



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Grant E. Mitchell, MD
Acting Commissioner

13886

Date: September 3, 2010

To: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition & Contract

From: Grant E. Mitchell, MD
Acting Commissioner, Department of Social Services

Re: **Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester RISE (Referral and Information Services and Education), Inc., pursuant to which Westchester RISE will provide a Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program for students in grades 9-12, who are eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services (up to 200% of the Federal poverty level) at Woodlands High School for a term commencing on October 1, 2010 and terminating on August 31, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$74,250 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation**

Attached for your consideration is a resolution which, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester, acting by and through the Department of Social Services (the Department), to enter into an agreement with Westchester RISE (Referral and Information Services and Education), Inc., pursuant to which Westchester RISE will provide a Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program for students, in grades 9-12 who qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services (up to 200% of the Federal poverty level) for a term commencing on October 1, 2010 and terminating on August 31, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$74,250 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

The Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program was previously operated by SER of Westchester. SER of Westchester has declined to continue providing this service. There was a petition signed by the youth participating in the program

requesting that the Department continue funding the services for a full 12-month period. Westchester RISE is operated by the same Site Coordinator who worked with SER of Westchester at Woodlands High School. The transition to Westchester RISE permits continuity in services for the youth enrolled in the program. The contract period is 11 months and is scheduled to end on August 31, 2011, the end of the school term. The goal is to align all after-school related programs with the school year calendar in order to accurately measure student academic performance. The not to exceed amount for the Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program was \$90,000 in 2009. After a reduction of 10% and an adjustment for an 11-month term, the requested not to exceed is \$74,250.

Westchester RISE is an organization which acknowledges the importance of developing innovative and effective ways to link people with the academic, health and human services they need. Under the proposed agreement, Westchester RISE will provide academic tutoring, case management, college and career counseling, job readiness and job placement services for the participants of the program. Through this program, Westchester RISE will offer students and their parents an orientation to the school system regarding educational expectations as well as an assessment of the educational needs of the students. The program will address the need for supplemental educational and social services for students and provide intervention that will encourage the youth to succeed in and out of school.

The services to be provided pursuant to this agreement will serve a **public purpose** as these services promote the self-sufficiency and economic security of the TANF youth population in Westchester County by assisting them to overcome educational and employment barriers through the academic and job readiness services provided by this program.

The **goals and objectives** of the Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program are to address the need for supplemental educational, mental health and social services for students and their families and to provide intervention that will enable student success.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** because this program recognizes that students experience challenges outside of the school setting which ultimately impact school performance. Researchers have demonstrated that the odds of a student dropping out of school are influenced by many forces beyond the classroom (*Reducing the High School Dropout Rate*, KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief, July 2009, The Annie E. Casey Foundation). Snyder and Sickmund reported that 60% of all juvenile crime occurs on school days, and juvenile crime is at its peak after school dismissal (*Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1997 Update on Violence*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1997). Children are also at a much greater risk of being a victim of a violent crime during the hours after school (*Juvenile Offenders and Victims: A National Report*, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1995). The services provided by Westchester RISE

identify the barriers that interfere with a student's academic performance and the barriers that jeopardize the safety and well-being of the student, their families and the community. Westchester RISE will provide linkages and referrals to community providers trained to meet the specific needs of students enrolled in the program.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** in that the services provided are aimed at improving a student's access to resources that would lessen the impact that transitioning and poverty have on their development. Families living in poverty are less able to provide nutrition and materials required for a child's healthy development (*Reducing the High School Dropout Rate*, KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief, July 2009, The Annie E. Casey Foundation). The program supports the health and well-being of the students enrolled by identifying any health related barriers that may exist within the family and refers the student and family to the appropriate health and human service provider.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** as the services provided help avert the need for students to become dependent on publicly supported programs when they become adults. The families of the students enrolled in the Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program qualify for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), up to 200% of the Federal poverty level. Students from economically disadvantaged families are at a higher risk of leaving school without a diploma (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007, *Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs with Appropriate Interventions*, National High School Center at the American Institutes of Research). Over the past three decades, adults without a high school diploma have seen a decline in real income and have dropped further behind individuals with more education (*Left Behind in America: The Nation's Dropout Crisis*, Center for Labor Market Studies, 2009, as cited in *Reducing the High School Dropout Rate*, KIDS COUNT Indicator Brief, July 2009, The Annie E. Casey Foundation). Westchester RISE will continue the Job Readiness Program that would prepare students for the workplace and strengthen their ability to become self-sufficient. The benefit to the County of Westchester and taxpayers is the cost avoidance in the provision of public funds for sustenance to students who participated in the program.

The **goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored using the performance measurement indicators** developed by the department and approved by the County Budget Office. Performance Measure Indicators to be tracked by the Department will include number of students enrolled in tutoring, improved grades, school attendance, number of students enrolled in Job Readiness and identification of barriers to participation and academic success. The vendor will submit monthly statistics and quarterly performance reports in the format approved by the Department. The Department will be responsible for setting the milestones and tracking the vendor's achievements by reviewing the performance reports submitted by the vendor and making onsite visits.

Based on the Performance Measure Indicators, the Department is able to report that from the period of October, 2009 through July, 2010, sixty-seven (67) TANF

eligible students participated in the Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program. During the same period:

- 66% of the students had improved grades
- 54% of the students improved their attendance
- 81% of the students were identified as having a barrier to participation and required academic support.
- 12 students obtained summer employment

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3 (a) xviii as this procurement is for the purpose of contracting for the creation and support of recreation projects, youth service projects and other appropriate programs and services for the prevention of delinquency and youth crime and the advancement of the moral, physical, mental and social well-being of the youth of Westchester County.

Accordingly, authority is requested for the County of Westchester, acting by and through the Department of Social Services, to enter into an agreement with Westchester RISE, Inc. to provide the aforesaid services.

A resolution requesting the same is attached for your Honorable Board's approval.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 9/23-2010 - SUMMARY VIEW - SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services, is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Westchester RISE, Inc. pursuant to which Westchester RISE, Inc. will provide a Student Transition Assistance and Job Readiness Program for students in grades 9-12 who are eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) services (up to 200% of the Federal poverty level) at Woodlands High School for a term commencing on October 1, 2010 and terminating on August 31, 2011 for an amount not to exceed \$74,250 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is hereby authorized to take such action and execute such documents as may be necessary and proper to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be
Charged/Credited

Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
263	22	708K	4380	T708	\$74,250

Budget Funding Year(s): 2010 Start Date: 10/01/10 End Date: 08/31/11
(must match resolution)

Funding Source

Tax Dollars:

State Aid:

\$74,250
(must match resolution)

Federal Aid: 100%

Other _____