

Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

37393

Date: December 4, 2013

To: Board of Acquisition and Contract

From: Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner
Department of Social Services

Re: Authority for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development for the provision of an Educational Care Coordination Program for children in foster care in an amount not to exceed \$257,316 for the period January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation

Authority is requested for the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development ("WIHD") whereby WIHD will provide an Educational Care Coordination Program for children in foster care. The term of the proposed agreement will be for the period January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 in an amount not to exceed \$257,316 to be paid monthly pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

The public purpose of this program is to identify and address the complex educational needs of children entering foster care for the duration of their foster care placement and throughout the reunification process through coordination, collaboration and advocacy. This program provides educational coordination for all children in family foster care in a way that meets the individual educational needs for children as they enter into foster care, during the time of their foster care placement as well as when they transition from foster care.

The goals and objectives of this contract are:

- To ensure timely and seamless transition of appropriate educational services for children entering foster care from home school districts;
- To ensure that children continue to receive educational services to meet their learning needs during their foster care placement;

- To ensure that children transitioning from foster care to birth families or to adoptive placements receive timely and appropriate educational services;
- To ensure appropriate documentation of these educational services in NY CONNECTIONS System and medical records;

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County as they are aimed at ensuring that children are enrolled in appropriate school placements. When children are not in appropriate educational placements, they do not learn to their capacity and often misbehave at school which can lead to placement disruption. Educational success and achievement are critical to children's well-being. Furthermore, the electronic educational record follows the child as he/she navigates the various stages of the foster care system as well as upon discharge, thus ensuring a seamless flow of information.

The goals and objectives are in the best interests of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility in that the program advocates for children to receive appropriate educational services and supports deemed necessary that are paid through the school system whenever possible. Additionally, cost-savings will come from having the necessary information entered into CONNECTIONS in a timely manner, thus avoiding both state and federal sanctions (federally required data elements are tracked through CONNECTIONS).

The **Performance Measurement Indicator** reports and statistics submitted monthly by the vendor will be tracked and monitored by the Program office. Based on the data submitted from January, 2013 through November, 2013, the department is able to report that 346 children (newly placed, discharged and receiving aftercare, and children who continued in care during 2013) were served, 392 CONNECTIONS entries completed, 97 % of the children received WIHD recommended educational plans following foster care placement. Additionally over 8,000 advocacy phone calls and emails were made on behalf of the children being served. This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3(a) xviii which exempts contracts in support of the moral, physical, mental and social well-being of the youth of Westchester County. This contract falls under the Social Services Block Grant and therefore is exempt from the requirements of the Federal Common Grant Rules.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is requesting authority to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development for the aforesaid purpose.

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

RESOLUTION

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

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with Westchester Institute for Human Development (“WIHD”) whereby WIHD will operate an Educational Care Coordination Program for children in foster care for the period January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014 in an amount not to exceed \$257,316 payable monthly pursuant to an approved budget; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this agreement is subject to County appropriations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (the “State Budget”) proposed and adopted during the term of this Agreement. The County shall retain the right, upon the occurrence of any release by the Governor of a proposed State Budget and /or the adoption of a State Budget or any amendments thereto, and for a reasonable period of time after such release(s) or adoption (s), to conduct an analysis of the impacts of any such State Budget on County finances. After such analysis, the County shall retain the right to either terminate this Agreement or to renegotiate the amounts and rates approved herein. If the County subsequently offers to pay a reduced amount to the Contractor, then the Contractor shall have the right to terminate this Agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

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

Account to be Charged/credited	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2014	101	22	8900	5960	-----	\$257,316

Budget Funding Year(s): 2014
(must match resolution)

Start Date: 01/01/2014

End Date: 12/31/2014

Funding Source

Tax Dollars: 32%

State Aid: 47 %

\$257,316

Federal Aid: 21 %

(must match resolution)

Other: _____