seeds for new programs.
- Infrastructure enhancement:
 - Hired a FT Manager of Administration & Grants (restructured a vacant PT administrative assistant position)
 - Hired a new program staff member, Manager of Network Learning and Development (a staff who has ESOL teaching experience and race equity training experience)
 - Recruiting for new communications team staff members
- Continued participation in community efforts to outreach to populations in need of ESOL

Notes on learners and classes thus far in FY22-The continued uncertainty of the pandemic is clearly affecting the implementation of FY22 classes; while there are some common themes, each program’s experience is a bit different. Some programs had planned to be

online for the fall and go back to in-person classes in the spring, but with the new variant have decided to be online for the entire year. Other programs had wanted to be in-person starting in the fall but being reliant on school and other outside facilities for class sites have not been able to implement them in-person and reverted to online. Yet other programs that planned to go back to in-person in the fall have found that either learners or instructors are not willing to do this and have had to stay online.

PART 2) Comparative Data and Continued Information on Pandemic Adjustments
(see attachments for comparative data and learners served by language group

With continuing pandemic conditions, we are not analyzing our data for trends. For a second year, MCAEL was grateful to find support through the Montgomery County Planning Department to analyze & present overall coalition demographic data, trends and identification of where MCAEL and the provider network can work differently to meet the needs. MCAEL will be publishing an updated StoryMap which shows MCAEL and coalition data.

The 2020 Census data shows 136,625 adults who self-identify as limited in their English proficiency. This does not represent a significant change from the 2018 American Community Survey number of 137,000 that we reported last year. Also, according to the recent Census, over 40% of residents over the age of 5, speak another language at home. We continue to compare MCAEL data with ACS/Census data to identify areas of need and trends.

Some notes on data and pandemic responses:

- A positive outcome of the pandemic is that all MCAEL coalition members have learned how to implement online classes. A number of programs have found that even if they planned to go back mainly in-person classes that there is real value in continuing some online classes. These help to address some childcare and transportation barriers for learners – and programs are able to draw new learners from farther afield.
- At the same time, online classes have led to new barriers for some learners who don't have basic digital literacy skills, reliable WiFi access and/or access to a suitable device for on-line learning
- For FY21, programs recalibrated their projections downward for total enrollment as well as unique learners. (These projections were made in July 2020 when it became clear that classes would need to continue online.) Both the actual total enrollment and number of unique learners still fell short of the projections by about 500 learners. So the pandemic had a continued effect on enrollment. (see tab 2)

- However, not all programs were adversely affected; some programs found that with online classes they were about to attract new learners who did not have the time or transportation available to attend in-person classes.
- A number of programs reported that they have had fewer learners at the literacy and beginner levels, because it is harder for them to navigate the technical aspects of attending online classes and may lack reliable WiFi and/or a suitable device with which to learn.
- While targets and actuals for # of learners were lower in FY21, the projected and actual number of classes increased. A number of organizations reduced the maximum number of learners per class in order to have better instructor/learner engagement. At the same time, some organizations did away with having a minimum number of learners to start a class, since there is less cost incurred (no classroom rent involved) to hold online classes. While the number of actual FY21 classes (577) did not reach the target of 641 classes, this represented a significant increase over the actual number of classes in FY20 (537).

See attachment for FY20-21 Comparison: classes offered and learners served by language

PART 3) Outcomes Data FY21

A. Learner Outcomes (see Attachment Learner Progress)

While MCAEL continues to collect data from coalition providers on a wide variety of data points: numbers of learners served, age, country of origin, location, it was not possible to collect all learner outcome data as per usual due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Each program endeavors to provide an Outcomes Report which asks them to project “How much will be done?” (#’s students served); “How well will it be done?” (retention rates, planned program improvements); and “Was anyone better off?” (# of students that complete, what were their goals, how is language gain measured.) The data collection that has been developed through collaborative coalition efforts over the years was critical to the information recently presented to County Council. The ability to capture how well the coalition is doing compared to census data is key to the coalition’s success.

Attached is a summary of selected learner outcomes that show individual learner success for FY21 (based on available data). As in past years, MCAEL providers collect data on individual goals set by learners and whether they achieved those goals.

The attached chart shows an average rate of learner progress of 76% across the goals and objectives that are used to measure learner outcomes. For adult learning, this is a very good rate of progress with great consistency across goal areas.

One of the key concepts for adult education is to ensure that adults can set goals that are meaningful for them. The high numbers of MCAEL learners that achieve success and progress is tied not only to excellent instruction and solid programs, but also to ensuring that adults can make progress in areas that are important to them.

B. MCAEL Program Outcomes

MCAEL's work (grant making, capacity building, training and technical assistance) is informed by data. MCAEL's output and outcomes data is included in our FY21 report: https://www.mcael.org/sites/default/files/mcael_fy21_final_report_use_this_one.pdf. MCAEL measures progress and outcomes not only for the increase in English skills of individual learners through specific indicators of success, but also for programs using the international TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) standards for adult ESOL programs. For purposes of this memo, below is a deeper dive into the progress that the coalition has made on program improvement.

Each year, as part of MCAEL's grant process grant recipients identify goals and then report on progress their *programs* are making with regard to TESOL standards. There are 9 standards: Program Structure, Administration, and Planning; Curriculum and Instructional Materials; Instruction; Learner Recruitment, Intake and Orientation; Learner Retention and Transition; Assessment and Learner Gains; Employment Conditions and Staffing; Professional Development and Staff Evaluation; Support Services.

Selected Program Outcomes Work – FY21

CASA --Curriculum and Instructional Materials

The transition from in person to distance learning last spring was extremely challenging due in large part to our learners' low digital literacy and limited access to technology. Therefore, over the summer the Life Skills ESOL Program undertook an extensive redesign of its curriculum materials across all nine course levels. What is distinct about this latest curriculum project is that the new materials have been designed for distance learning as well a traditional classroom space where social distancing is enforced. New materials were also created to develop students' digital literacy skills within the context of English language acquisition. Teachers participated in a series of trainings before the start of each session to ensure that they were prepared to effectively facilitate student-focused and task-based ESOL activities utilizing curriculum materials within the framework of our new program structure. As a result, 84% of post-tested students demonstrated learning gains this year. 93% of surveyed learners reported that they now read better in English, 83% that they now write better, and 86% that they now speak better.

George B. Thomas Learning Academy: Adult Literacy -We are proud to report 100% attendance the second half of the 2021FY. We contribute the success of the goal through TESOL Standards 1 and 2. We took the time to know our students and what motivated

them. Because they felt their needs were being met, they continued to come to class and be active learners. We still have a goal to increase the number we reach to 50 learners and will work on our promotion and advertising of the class to meet these objectives.

Mill Creek Parish United Methodist Church –One of the greatest learnings of this year was the importance of having a dedicated Program Administrator for this program. With MCAEL funding, we were able to pay a part-time Program Admin. who was able to provide regular, on-going support for our teachers and students. The Program Administrator worked to ensure that teachers were equipped with information and tools sent from MCAEL as well as tricks of the trade and other resources that helped both students and teachers have a better learning experience. We were also able to provide textbooks to students free of charge as a means of offering tools that would not be cost prohibitive for their participation.

Sheppard Pratt – Thriving Germantown Program -During FY21, TG made significant improvements to the program. The first TESOL area that TG focused on was learner recruitment, intake, and orientation. Learner recruitment was still a challenge for TG for the first fall session and the winter session due to many participants lacking the necessary computer skills to be successful in class. TG did more outreach and advertising for the spring sessions and was very successful with recruiting new learners for the class. The intake process remained the same, but orientation was modified to make it more learner friendly. Orientation focused on getting students logged into the virtual classroom, providing the schedule for the session, and meeting the instructor. The result was positive. More learners who attended orientation attended the first day of class and stayed in the class.

PART 4) Funding to Meet MCAEL Strategic Goals and County Priorities –FY23

(see attachments: MCAEL FY22 Budget, Statement of Activities, 11/30/21), Grant requests by year vs. funding by year

To support the county priorities, MCAEL must continue to grow and our work to continue to build and strengthen the network – a systems approach – of adult English learning opportunities is more critical than ever given the effects of the pandemic on our community. The populations that MCAEL serves were hardest hit and will continue to feel the economic impacts for many years. English proficiency is key to recovery.

MCAEL's budgeting and budget request for FY23 ties to our strategic plan, our race equity plan and the County Executive priority area of A More Affordable and Welcoming Community Priority Outcome and signature initiative Advancing Racial Equity and Social Justice. We seek an increase of \$150,000 - \$200,000 as outlined below to meet the demands of the network and implement expanded program offerings in high need communities. This would bring MCAEL's total Montgomery County Funding to between 2,057,058 - \$2,107,058

We are completing the current strategic plan and will be embarking on a new planning process in the late Spring/Summer of 2022. That plan will incorporate our current Race Equity Plan and build on some shifts and lessons learned experienced due to the pandemic. We will finalize a plan for 2021 at the board meeting in January to focus on completion of any outstanding goals as well as continue the work of the coalition while the pandemic conditions continue.

Our budget requests focus on MCAEL's continued work as the hub of the coalition and increasing our ability to support racial equity and social justice in the MCAEL network and county, use data to continue to expand services to areas of unmet need, and coordinate solutions that serve more people with quality opportunities to learn English.

Maintaining at least consistent funding, for both grant money that MCAEL distributes to over 28+ programs implemented by 20+ organizations, as well as its own operating budget. Thus, MCAEL requests an increase of at minimum \$150,000-\$200,000 increase in funding to add to the grants and operating budget for the organization. MCAEL and its grant partners – like other businesses – will be facing increased personnel costs (recruiting and retaining employees), vendor and inflationary increases. To maintain services, as well as continue to provide English classes for new residents, MCAEL is requesting an increase of \$150,000-\$200,000 for its FY23 budget.

The top priorities for MCAEL's FY23 budget are:

- Continue to expand access points and learning opportunities in areas of greatest need for county residents via Community Learning Groups, additional learning opportunities
 - Continue the CLG classes for the Latino Childcare Association of Maryland – learners have completed beginning classes with great success and have requested additional classes
 - Identify other work-place based CLGs
- Increase pathways for instructors to receive training and grow the ESOL workforce
- Continue to address equity issues across the coalition – pay, training, access points, translation for grant applications
 - With coalition programs explore possible pay increases for instructors (overdue)
- Offer technical assistance to new classes/programs, especially those that we are funding through mid-year start up grants
- Sharpen communications and leverage additional funding sources for technology support and increased flexibility for programs
- Provide digital literacy support (Part-time or consultant) to new learners and instructors
- Fully launch and implement the Learner Leadership Group to involve learners in advocacy and planning
- Identify additional needs in coalition for tutoring and training for tutors

Continued Support for Grants (both start-up and regular)

- Maintain current, strong grant pool
- Maintain the successful increase for Access Grants implemented in FY21 to \$20,000 per grant
- Continue to provide additional start-up grants paired with technical assistance after testing pilot mid-year grant process in 2021 in order to seed new programs
- With coalition partners identify increase in instructor pay opportunities to support the workforce

Increase access points and increase numbers of learners served

- Community Learning Groups - build on pilots and this year's successes
 - Plan to be implementing one new work-place based class in Jan. 2022
 - Will be launching a new cohort of CLG trainings and classes in 2022
- Increase and target robust communications about English learning needs and the importance for community economic health and well-being
- Identify needs for tutoring and tutor training

Strategic Planning and Race Equity Plan Implementation

- Support launch of Learner Leadership Group – a group of learners who will be trained and involved in advocacy and program planning
- Develop a new 3-year strategic plan which incorporates the MCAEL Race Equity Strategic Plan
- Provide a robust menu of training for coalition instructors and learners on equity in the classroom

Technology and Training

- Provide training and set-up technical assistance to Learner Leadership Group members, CLG's, and instructors
- Provide Wifi and computers/Chromebooks as needed to coalition programs and participants

Communications and translation

- Translate grant applications into 1-3 other languages
- Review and assess grant making processes with an equity analysis
- Update website, publications with equity reviewed language

1) **Increase of \$200,000**--We would be able to fully implement the items above. The board and staff will likely need to prioritize some of these items and scale some of them back, but



with a \$200,000 increase we could fund at least 2-4 new Access Grant programs, and support additional Community Learning Groups, equity needs for instructors (overdue pay increases), additional start-up grants, and technology support for on-line learning.

2) Increase of \$100,000--With a \$100,000 increase, we would be able to fund 1-3 new Access grants and/or start up grants, as well as scale implementation of the other priority areas listed above.

3) Flat Funding--MCAEL would do our best to maintain grant funding to ESOL programs, and delay or find alternative funding sources for other ongoing work to meet the increased need and increased anticipated costs.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these summary updates. MCAEL has more detailed information about our CLG successes, learner stories, and other program updates that we will share at our Council briefing, and for others in early 2022. MCAEL is grateful for the generous Montgomery County budget support and would be happy to provide any additional information in support of our FY23 budget planning and requests. MCAEL is available to work collaboratively and innovatively to maintain our services and support the need in the county while balancing reduced resources. Please let me know if you need additional information.

Attachments

- Comparative Data – Classes offered and learners Served FY20-21
- Learners by Language group (FY21)
- MCAEL Dashboard – Learner Progress
- MCAEL FY22 Budget
- MCAEL Statement of Activities as of 11.30.21
- Grant requests vs. funding offered, 3-year history