

TAYSF Service Provider Network – Youth Workforce Subgroup

As a group of long time youth workforce service providers and advocates with a designated seat on the Workforce Investment Community Advisory Council (WiCAC), we are committed to be partners in reforming a workforce system that has not been fully effective in meeting the needs of the community, especially its youth.

We understand that reform requires change. That said, we want to raise several critical concerns based on the recommended strategies for youth workforce funding established in the various youth workforce RFPs for the coming year and the policy shifts they represent. In merging funding or RFP processes, MOH/OCl, DCYF and OEWD have set in place some ill conceived system-wide policy shifts.

THE YOUTH WORKFORCE SYSTEM MUST CONTINUE TO SERVE OUR MOST MARGINALIZED AND VULNERABLE YOUTH

(1) TAY youth 22-24 have been deprioritized.

Example:

DCYF RFP Q&A - Q. Since WIA funds are under three separate strategies (10-12), what funds are supporting 18+ under Y-LEaD-strategy 7a (Workforce-High-Risk-Direct Service Providers)? And if general funds, why is the age range limited to 18-21 which is a WIA constraint rather than 18-24 which is the city's definition of TAY? A. Strategy 7A is funded by DCYF, and will most likely be a blend of Children's Fund and General Fund (GF) dollars. **Due to limited GF availability, we intend to limit the scope of the funds to reach the 18 - 21 years old population.** Pending funding availability, OEWD may issue another RFP for the 18 - 24 years old population.

(2) High-risk and therefore prioritized populations are defined by their system status – histories of foster care, juvenile justice, diagnosed disability – populations that the system has visibly failed. However, two key populations of youth, LGBTQQ youth and undocumented youth are just as often completely marginalized from any systems of support and can be, therefore, made invisible in this type of prioritization.

(3) Disconnected TAY youth reflect some of the most marginalized youth that the workforce system is attempting to support. They are the most behind developmentally and they have the most barriers to overcome to reach success. Therefore, they present one of the most high-cost populations to effectively serve. The city has been resistant to supporting the unit cost that is necessary, and, as such, much of what does exist reflects a high level of funding leveraged by community organizations. Program models being funded in FY 10/11 have only further established the city's deprioritization of the high-intensity models that our most marginalization disconnected TAY require, putting at risk not only the chance for success for these young people, but

also the leveraged dollars being raised from private sources meant to match dollars provided by the city.

IN ORDER TO SERVE OUR MOST VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED YOUTH, YOUTH WORKFORCE PROGRAM MODELS MUST BE PROPERLY RESOURCED

(3) Programs integrating **case management** as PART OF their workforce development programming are not being supported, and

(4) Programs that integrate **subsidized employment** are not being supported.

Models being funded reflect reduced amount of funding per unit or per youth, yet typically are requiring more comprehensive services.

Examples:

OEWD RFP#108-Workforce Services/Youth Sector Bridge – Funding available for each youth was about \$2183/youth on average. Services requested included **youth engagement** (outreach, intake, initial assessment, diagnostic assessment, Individual Service Strategy), **employer-driven occupational training** (partnerships with employer), comprehensive social supports (emphasizing **educational counseling and including case management**), and transition support. Additionally, it is stated that “successful models blend education and financial incentives with employment so that disconnected youth can build education credentials while learning skills and **earning money.**” Extensive data collection and management is also required both during and after program completion.

Concerns:

- o While the comprehensive design of the program model is an effective one, the funding structure is seriously underresourced and unsustainable.
- o Models being funded shift focus to programs that prioritize employer-driven programming at the expense of youth development principles and practices.

Models require case management services, but expressly disallow funding for case management as an integrated element of youth workforce programming.

Examples:

DCYF RFP STRATEGY Y-LEAD 7: Youth Workforce Development for High-risk Population. NOTE: **DCYF will not fund primary case management services within this strategy.**

DCYF RFP Q&A - Q. [Part 3 of 3, page 22/23] Y-LEaD-Strategy 3 (Workforce-General Population) – It is stated that priority will be given to applicants that can provide full continuum. Given this context... (2) is it being suggested that workforce programs that integrate wraparound into their programs - rather than “refer youth participants” - cannot anticipate a unit cost being supported which integrates wraparound supports its workforce model? A. ... (2) The way we understand the question is “will DCYF fund wraparound support services within this strategy?” The RFP seeks providers who can best provide the program components indicated. Under “Worksite Placement & Education Support,” the last bullet calls for an example whereby the proposed program will “refer youth participants to any needed wraparound or support services needed to ensure the youth can be successful in the program.” **If an agency offers wraparound service as**

part of its continuum of care, this wrap around service should not be considered as part of the proposed program's budget under this service strategy.

(5) In working with disconnected TAY in particular, **case management and job development functions have typically been integrated in order to ensure the highest level of success for employees and employers.** Program models being supported in the system's redesign are separating these functions, with **case management being defunded and job development functions working apart from an integrated program model** with youth at the center, and proper supports for the employer.

IN ORDER TO SERVE OUR MOST VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED YOUTH, THE YOUTH WORKFORCE SYSTEM MUST CONTINUE TO SUPPORT A DIVERSE ARRAY OF PROGRAM MODELS AND COMMUNITY PROVIDERS

(6) Stimulus dollars allowed San Francisco to launch some innovative pilots, namely the sector academies, which-at the time of the RFP-were still very much in the development phase and have not yet been evaluated for what about them is working and what is not. **Current funding strategies prioritize linkages to these pilot models** and the collaborations that were brought together to run them. This strategy seems to imply that everything that existed is what is not working and therefore does not deserve funding, and everything that is new and proposed by OEWD is the better strategy, deserves all the funding, and has the capacity to absorb even more participants and partners; and

(7) Given the time limited nature and the quick ramp-up time required for programs funded with stimulus dollars, **programs funded needed to have existing capacity for large numbers of participants.** The funding strategies for WIA youth formula dollars seem to, again, be prioritizing building from programs launched with stimulus dollars which only reflect a small subset of San Francisco's youth workforce providers and exclude some very effective, albeit smaller, programs currently being funded.

Examples:

Youth workforce providers funded in FY0809 by OEWD for WIA-Youth formula funding under multi-year contracts for up to three years, were terminated after two years with little or no notice.

The key funded strategy for Youth Workforce by OEWD going into FY 10/11 is Youth Sector Bridge which prioritizes linkages to their Sector Academy strategy, leaving little if any funding for other models supporting TAY youth workforce. Additionally, the small number of organizations they intended to fund and the required large capacity of the organizations, further cut off funding opportunities for existing programs that fall outside OEWD's rigid and untested system redesign. It was stated that OEWD hoped to fund the same organizations under the Youth Sector Bridge strategy for both the OEWD #108 and the DCYF RFP. OEWD RFP #108 – Youth Sector Bridge. Number of youth to be served 35-90 between 1-3 organizations, and DCYF 2010-2013 (Joint w/OEWD) RFP – Youth

WORKING DOCUMENT (5/5/10)

Sector Bridge. Number of youth to be served 125-175 between 2-4 organizations. Minimum number of youth to be served assuming 160 youth and 3 funded organizations is over 50. 50 youth per organization was also the minimum number for participation in the ARRA funded Summer Youth Program.

MYEEP focuses on younger youth and leaves older youth expected to track into sector specific employment, and without the proper supports in place at the work sites. This system redesign is unrealistic and too accelerated.

It is important for us to lay out our vision for an effective workforce system and to set a roadmap for its successful implementation. It is, however, also important for all the stakeholders in the workforce system to stay vigilant to any negative consequences to youth and programs that might emerge and to take corrective action.

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