

PROPOSAL FOR FUNDING “SECOND CHANCE AT SUCCESS” INITIATIVE

Dear Colleagues:

Research shows that North Carolina’s two-year recidivism rate is 40.7 percent, which comes at a significant cost to our taxpayers, their families and our public safety. Therefore, I propose funding a **Second Chance at Success** initiative that would build on the Board of Commissioners’ Fair Chance Hiring Ordinance, established to ensure fairness in the county’s hiring process for applicants who have been convicted of a crime, and our more recent resolution to support a Raise the Age bill in the N.C. General Assembly.

The primary goals of the Second Chance at Success initiative are to address recidivism by creating a collective impact framework to:

- Prevent entry into the criminal justice system;
- Strengthen our reintegration efforts; and
- Support criminal justice reform.

When creating the board’s strategic goals and objectives, we determined that it is important and necessary to work with community partners whenever possible to accomplish our goals. Second Chance at Success will take a comprehensive approach to problem solving, and include engagement with community partners and stakeholders.

GOAL 1: PREVENT ENTRY INTO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

We can help stem the flow of people into our criminal justice system in Wake County through our existing Vulnerable Communities Initiative. The many programs under its umbrella use the collective impact model to support and strengthen those in poverty. They include the:

- **Wake County Juvenile Crime Prevention Council**, which funds programs to help to youth at risk of delinquency or who have been adjudicated undisciplined or delinquent;
- **Wake County Juvenile Justice/Substance Abuse/Mental Health Partnership**, which brings together partner agencies to deliver effective, family-centered services and support for juvenile justice-involved youth with substance use and/or mental health challenges;
- **Youth Thrive**, which is a community collaborative that utilizes a collective impact approach to promote positive youth development for all Wake County school-aged youth; and
- **Middle Class Express**, which is a program that helps citizens make progress toward economic and social self-sufficiency by providing participants with life coaching and life planning to achieve a middle class lifestyle in five years.

These ongoing efforts coordinate strategies and interventions that can result in positive outcomes on a systematic level, as well as an individual level for juvenile justice-involved youth and their families.

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN REINTEGRATION EFFORTS

The three well established pillars of successful reintegration are gainful employment, stable housing and family support. The Second Chance for Success initiative addresses all three pillars.

Wake County Detention Center Employment and Education Initiative

The goal of the Wake County Inmate Employment and Education Initiative (WCIEEI) is to create a sustainable transition and reentry process that ensures coordinated employment and supportive services for offenders released from the Wake County Detention Center (WCDC), leading to improved educational attainment and careers that provide family-supporting wages. The coordination provided by WCIEEI will strengthen the network of government agencies, community organizations, businesses and citizens committed to successful offender reentry.

WCIEEI will serve Wake County residents who have a sentence at WCDC that exceeds 21 days. At intake, inmates will receive a risk/needs assessment, an initial goals plan and the Test for Adult Basic Education to determine educational needs. Individual case management for inmates enrolled in the program will include a reentry and transition plan, class assignments, individualized support and coordination with post-release partners.

The curriculum of educational, behavioral, and vocational classes taught by WCIEEI staff and partners will include cognitive behavioral change, substance abuse education, anger management, high school equivalency prep, computer literacy, employment training, career awareness modules and interview skills. Reentry case managers will provide intake assessments, reentry planning, some class instruction and helpful transitions to the NCWorks Career Center and other community partners such as the Community Success Initiative. The caseload is expected to be 20:1.

WCIEEI is modeled on reentry best practices used in other communities. Reentry-focused case management will create seamless connections to community services. Scheduling will allow for both group classes and one-on-one case management. Paid staffing for course instruction will ensure quality and provide flexibility. Individualized case management, including goal setting and reentry planning, will create strong buy in from inmates. Cognitive behavioral classes and coordination with mental health and substance abuse services will also be important.

Partnership with Community Success Initiative

The initiative would also provide financial support to further the work of Community Success Initiative's existing job readiness program, and its "Using Time While Doing Time" jail workshop and recruitment campaign targeting employers across Wake County. CSI has more than 12 years of experience working with individuals who are pre-release and post-incarceration, community partners and stakeholders such as the North Carolina Justice Center, and public and private employers. Therefore, the nonprofit organization is well positioned to help accomplish our goal of reducing recidivism.

Measurable Outcomes/Expectations:

- o Identify and recruit employers willing to adopt fair chance hiring policies and publicly identify as "Second Chance Employers."
- o Develop and implement a public awareness campaign centered on the public identification and praise of "Second Chance Employers."
- o Help Wake County residents with criminal convictions get job training via Wake Tech Community College and other methods by informing them of opportunities that match their abilities and guiding them through the process to gain additional training and skills.

- o Connect individuals with criminal records who are ready for stable employment with employers in need of their skills.
- o Help ensure that individuals who are released have a housing option by working with the South Wilmington Street Center, Cornerstone Day Services and other homeless services in Wake County, and identifying other housing options willing to consider individuals with criminal records.
- o Work in conjunction with Wake County's Vulnerable Communities Initiative for Southeast Raleigh with a focus on workforce development, job skills development and placement.
- o Coordinate access for clients on an entrepreneurial track with Southeast Raleigh's Virtual Business Incubator.
- o Mentor and train formerly incarcerated individuals for leadership and advocacy roles at the local and legislative levels.
- o Support the families of clients and connect them to resources as needed.

Many formerly incarcerated individuals need additional assistance to secure a driver license, deal with substance abuse issues and address other similar matters. CIS will also work with Wake County to provide help in these unique areas.

Support Criminal Justice Reform

As part of the Second Chance for Success initiative, the Wake County Board of Commissioners will continue to explore policy changes that will help break down barriers that make it difficult for individuals with a criminal record to be productive, law-abiding citizens. We will use our collective voice to support legislation such as Raise the Age that furthers our goals and discourage legislation that may be counterproductive. We will support community expungement efforts in partnership with the Wake County District Attorney's Office, proactively work with the Sheriff's office and support Diversion Programs alongside Wake County judges and attorneys.

The Wake County Board of Commissioners acknowledges the importance of specialty courts such as Drug Treatment Court and will continue to support this court and advocate for state funding to ensure its long-term availability to our residents.

In addition to creating a collective impact framework to prevent entry into the criminal justice system, strengthen our reintegration efforts and support criminal justice reform, the Second Chance for Success will form a Task Force on Recidivism that will meet at least twice over the course of the pilot. The task force will assess current recidivism efforts across Wake County, engage community members and stakeholders in the conversation, report best practices to the board and help inform our efforts.

Recognizing that substance use and behavioral health affects a number of individuals, it is imperative that community based-services and programs are available for individuals dealing with those issues. Wake County will partner with Alliance Behavioral Healthcare to ensure individuals have access to these services.

Lastly, per input from Wake County's District Attorney, the task force will be responsible for working with Wake County to create a resource guide tailored to the needs of inmates exiting a Wake County detention facility. You will find the estimated cost of implementing this pilot in the chart below.

INITIAL COST ASSESSMENT	
WCIEEI	One case manager to serve 80 inmates (20 in 3-month period)
1 CASE MANAGER * TOTAL SALARIES	\$48,438.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	\$15,015.78
	TOTAL PAYROLL: \$63,453.78
VOCATIONAL/COMPUTER CLASSES	\$12,000.00
TABE AND HSE TESTING	\$6,760.00
TRAINING ON NEW TOOLS	\$12,000.00
SUPPLIES	\$1,500.00
CLASS AND ASSESSMENT MATERIALS	\$4,000.00
PRINTING RESOURCE GUIDE	\$5,000.00 approx.
INTAKE SOFTWARE	\$4,000.00
FIREWALL AND SWITCH	\$2,500.00
TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT	\$2,000.00
NETWORK PRINTER FOR CLASSROOM	\$300.00
WCIEEI TOTAL	\$108,513.78
CSI PARTNERSHIP	\$50,000.00
SECOND CHANCE INITIATIVE TOTAL	\$163,513.78

* The Wake County Sheriff's Office may require that a detention officer from the jail accompany the case manager, which could increase the cost of the pilot.