



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

17048

Date: January 19, 2011

To: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition & Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner, Department of Social Services

Re: Request authority to amend a previous resolution, which authorized the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with The New York State Unified Court System whereby the Court System shall utilize the services of the City University of New York- Hunter College School of Social Work to facilitate the Disproportionate Minority Representation in foster care research project, in order to modify the authorized term from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 to October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011

By resolution approved on October 14, 2010 (the "October 14th Resolution"), your Honorable Board authorized the County of Westchester (the "County"), acting by and through its Department of Social Services (the "Department"), to enter into an agreement with The New York State Unified Court System (the "Court System"), pursuant to which the Court System was to utilize the services of the City University of New York- Hunter College School of Social Work to facilitate the Disproportionate Minority Representation in foster care research project (the "Project"), for the term October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, for an amount not to exceed \$16,667, pursuant to an approved budget (the "Agreement"). The Agreement has not yet been executed.

The County has learned that the Project will take longer than previously anticipated. Accordingly, the County now respectfully requests that your Honorable Board amend the October 14th Resolution by modifying the term authorized, from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 to October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011.

All other terms and conditions of the October 14th Resolution shall remain in full force and effect and unchanged.

The services to be provided pursuant to this agreement will serve a **public purpose** as the Project will assist in the evaluation of the impact of decision making at key points in child welfare cases adjudicated in Westchester County Family Court on racial disproportion and disparity in the foster care system. The Project is a significant part of the Department's response to the mandatory New York State Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) by which the Department is working to reduce the length of stay of children placed in foster care.

The **goals and objectives** of this agreement are to assess child welfare decision points and their potential impact on racial disproportion. Cases involving African-American, low-income and poor families are more likely to be investigated by Child Protective Services (CPS), substantiated, and involve removal of children than cases involving European-American families (Robert B. Hill, *The Role of race in Foster Care Placements*, Race Matters in Child Welfare: The Overrepresentation of African American Children in the System, CWLA: Washington, D.C.). The Project will seek to identify how such disparities continue to be present. By examining the decision making process of cases adjudicated in Westchester Family Court, the Project may ascertain whether or not such decisions intensify or diminish the likelihood of racial disparity inside the child welfare system.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as the service provided through the Project does not seek to undermine the main objective of providing a safe environment for children. The process initiated through the Project places a unique emphasis on safety and risk while attempting to identify preventive and protective strategies that require a high level of cultural competency so that racial disparity is minimized.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** of the youth and families of Westchester County because the service provided through the Project addresses the health and well-being of children. The Project proposes to study case records and interview key decision makers in the child welfare system to identify any outcomes of those decisions that may be associated with racial disproportion and disparity. The focus is always on strengthening the three child welfare goals of safety, permanence and the well-being of children.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** as the program is designed to meet the requirements of the mandatory New York State Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The Department would avoid financial sanctions by adhering to the mandatory NYS requirements of the PIP. The service provided through the Project focuses on safely returning children home and achieving a more timely permanency solution. The benefit to the County of Westchester and taxpayers is the cost avoidance of maintaining children in out-of-home placements.

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. The vendor will submit monthly statistics 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. Because this is a new initiative, there are no outcomes to list at present.

The Amendment is to the Resolution as the contract has not been executed.

An appropriate resolution is attached herewith for your Honorable Board's approval.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 2-17-2011 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the Resolution approved on October 14, 2010 (the “October 14th Resolution”), which authorized the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with The New York State Unified Court System (the “Court System”), pursuant to which the Court System was to utilize the services of the City University of New York- Hunter College School of Social Work to facilitate the Disproportionate Minority Representation in foster care research project (the “Project”), for the term from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010, for an amount not to exceed \$16,667, pursuant to an approved budget, is hereby amended to modify the term authorized, from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 to October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2011; and be it further

RESOLVED, that except as specifically amended hereby, all terms and conditions of the October 14th Resolution shall remain in full force and effect and unchanged; 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
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Budget Funding Year(s) N/A Start Date: 10/01/10 End Date: 12/31/11
 (must match resolution)

Funding Source \$N/A Tax Dollars: N/A
 (must match resolution) State Aid: N/A
 Federal Aid: N/A
 Other _____