



MEMORANDUM

Council Agenda
Item No. XI.A.
4/21/2015

The City of OKLAHOMA CITY

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Councilmembers White, Salyer and Pettis

Resolution expressing strong support for the Oklahoma School of Science and Math, and requesting and encouraging the Oklahoma State Legislature to continue to fund the OSSM at its current level and, if possible, to restore funding to previous levels, and to otherwise support the Oklahoma School of Science and Math.

Councilmembers White, Salyer and Pettis.

Purpose

The purpose of the Resolution is for the Mayor and City Council to convey the following information and message to the Oklahoma State Legislature:

1. That the OSSM is a proven entity that adds significant value to Oklahoma's economy; and
2. That the Mayor and City Council of The City of Oklahoma City continue to strongly support OSSM; and
3. That the Mayor and City Council request and encourage the Oklahoma State Legislature to continue to fund OSSM at its current level and, if possible, to restore funding to previous levels, and to otherwise support the OSSM.

Background

The Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics (OSSM) is located in central Oklahoma and is currently Oklahoma's public, tuition-free, residential high school for juniors and seniors with exceptional ability in mathematics and science. OSSM was created by the Oklahoma Legislature in 1983 and is funded by the State. The City of Oklahoma City was a key partner in the creation of the OSSM and is vitally interested in its continuation and success.

The Oklahoma School of Science and Math (OSSM) has a significant, positive impact on the State of Oklahoma, by offering an unparalleled curriculum to high school student in scientific, technical, engineering and mathematical fields. OSSM and its alumni generate \$40 million a year in economic activity, and contribute to the recruitment of high tech companies to our state.

Over the past five years, state funding to OSSM has decreased 22%, which has required OSSM to cut 30 % of its faculty and staff positions. Another 6.25 % decrease in funding is proposed in 2015, which would result in the loss of five additional faculty positions. While the school's president and faculty are making every effort to secure additional funding from other sources and to limit costs while still offering an excellent educational opportunity to students throughout Oklahoma, additional funding cuts would jeopardize OSSM's continued viability.

Review

Municipal Counselor's Office

Recommendation: Resolution be adopted.

Attachment