

TO: Members of the Youth Council
FROM: Carla Javitz, Chair of the Quality Standards Working Group of the Youth Council
DATE: July 30, 2009
SUBJECT: Action Requested: Approval of Minimum Quality Standards for Youth Workforce Programs
CC: Michael Wald
Rhonda Simmons, OEWD
Glenn Eagleson, OEWD

ACTION REQUESTED

The Quality Standards Working Group requests that the Youth Council recommend to the Workforce Investment San Francisco Board (WISF) to adopt the Minimum Quality Standards for Youth Workforce Programs to be used as citywide standards in the planning, decision-making and funding of youth workforce programs beginning in 2010.

BACKGROUND

Standards are practices or essential elements of operation that are widely recognized as leading to program excellence and positive outcomes for recipients. They provide a foundation for program quality and a benchmark for professionalism in the service delivered. Currently city agencies which fund youth workforce programs utilize a range of standards and desired qualifications in the design and implementation of their funding process.

Building on the success of the Citywide Nonprofit Monitoring and Capacity Building Program which has begun standardizing monitoring elements, policies and procedures for contracting and monitoring nonprofits that the City contracts with, the Youth Council sought to identify a core set of minimum quality standards to define the baseline and threshold of what the City should require of organizations and programs that provide youth workforce services.

The Working Group began by reviewing various quality standards frameworks utilized by city departments and others nationally. It agreed to adopt PEPNet¹ as the framework of (high) quality standards. And from these high quality standards, it developed a set of minimum quality standards recommended for adoption by the Youth Council.

The recommended Minimum Quality Standards for Youth Workforce Programs fall into three categories: Management and Administration, Programmatic Approach and Youth Development Competencies. Attached is a copy of the evaluation criteria that provides an overview of the metrics used to evaluate an organization.

¹ The Promising and Practices Network (PEPNet) developed by the National Youth Employment Coalition in partnership with the US Department of Labor has identified standards of effective practice found in programs that result in positive outcomes for youth.

Our intent is to define and raise the bar on the quality of services provided to youth by city-funded youth workforce programs and forge interdepartmental collaborations and alignment of funding requirements and protocols making it easier for organizations to run programs which are funded through multiple funding sources.

The Working Group is recommending two levels of standards – those which are threshold standards that an organization or program must meet to be considered for funding and a second tier of standards which would be weighted in funding considerations. These standards would be in addition to and not conflict with any current city contracting requirements.