



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Child and Family Strengthening
Advisory Board
Minutes of July 09, 2021

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

Members Present:

Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Nora Vargas, County Board of Supervisors
Alethea Arguilez, First 5 San Diego
Crystal Irving, Child Welfare Services, Protective Services
Carolyn Griesemer, Children's Legal Services of San Diego
Stephen Moore, Voices for Children, Inc.
Jessica Heldman, Polinsky Children's Center
Cheryl Rode, San Diego Center for Children
Kimberly Giardina, Child Welfare Services
Nick Macchione, County Health and Human Service Agency
Maddy Kilkenny, District 5 Appointee
Simone Hidds-Monroe, San Pasqual Academy
Patty Boles, Straight from the Heart, Inc.
Adam Reed, Dependency Legal Services
Sade Burrell, Former Foster Youth
Joy Singleton, District 3 Appointee
Jeff Wiemann, Foster Family Agency
Mara Madrigal-Weiss, San Diego County Office of Education
Sandy Mueller, Children's Health Care Professional
Scott Huizar, County Probation Department

Members Not Present:

Melissa Villagomez, Former Foster Youth
Judge Ana España, Juvenile Court

Staff Present:

Stephanie Gioia, Supervisor Nathan Fletcher's Office
Ruth Martin, Supervisor Nora Vargas' Office
Kyle Sand, County Counsel
Sandra McBrayer, The Children's Initiative
Jocelyn Nuñez, County Health and Human Services Agency
Jesse Greenfield, County Health and Human Services Agency

1) Welcome and Introduction

- Supervisor Fletcher brought the meeting to order at 9:00 am and Jocelyn Nunez conducted roll call for the Advisory Board.

2) Public Comment

- Supervisor Fletcher asked if any of the public members wished to address the Advisory Board.
 - There were no members of the public that wished to address the board on non-agenda items.

3) Approval for the Statement of Proceeding/Minutes for the meeting of March 12, 2021, April 29, 2021, and May 14, 2021.

- Supervisor Fletcher made a motion to approve the meeting minutes with the suggested amendment from Cheryl Rode and a second from Stephen Moore.
- The motion passed with all members voting Aye and one abstention.

4) San Pasqual Academy (SPA)

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Kimberly Giardina to provide an update.
 - The County of San Diego signed the agreement with the California Department of Social Services and is following the new guidelines provided by the extension.
 - New guidelines provided by the extension:
 1. No new placements can be made

2. Child and Family Team meetings for youth will need to continue for placement planning
 3. A third-party independent evaluator will need to assess the needs of the youth and stakeholders
 4. The County of San Diego will need to report updates to the California Department of Social Services every two weeks.
 - The County of San Diego will be working with the Children's Initiative and Harder+Company to conduct the stakeholder meetings.
- Supervisor Fletcher opened the item to public comment.
 - The members of the public shared their concerns about the ongoing trauma this brings to the children at SPA.
 - Supervisor Fletcher requested any other comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - Several members of the Advisory Board asked for clarification on several items discussed by Kim.
 - Sandra McBrayer stated there were no more comments and concluded item 3.

5) Update on the Foster Youth Subcommittee – June 10, 2021

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item asked Simone Hidds-Monroe to provide an update.
 - Simone shared on the items the workgroup is currently working on.
 - Mission and Vision
 - Survey for current and alumni of SPA
- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - There were no member comments.

6) Approval of Recommendations from Subcommittees

- Sandra McBrayer introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Kim Giardina. Kim presented on the remaining workgroup recommendations, currently 76 of the 88 recommendations are completed.
 - Workforce Development Recommendations
 - Completed – Ongoing: Enhance education and training to create better experiences of CWS improving the lives of children and families that can influence the public's consciousness
 - Completed: Establish stronger guidelines for continuing education that address individual areas of need and improvement for caseworkers and supervisors
 - Completed: Explore peer support and mentorship models to create internal support systems and enhance caseworker and supervisor skills and abilities.
 - Organizational Structure Recommendations
 - Completed-Ongoing: Actively involve children, youth, families and providers to create plans and implement policies that change experiences and result in greater positive impact.
 - Completed-Ongoing: Make all CWS policies publicly available
 - Completed-Ongoing: Evaluate the operationalization of the SET practice framework across agency culture, practices, and policies.
 - Completed-Ongoing: CWS to track and assess the overall impact to children's well-being by examining initial scores in relation to follow-up scores of the children over time.
 - Completed-Ongoing: Continue to conduct an annual caregiver satisfaction survey, sharing results with stakeholders.
 - Completed: The County must immediately leverage both internal and external technology resources to adopt/develop an RFA Applicant Management System

- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - Several members of the advisory board discussed evaluating the recommendations to ensure efficacy.
- Supervisor Fletcher made a motion to approve the recommendations. It was seconded by Jeff Wiemann.
 - Motion passed with all members voting Aye.

7) COVID-19 Update

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and began the update.
 - Supervisor Fletcher provided the below updates:
 - Assessing the viability of having in-person or hybrid meeting as we continue the Child and Family Advisory board meetings.
 - Current County of San Diego vaccine rates

8) Child Welfare Services, Director's Report

- Supervisor Fletcher asked Kim Giardina to provide a Director's Report.
 - Kim gave the below updates:
 - Shared CWS organizational chart
 - CWS data from 2020
 - CWS Operational Plan
- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the advisory board asked for clarification on the FURS process.

9) Advisory Board Member Updates

- Supervisor Fletcher opened the floor to members with updates.
 - Several members of the advisory board shared updates.

10) Adjournment

- Supervisor Fletcher closed the meeting and reminded attendees the next meeting will be on Friday, September 10th from 9:00 am – 11:00 am.

Next Meeting:

- September 10, 2021

Distributed:

- Meeting Agenda
- Family Support Liaison Program Presentation

Meeting minutes were submitted by Jocelyn Nunez. Please call Jocelyn Nunez at (619) 550-8815 if you have corrections or suggested revisions. She may also be contacted for agenda items or general information.



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Supervisor Nora Vargas, County Board of Supervisors
Aimee Zeitz, District 2 Appointee
Alethea Arguilez, First 5 San Diego
Carolyn Griesemer, Children's Legal Services of San Diego
Stephen Moore, Voices for Children, Inc.
Judge Ana España, Juvenile Court
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Ruth Martin, Supervisor Nora Vargas' Office
Kyle Sand, County Counsel
Sandra McBrayer, The Children's Initiative
Jocelyn Nuñez, County Health and Human Services Agency
Kayla Iliff, County Department of Human Resource

1) Welcome and Introduction

- Supervisor Vargas brought the meeting to order at 9:01 am and Sandra McBrayer introduced Aimee Zeitz, the Advisory Board's newest member. Sandra then conducted roll call for the Advisory Board.
- A quorum was present

2) Public Comment

- Supervisor Vargas asked if any of the public members wished to address the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the public asked why the Race & Equity Ad-hoc committee is not on the agenda.
 - Several members of the public of the public stated the importance of having the Race & Equity Ad-hoc committee discussed at every meeting.

3) San Pasqual Academy

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Sandra to provide an update.
 - The County of San Diego has been working with the Children's Initiative and Harder+Company to conduct focus groups with various stakeholders to re-imagine San Pasqual Academy.
 - Focus groups will include former SPA alum, court partners, community partners, SPA staff and partner staff, SPA advisory members, and other relevant stakeholders.
 - The findings from the focus group will be presented to the Board of

Supervisors in December and will be brought back to this group during the November meeting.

- Supervisor Vargas opened the item to public comment.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any other comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - A member of the Advisory Board asked for an update on the current number of youths at the SPA campus.
 - Kim shared there are currently 43 youth on campus.

4) Update on the Foster Youth Subcommittee – September 09, 2021

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item asked Simone Hidds-Monroe to provide an update.
 - Simone provided a brief update on the status of the Reimaging SPA Survey.
- Supervisor Vargas called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - There were no member comments.

5) Family Urgent Response System (FURS) Presentation

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Kim Giardina. Kim then introduced Daphyne Watson and Marrisa Simmons from Mental Health America (MHA) San Diego.
- Daphyne and Marrisa provided an overview of FURS, which included a background on the referral process and response process.
 - Family Urgent Response System is a statewide, crisis response for foster youth, former foster youth, and caregivers.
 - FURS utilizes a statewide hotline that youth and caregivers can call whenever there is a crisis in their home.
 - The statewide hotline will triage the call and determine if an in-person response is needed. If it is, they refer the call to MHA so they can provide a local in-person response.
 - MHA will de-escalate the immediate crisis and link the family to any ongoing services that might be needed.
- Supervisor Vargas called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the advisory board asked to see current statistics on referrals and response time.
 - One member of the public suggested to provide all the schools with information on FURS.
- Supervisor Vargas concluded the agenda item by stating she would like to see data for the first 6 months of utilization to see who is utilizing the system and how can we better support this program.

6) Child Welfare Services, Director's Report

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and asked Kim Giardina to provide a Director's Report.
 - Kim gave an update on Family First, a new piece of Federal legislation that provides new funding for prevention services for substance use, mental health, in-home

parenting, and kinship navigation. FFPSA also requires changes to congregate care so that more children/youth are placed in a family like setting.

- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the Advisory Board stated it would be good for FAYCES to be a voice at the federal level.

7) Approval of Recommendations from Subcommittees

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Sandra McBrayer. Sandra provided an overview of the Subcommittees and turned it over to Kim Giardina to review the recommendations.
 - Workforce Development Recommendations
 - Completed – Implement a long-term STS-specific intervention for supervisors and caseworkers.
 - Child & Family Services
 - Completed–Ongoing – Child’s right to be present at court hearings
 - Placement of Sibling Sets Together
 - Completed–Ongoing – Attempt to keep homes that can accept multiple children free until they can be filled by sibling sets, rather than placing multiple individual children in those homes
 - Completed–Ongoing - Keep sibling sets at Polinsky Children’s Center longer than 10 days, if necessary, in order to facilitate sibling sets being placed together
 - Completed - Ask Child Welfare policy experts to review the Policy Manual and include directives to case-carrying social workers of the requirements of WIC 16002 and WIC 306.5 as needed in policies related to placement and visitation
 - Completed–Ongoing - Make a referral to the Promises2Kids Camp Connect program to ensure quality visitation for the children if there is no option other than to split up a sibling set
 - Resource Family Approval
 - Completed–Ongoing – Develop a responsive system of training for resource families that identifies, prepares, and delivers ongoing trauma-informed training at the time needed in relation to the development of the children in their care
 - Completed - Investigate the use of a psychological evaluation tool to improve the speed and quality of the written family evaluation
 - Completed - Develop a process to determine which relative family member to select for the RFA approval process when multiple relatives have been identified and express interest in caring for the child(ren)
 - Completed - Establish a CWS unit focused on providing same day/after hours (24/7) responsive support to caregivers
 - Organizational Structure Recommendations
 - Completed - Review and update all vendor contracts to ensure alignment with the requirements of CCR/RFA
- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.

- Several members of the Advisory Board discussed possible resolutions to the issue of siblings being separated.
- Supervisor Fletcher made a motion to approve the recommendations. 2nd by Aimee Zeitz.
 - Motion passed with all members voting I.
- Sandra shared at the last subcommittee meetings the groups have decided to sunset the Workforce Development and Organization Structure subcommittee.
- Supervisor Fletcher asked how many recommendations have been completed.
 - Kim shared 81 of the 88 recommendations have been approved by the advisory board. All recommendations will be completed by the next advisory board meeting in November.
- With that being said Supervisor Fletcher stated we need to start thinking how we are advancing the interest of our children and families and focusing on prevention efforts.

8) Advisory Board Member Updates

- Supervisor Fletcher opened the floor to members with updates.
 - Patty shared her organization has been given funding for extra curriculum activities for youth. Please contact Patty if you have any ideas for this funding.
 - Kim shared Margo Fudge will be leaving the County of San Diego.

9) Adjournment

- Supervisor Fletcher closed the meeting.

Next Meeting:

- November 12, 2021

Distributed:

- Meeting Agenda
- FURS Presentation
- Recommendations of Subcommittees

Meeting minutes were submitted by Jocelyn Nunez. Please call Jocelyn Nunez at (619) 550-8815 if you have corrections or suggested revisions. She may also be contacted for agenda items or general information.

October 2021

Re-Envisioning San Pasqual Academy

Stakeholder Focus Groups Summary

This report summarizes the feedback of seven key stakeholder groups on re-envisioning the San Pasqual Academy campus.

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Introduction

Agenda Item #6

San Pasqual Academy (SPA) opened in 2001 in Escondido, California, and is first-in-the-nation residential education campus designed specifically for foster youth. SPA serves as a placement option for dependents of the Juvenile Court between 12-17 years old, and Non-Minor Dependents (NMDs) up to age 19 years old. On-site services are provided through a public-private partnership between the County of San Diego, New Alternatives, Inc., San Diego County Office of Education, and Access, Inc.

After the passing of AB403 requiring changes to the use of congregate care in California, SPA was approved by the California Department of Social Services as a three-year pilot project in 2018. It provides a stable, long-term placement with linkages to transitional housing and post-emancipation services. The Academy offers a comprehensive support system for the youth, using a trauma-informed care lens, including individualized education, independent living skills, work readiness training, therapeutic services, extra-curricular and enrichment activities, family connections and relational permanency.¹

Over the last five years, federal and state legislation have significantly shifted the statutory requirements for keeping children safely with families, resulting in sweeping legislative changes that identify home-based settings with resource families as the best placement option for youth and requiring the reduction in use of congregate care.

In February 2021, San Diego County Child Welfare Services (CWS) was notified by the California Department of Social Services that the SPA three-year pilot project and supporting Memorandum of Understanding to continue SPA's operation would terminate effective October 1, 2021. Additionally, there will no longer be federal Title IV-E funding authority to operate SPA, because it does not meet the requirements to be a therapeutic placement setting outlined in the federal requirements under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

In the Spring of 2021, San Diego County requested and was granted an extension to allow SPA to function in its current capacity until June 2022. As that end date approaches, and the use of SPA will have to change, San Diego CWS and Board of Supervisors are gathering input as to the potential next iteration of the SPA campus.

¹ [Child Welfare Services: San Pasqual Academy](#)

Purpose of this Report

Harder+Company Community Research (Harder+Company) works with public sector, philanthropic, and nonprofit clients throughout California to reveal new insights about the nature and impact of their work. We have specific expertise in facilitating conversations with diverse stakeholder groups to come to shared understandings and work towards common goals.

The Children's Initiative engaged Harder+Company in July 2021 to conduct focus groups with seven key stakeholder groups to gather their feedback on potential future uses of the San Pasqual Academy (SPA) campus and produce a report synthesizing this feedback for San Diego County Child Welfare Services (CWS) and The San Diego County Board of Supervisors (BOS).

Our goal in producing this report is to authentically convey the opinions, experiences and ideas of the key stakeholder groups that participated in focus groups and to provide CWS and the BOS with timely information from which to make decisions about the future of the SPA campus.

Overview of the Feedback Gathering Process

Harder+Company conducted virtual focus groups via Zoom with seven key stakeholder groups that were invited to participate in the feedback process by The Children's Initiative. The focus groups each lasted between 1.5 and 2.5 hours and were facilitated by a team of 3-4 Harder+Company staff. Each focus group had between 8-25 participants; across all groups about 85 total stakeholders participated. The stakeholder groups included:

- Relative and Resource Families
- San Pasqual Academy Partners
- Foster Family Agencies (FFA), Short-term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP), and Transitional Housing providers
- Community Partners and the Children and Family Strengthening Advisory Board (CFSAB)
- County and Legal Partners
- Child Welfare Services (CWS)
- San Pasqual Academy Alumni (2 groups)

Focus group participants were asked to share their ideas for the future use of SPA as well as environment, service, and other considerations if SPA was to be used as one of four qualified settings under the Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA):

1. A qualified residential treatment program (QRTF) for foster youth;
2. A setting specializing in providing prenatal, post-partum, or parenting supports for youth;
3. A supervised setting for youth who have attained 18 years of age and are living independently;
4. A setting providing high-quality residential care and supportive services to children and youth who have been found to be, or are at risk of becoming, sex trafficking victims.

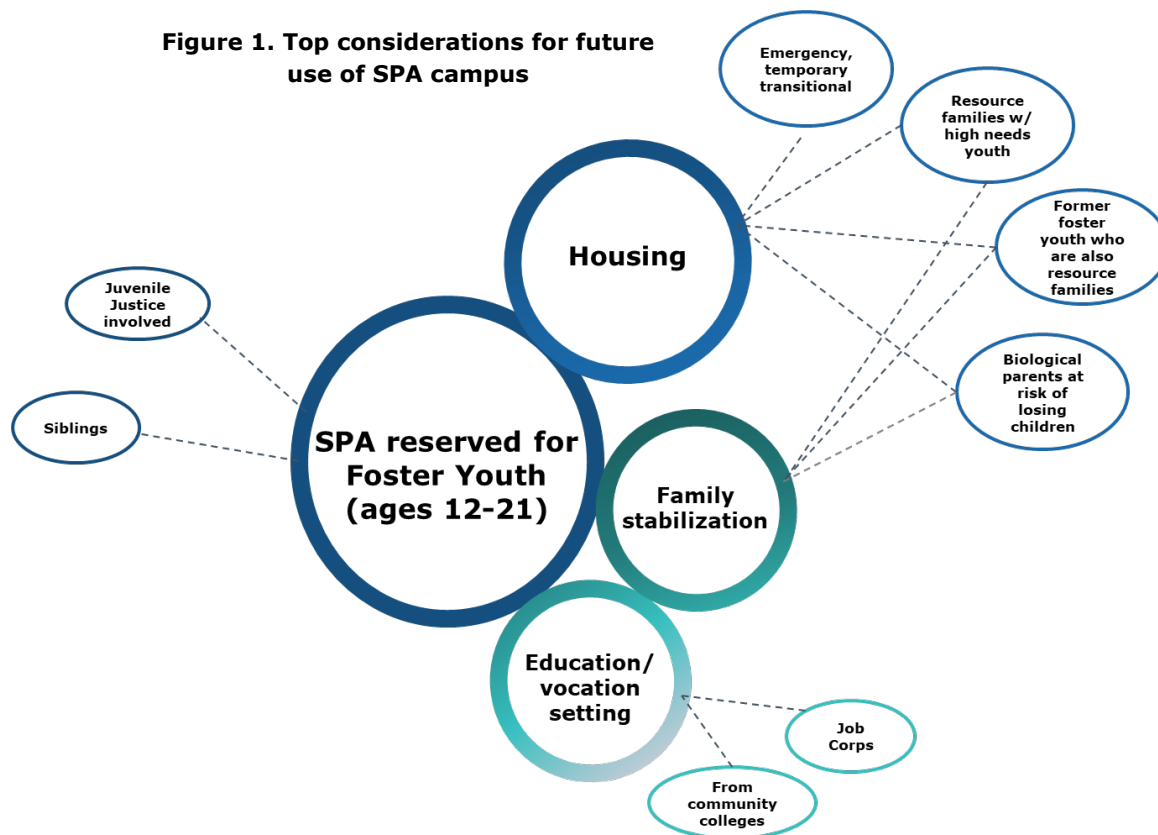
The sessions concluded with participants prioritizing their suggested uses of the SPA campus.

Following the completion of all focus groups, we analyzed the data. In our analysis of the focus group conversations, we looked for common and divergent themes and ideas both within and across groups. For more detail on the focus group process, see Appendix A.

The following report provides a high-level overview of key takeaways including the most mentioned uses of SPA, highlights from each stakeholder focus group, and key services for each of the four federally qualified populations. The report provides a qualitative overview of the perspectives and experiences of SPA Alumni and concludes with key considerations for decision makers as they determine the future of the SPA campus. Details of the focus groups from which results were culled for this report are presented in Appendix B.

Top Line Highlights

Across all stakeholder groups who participated in focus groups, there was overwhelming agreement that the San Pasqual Academy (SPA) campus should be prioritized to benefit as many foster youth as possible. The opportunity to leverage the housing on campus was a consideration for many stakeholder groups. Other common ideas across groups were the use of SPA for family stabilization and using SPA as an educational/vocational site. Figure 1 below illustrates the four, top mentioned suggestions across focus groups with their relative importance indicated by the size of their circle. The smaller, outer circles include additional context about the key highlight as well as the interplay and potential synergy between highlights. See Appendix B for a summary of results by stakeholder group.



There was mixed feedback from stakeholder groups about whether it was a good idea to have multiple subpopulations of foster youth on the campus at the same time (e.g. survivors of sex trafficking, parenting foster youth, 18+ foster youth and foster youth in a QRTP setting). Some expressed concerns about having these populations living together on the same campus and for the ability of one campus to meet their diverse needs. Others, including some of the SPA alumni, saw it as artificial to think of these groups as separate or different when there is significant overlap between them. Some SPA alumni were concerned that separating these groups on campus would detract from the sense of community that was so important at SPA.

Service Considerations at SPA

Regardless of the population of foster youth San Pasqual Academy (SPA) will serve in the future, stakeholders named universally important services that should be offered on campus. Services such as high-quality education, mentorship, mental health services, substance abuse counseling, and family finding engagement were all cited as especially important.

Across all focus groups, participants shared that the environment at SPA should retain a home-like setting that does not have a clinical or institutional feel. Focus group participants shared details about the home-like setting on campus, from having actual family or resource families onsite, to ensuring that there are opportunities for family-like outings.

Participants also expressed overwhelming agreement on a set of standard services that should be provided regardless of the subpopulation, though the participants shared different details of these services:



Education services. The size of the SPA campus is optimal for being a dedicated education setting or vocational training site. The isolated location is also free from distractions so that students can stay focused. Onsite high-quality education or coordination with teachers at the off-site schools that serve the foster youth must be offered. Suggestions include college preparation, vocational coaching and career planning.



Mentorship services. High-quality mentorship from peers or older, parent or grandparent-like figures have been a significant support for SPA alumni. Mentor experiences offer support and expert guidance about independent living and life outside of the child welfare system. Stakeholders see mentorship as a key service component at SPA in the future.



Mental health services. Foster youth should have accessible, onsite mental health support from highly-qualified professionals that are trained in trauma-informed care. SPA Partners and Relative and Resource Families suggested that youth should also have access to therapists that are independent from the onsite mental health team. While high-quality mental health services should be available for any population of foster youth at SPA, they were cited as particularly important for youth in a qualified residential treatment program (QRTP). In addition, wellness services (e.g., yoga and meditation) and somatic and nonclinical therapy (e.g., equine and art therapy), were also suggested.



Substance use counseling. Counseling for substance use should be offered for any foster youth populations at the SPA campus, as it is a condition that many different sub-populations of foster youth face. Extra consideration should be taken to ensure that foster youth are offered substance use counseling that is trauma-informed and culturally competent.



Healthcare services. Onsite or 24/7 access to medical providers should be provided to all foster youth. This is especially important for pre-natal or postpartum youth and QRTP subpopulations.



Access to family. Services that facilitate access to visits with a foster youth's family to maintain connections and that supports family-finding for foster youth were considered paramount for all potential future foster youth populations at SPA.



Independent living skills. All foster youth populations could benefit from services that teach independent living skills, but this service was especially identified as necessary for the 18 and older population. Many participants cited financial literacy, vocational training, and conflict resolution as part of a skillset important for all populations. Other examples include cooking classes and rental assistance.



Transportation services. While ideal for an educational setting, the location and isolation of the SPA campus came up as a barrier in nearly all focus groups. It is a particular challenge for groups of foster youth that would need their own vehicles to get to and from work or that need to be close to services or family in San Diego's urban center. There is also concern that families without transportation would struggle to visit foster youth located at the site.

If SPA had to be used for populations other than foster youth, stakeholders recommended populations such as unaccompanied minors and youth in the juvenile justice system. They also considered adult populations in need of housing and services, like families experiencing homeless, refugees, veterans, and families at risk of entering the dependency system. SPA is also ideal for family retreats, vocational training or educational purposes.

Qualified Settings under FFPSA

While the previous section describes universal service recommendations for any foster youth population that may occupy San Pasqual Academy (SPA) in the future, there were also special considerations for the four qualified settings under FFPSA. Table 1 below shows additional services and considerations that were cited for each potential qualified setting.

Table 1. Special services by FFPSA qualified setting

Qualified Settings	Services Needed
Qualified Residential Treatment Program (Q RTP) for foster youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborations with schools, clinicians, and emergency responders
Setting specializing in providing prenatal, post-partum, or parenting supports for youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onsite childcare • Parenting classes • Relationship coaches • A parenting or peer coach who mentors moms throughout the prenatal, post-partum and parenting stages • Private living spaces • Place to practice healthy family dynamics by letting partners live together; allowing mothers and fathers to raise children together and co-parent
A supervised setting in which a youth who has reached 18 years of age is living independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle or transportation stipend/assistance • Career, technical education, certificate programs. These services are not currently funded by the County and could be enhanced with appropriate funding
A setting providing high-quality residential care and supportive services to children and youth who have been found to be, or are at risk of becoming, sex trafficking survivors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On campus security • Collaboration with law enforcement • Mentorship programs (with former CSEC)

Foster Youth Voice: Centering the Lived Experience of Foster Youth in SPA's Future

Twenty years ago, San Pasqual Academy (SPA) was established with the direct feedback of foster youth. Now, as the County considers the future of SPA, the voice and experience of foster youth is again of critical importance. Our study included two points of contact with former foster youth to ensure their experiences are fully considered in the County's decision for the future use of SPA. While the current study strove to hear from, represent, and balance the voice of various stakeholders who have insights for SPA's future, it is critical that the County fully consider, if not center, its decisions on the experience of foster youth. This section highlights former foster youth experiences at SPA and insights of what should be considered for the potential culture, environment, physical space, and services on campus to best serve foster youth in the future.

Before we present the results, it is first important to acknowledge SPA Alumni's frustration and disappointment with the state and federal legal decisions that define who can benefit from SPA:

"I think a lot of kids within each of those [federally legislated subpopulations] are already at SPA. That's what I don't understand. I haven't had the opportunity to wrap my brain around the concept of the whole why SPA's disappearing. 'It's short-term, long-term....' blah, blah, blah whatever it is. The fact is, is it becomes of home for a lot of these individuals."

SPA Alumni uniformly felt that SPA should continue to serve foster youth. While a few responded to the question about "what other uses could the SPA campus serve" with ideas of a retreat center for nonprofits, a training center for social workers, and even renting out the NFL sized football field to a sports team to bring in revenue, they were largely disheartened and upset that SPA is changing. "It just feels like it's regressing" one foster youth mourned, "when this kind of care is giving us some sort of chance, some sort of normalization to us, not to grow up so institutionalized."

Foster Youth Experience at SPA

While the FFPSA legislation does not allow SPA to continue in its current form and format, former foster youth identified five core features that should be integrated into future use of SPA. These observations are of utmost importance in part because alumni have the benefit of hindsight, being able to pinpoint the most and least helpful elements of their time at SPA.

- 1. The home environment.** The SPA campus homes, with house parents, and other youth, were regularly noted as a critical feature of their experience. Homes replicated a true home experience and when coupled with a caring house parent, and made an indelible, positive impression on youth. Thinking back on their house parent, one participant shared:

"She was a very mother-like figure towards me. She was very on top of us, which was good. It gave us structure and how to keep our rooms clean and how to do chores. How to wash the dishes and do our laundry, and stuff like that."

Foster youth noted the importance of a stable, positive, adult role model in their lives in the context of homes on the campus.

- 2. The unique and lasting quality of the SPA community.** SPA also was noted as having the unique opportunity to build a community amongst foster youth with shared experiences. Many noted that the youth on the campus became "like a family" to one another and provided an inner circle of support that can only come from those who have lived similar experiences.

"Everything was close and all your friends that you had around you were going through the same thing that you were going through. You didn't have to 'fake it until you made it.' Because they were all foster kids and going through the same thing- losing parents or getting taken away from your parents. That was also what made us closer, 'cause you didn't have to fake it."

"We all get along, or you don't get along. But in the end, we're all like family. If somebody passes away, who's there? We are. We're all there for each other because we grew up together. We all have this same experience. We all know what 'it' is. So I just feel like [SPA] became like just a different definition of family, but we're all family."

The carryover of these close ties from SPA into adulthood was palpable in the focus groups. SPA Alumni members share a common bond through shared experience, keeping in touch long after they left the SPA campus. This tie has provided a unique strength and center of support even to this day.

3. **Keep siblings together.** Participants with siblings were vocal about the importance of SPA in keeping them together. Resource families do not always have the space to accommodate siblings, and as a result, they can be separated causing additional loss and trauma. Former foster youth said that while they may not always have been in the same house as their siblings at SPA, they saw them regularly on campus and were able to maintain that critical relationship in an uncertain time of their lives.
4. **Retain the low barrier to service model.** Many former foster youth noted that having services centralized on the SPA campus provided ongoing, timely access to needed services. Therapy, social services, health and education were all in one place, which reduced barriers to services for youth in crisis or experiencing trauma.

"I could go see my county social worker and also take a five-minute walk and see my clinician. There was also a nurse's office or station... I personally have diabetes, so I always needed healthcare resources. I could walk up there at any time. It was just like really easy and accessible. I found like that really beneficial for my development."

"If I needed anything I could go and be able to talk about it, or get things settled instead of waiting. 'Okay, well I got to wait this month' or 'Oh, my social worker didn't show, up now I got to wait next month. Hopefully they come.' That type of uncertainty wasn't there. Just having that support and that dependency."

"You didn't feel like you had to go hunting for [help] or call your social workers or your therapists and be like on the phone for hours... You feel like everything is kind of at your fingertips, which is a lot easier than accessibility anywhere else...even with a foster parent."

The "SPA blanket" as one participant called it, helped them to feel safe, cared for, and supported.

5. **Maintain the unique variety of supports and services on the SPA campus.** Former foster youth often noted the importance of the breadth of services and supports available to them on the campus. Computer labs, gyms, and a broad variety of other enrichment activities provided an exploratory, supportive environment foster youth to be exposed to, try out and then develop different skills and self-improvements.

"Just having everything so central was very, very beneficial. School was right there. We worked on campus. We live on campus, having our social worker right on campus. [...] I think there's something for everyone [...] If I was back with my parents or another foster parent, I may not have had the opportunity to have access to those resources."

" they provide a lot for kids to succeed, but it's really up to the kid if they want to succeed because they do offer so much to you, but it's really up [to you]".

The five elements above provided both broad and deep support to former foster youth. It nurtured a sense of normalcy while also expanding horizons through no-barrier access to services, a community of peers, and a variety of enrichments that would not have been possible under other circumstances. Together, these unique benefits of SPA were frequently summed up by SPA Alumni in one word – “safety”:

"There's a lot of bad stuff, a lot of negative stuff out there. And being able to go in to a safe environment [was important because...when I came out,] I was protected [from the bad stuff and if I didn't have that]...it could've led me on a whole different path."

Future of SPA

SPA Alumni expressed a range of responses regarding how to best support foster youth in the four FFPSA qualified settings, from concerns about mixing the different subpopulations (in particular, those who have been sex trafficked), to concerns about artificially separating subpopulations at the expense of promoting a sense of community, to noting “it’s probably experts who are better equipped to provide advice for something like that.” Many SPA Alumni said they didn’t see the FFPSA-identified subpopulations as mutually exclusive. In fact, they were one of the few groups we convened who talked about foster youth’s overlapping identities, noting that one foster youth could potentially be associated with all four FFPSA-identified subpopulations. Thus, the questions we posed about what would serve each specific subpopulation provided limited specific insights.

On the other hand, SPA Alumni were unified that SPA should continue in some form to provide foster youth the environment, resources, and services that they benefited from. In addition to the previously identified positive experiences from when they lived at SPA, they noted several additional points that should be considered when re-envisioning how the SPA campus can support future foster youth:

- **Look for multiple benefit options.** The SPA campus is unique in the expanse of space, its houses, and the general campus infrastructure. Former foster youth suggested that this could benefit various foster youth populations and have multiple, beneficial impacts. For example, in the high-priced San Diego housing market, these houses could be provided to foster families to house themselves and the children in their care. This could be of even further benefit to the foster care population if these foster families were former foster youth – many who do not have resources to purchase housing but can draw upon their lived experience to support current foster youth.
- **Ensure it serves multiple generations of foster youth.** For many former foster youth, SPA is their childhood home. Providing alumni housing and keeping space for them to return is important to their sense of self and their connection to others. “I think that especially during college and even afterwards,” one youth shared, “SPA gave me the opportunity to kind of have a place like home to come back to.” They would like to see SPA support future foster youth, but also remain open to them to return and connect. One foster youth cautioned the County to be careful of renaming/repurposing the site because it negates their history and connection to that important childhood experience.
- **Consider the orientation of contractors in the model.** Former foster youth from different cohorts at SPA noted the central importance of house parents and caring adults. At some point in SPA’s development, a contractor was brought on that instituted “shift work” approach to the adults who youth rely on instead of stable house parents. Several former foster youth identified the transactional quality of this support, noting that the adults were not consistent, often did not know their names and preferences, and did not build a trusting relationship. Rotating adults also meant that reports from external schools were not given to house parents with relationships but rather to service directors. As a result, small incidents became bigger “clinical” incidents. In general, former foster youth felt that the personal, home-like experience turned into one that felt more “institutionalized.”

- **Integrate connections to pierce the "SPA bubble."** The remote location of the site, accompanied by the comprehensive services of the campus, resulted in what many considered a very safe, but also isolated, experience. SPA Alumni suggested making stronger connections to the outside community. This will require additional focus on transportation options to and from the campus.
- **Provide education that prepares youth for college.** Several former foster youth shared that the education on campus did not prepare them for college. For example, one SPA Alumni noted that every day they discussed "resiliency" but "that doesn't teach you math." Others noted an overemphasis on trauma-informed care that sometimes manifested as a lack of accountability, such that teachers would excuse students' poor performance or lack of follow through. They suggested a model with more similarity to other traditional school experiences would better prepare them for the potential of college.
- **Incorporate job and career training.** Many former foster youth recommended stronger job training focus to train them for more independence when they leave. Trade schools, Job Corps, and pathways to colleges were all noted. Training programs could also happen off site, thereby piercing the SPA bubble and providing more experience with "the real world."

The County has a wealth of experience to continue to draw upon as it develops the future of SPA. The SPA Alumni expressed an eagerness to continue to provide input.

Considerations and Recommendations

After having gathered and synthesized the feedback from seven key stakeholder groups about the potential future uses of SPA, we offer the following observations and considerations as the County moves forward in its decision-making process.

1. **The location and structure of the SPA campus lends itself to key uses.** The campus' housing, educational facilities and sports facilities are well established and a valuable infrastructure to build upon. While the remote location can be a barrier, it can also be optimal to housing, educational or vocational uses that benefit from less distraction. Stakeholders shared that if SPA was no longer used for foster youth, it could be used for emergency, temporary or transitional housing for unaccompanied minors, refugees or homeless populations. As an educational or vocational setting, SPA could be used for students with complex IEP's or behavioral needs, or a job training or community college setting. Stakeholders shared ideas of partnerships with other agencies that could transform SPA into one of these settings.
2. **Community environment of SPA is a key strength.** Stakeholders noted that the family-like environment that was created at SPA is among its best attributes and likely connected to the positive outcomes of SPA Alumni. The home-like environment promotes a sense of community and belonging, and any future use of SPA should make sure that programming and staff are optimized to create this environment.
3. **Continue to include youth in plans to re-envision the campus** SPA Alumni have direct lived experience to inform the best use of the SPA campus. After conducting focus groups with them, the evaluation team recommends that this community remain engaged and be a primary source for input when it comes to the future of the SPA site and recommendations for programming.
4. **Use data to inform future decisions.** Stakeholders had varying levels of familiarity with the service gaps and the current needs of the foster youth population. Some knew precisely how many beds and/or homes were available for specific populations in San Diego County, while in others did not. The lack of precise data was a source of frustration for some stakeholders as they tried to identify which foster youth populations had the biggest need for SPA's resources. As the county re-imagines the SPA campus, bring data and stakeholders together.

- 5. Integrate stakeholder groups for additional feedback.** Our research aggregated the information, knowledge, experiences and opinions from individual stakeholder groups. During this process, groups often referred to each other to fill their own knowledge gaps. As an enhancement to ensuring that up-to-date data are available for all decision-makers, future efforts to engage stakeholders in discussing the future of SPA should include a process to allow stakeholder groups are able to collaborate in real-time. This will facilitate the integration of data and information that may be siloed in area of expertise that specific stakeholders have. A cross-stakeholder working group is an optimal intervention.

Appendix A: Methodological Details

Harder+Company conducted virtual focus groups via Zoom with seven key stakeholder groups that were invited to participate in the feedback process by The Children's Initiative. The focus groups lasted between 1.5 and 2.5 hours and were facilitated by a team of 3-4 Harder+Company staff. Each focus group had between 8-25 participants; across all groups approximately 89 stakeholders participated. The stakeholder groups were as follows:

- *Relative and Resource Families*: Included non-relative and relative foster parents, resource parent mentors, representatives from YMCA Kinship Program and Youth and Family Services, and Grossmont College Foster, Adoptive and Kinship Care Education Program.
- *San Pasqual Academy Partners*: Included SPA Advisory Board Members (e.g. representatives from San Diego County Office of Education and New Alternatives, who currently provide services at SPA), local community school district representatives and members of The Friends of San Pasqual Academy.
- *Foster Family Agencies, Short-term Residential Therapeutic Programs, and Transitional Housing providers*: Included representatives from transitional housing programs such as YMCA, Casa de Amparo, North County Lifeline, San Diego Youth Services; representatives from Foster Family Agencies such as New Alternatives, Walden Family Services, Angels, and Koinonia; and representatives from STRTPs, such as Fred Finch Youth Center, Center for Positive Changes, Varsity, and New Haven.
- *Community Partners and the Children and Family Strengthening Advisory Board (CFSAB)*: Included representatives from Just in Time, San Diego Regional Center, Promises2Kids, SAY San Diego, San Diego Workforce Partnership, Mental Health America, Supervisor Nathan Fletcher's Office, Children's Advocacy Institute, Singleton Law and Intesa Communications.
- *County and Legal Partners*: Included representatives from San Diego County Counsel, Children's Legal Services of San Diego, Voices for Children, San Diego County Probation, San Diego County Aging and Independence Services, San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, and Parks and Recreation Department. Two juvenile court judges did not participate in the focus group but submitted feedback via email.
- *Child Welfare Services (CWS)*: Included protective service workers, protective services supervisors, and other San Diego County CWS staff.
- *San Pasqual Academy Alumni* (2 groups). This group included former foster youth, most of whom had lived at San Pasqual Academy as dependent minors.

A representative from The Children's Initiative was present at each focus group, except for one. A CWS manager was also present at each focus group, except for one, and presented an overview of the recent changes in state and federal legislation that required SPA to close. The CWS representative also presented four scenarios, under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), for which federal foster care maintenance payments are permitted for foster youth placed in childcare institutions. These scenarios are:

- A qualified residential treatment program (QRTP).
- A setting specializing in providing prenatal, post-partum, or parenting supports for youth.
- A youth who has attained 18 years of age, a supervised setting in which the youth is living independently.
- A setting providing high-quality residential care and supportive services to children and youth who have been found to be, or are at risk of becoming, sex trafficking victims.

Focus group participants were instructed that they would be asked to consider these four possible scenarios when thinking about and sharing ideas for future uses of the SPA campus.

In all groups with more than 8 attendees, we broke participants out into smaller groups of 4-5 people for facilitated conversations about their ideas for potential future uses of the SPA campus. Participants shared their ideas verbally, using an anonymous virtual whiteboard, and through the Zoom chat function. Questions asked in the small groups included:

What are the ideas about the future use of SPA that you are bringing to this meeting?

If the SPA campus was to be used as a **QRTP for foster youth**:

- What is needed to create a supportive environment?
- What services should be present?
- What other considerations should be made?

If the SPA campus was to be used for foster youth who are **pregnant or parenting**:

- What is needed to create a supportive environment?
- What services should be present?
- What other considerations should be made?

If the SPA campus was to be used for foster youth who are **survivors of sex trafficking or at risk of being sex trafficked**:

- What is needed to create a supportive environment?
- What services should be present?
- What other considerations should be made?

If the SPA campus was to be used for former foster youth **18+ years and older who are living independently**.

- What is needed to create a supportive environment?
- What services should be present?
- What other considerations should be made?

What might be the other uses of the San Pasqual site for foster youth populations or other populations in the community that we haven't yet discussed? Think of the communities you serve and their needs – is there something about the SPA campus that can help meet their needs?

What use(s) of the San Pasqual campus that has been discussed today would you prioritize?


The focus group prompts and conversation during the second SPA Alumni focus group were different than the other groups and centered more on alumni's lived experience at SPA and the qualities and features of SPA they found served them well and did not serve them well.

Following the completion of all focus groups, we proceeded to analyze the data. In our analysis of the focus group conversations, we looked for common and divergent themes and ideas both within and across groups.

Appendix B: Focus Group Finding Details by Stakeholder Group

Stakeholder Group	Priority Populations Identified
Relative and Resource Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain SPA for foster youth: Relative and Resource families overwhelmingly believed that the SPA campus should remain with the current population (high school-age, foster youth) and expand either services or age ranges to accommodate youth in the 4 FFPSA qualified settings. There were concerns about mixing age-groups, thus most of the recommendations were geared towards high-school aged youth up to age 21. • There are many different opinions on the exactly how current services at SPA could be expanded, with additional ideas of the SPA campus being good for youth in the juvenile justice population. Expanding the educational services offered or creating new educational or vocational programming at SPA was among the top recommendations, from offering more Career Training and Employment programs to adding vocational training from community colleges. As long as many foster youth could access these offerings, it would be priority use for SPA. • While expansion of current services and education or vocational training were the key themes, if SPA was to be used for populations outside of foster youth, the ideal use for the campus would be for housing - whether emergency, temporary or transitional.
SPA Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPA partners feel that the campus should remain in use for foster youth and the current participants. It is large enough to house several populations of foster youth and offer specialized services. When these services are combined with very good staffing there seem to be exceptional outcomes for participants. Most of the best uses to meet needs are centered around a combination of the campus size and geography – when the isolated location is optimal for a population for safety or distraction purposes, the location is challenging for transportation, access to potentially needed medical services, providing security in the case of CSEC youth.
Foster Family Agency (FFA), Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP), and Transitional Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When considering the future use of SPA for foster youth, these stakeholders favored SPA to be for housing for resource families with higher needs foster youth. Parents could live onsite and gain access to federal funds for supports and rather than services being concentrated onsite, services would come to SPA. There were many concerns about housing different foster youth populations on the same campus, citing concerns with mixing age groups and risk/needs levels. • Ultimately, stakeholders want to see which of the foster youth priority populations are the most at-need and identify service gaps to determine the future use of SPA. This group has knowledge on vacancies in programs such as a STRTP and felt they lacked information on the supply and demand projections for the current and future foster youth populations that quality to use SPA. As participants shared this, they voiced concern that recommendations could be overwritten by new legislation, thus the group considered many of populations and uses of SPA. • Other uses for SPA include many different types of housing, from low-cost family housing, to housing for non-minor dependents and non-foster children adults, to general affordable housing, FFA homes, housing as a family treatment center for CWS families and immigration center housing. This group questioned placing multiple populations on one site and asked if the property could either be subdivided and sold or transformed into a community college with housing. No matter which uses are selected, consideration should be taken to identify the housing-need and needs that benefit from the remote location rather than being

	<p>hindered by it. They also suggested using braided funding for programs to leverage the remote location.</p>
Community Partners and Children and Families Strengthening Advisory Board (CFSAB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community partners and CFSAB shared that the current foster youth, QRTP and foster youth 18+ are the priority populations for SPA though there were many other ideas for uses from this group. They advised that if SPA is to remain in use for any foster care sub-population, research should take place on what worked and what hasn't at SPA instead of re-designing the model and that youth should be able to participate in the selection of the services they receive. If SPA is to remain for any foster youth populations, it should continue to be a safe space for foster youth and siblings that centers community-building. Other uses of the SPA campus included housing for biological parents at risk of losing children to foster care or housing for foster families. SPA could also be used for housing veterans or homeless families, or it can be converted to an educational setting. This group suggested that SPA alumni be asking for input prior to decisions being made. SPA alumni input is summarized below.
Legal and County Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal and County staff participants identified foster youth needing STRTP as a priority population and use for SPA, sharing that the site would be too large for QRTP. There was also ideation on if SPA could focus on filling gaps for youth in the juvenile justice system, somewhat similar to Polinsky Children's Center. There was interest in ensuring that the housing facilities at SPA are used for family of foster youth, families at risk of entering the child welfare system or parents with children in need of substance abuse treatment. Regardless of the use or youth population, this group wants to ensure that intergenerational peer or mentorship is part of services. These partners are aware of many populations in need that could benefit from the SPA campus. Refugees, homeless or unaccompanied minors, youth in the welfare system who age-out but do not qualify for SDRC or low-functioning individuals who do not qualify for San Diego Regional Center (SDRC) clients are amongst the most at-need who could benefit from the SPA campus. If not used for foster youth, the campus could be used for housing and support services, these stakeholders also favored the conversion of SPA to an educational or vocational setting.
Child Welfare Services staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Child Welfare Services staff agreed that the priority population for SPA should be teens and that the site should be used for housing. For foster youth, SPA could be a residential placement option for teens and sibling groups that do not want a foster home, for youth who do not meet STRTP but cannot access resource homes, or SPA could be used for special sub-populations such as dual diagnosis youth in need of substance abuse treatment or LGBTQ+. They also shared that currently there is a shortage of resource homes. Other ideas for SPA usage aside from foster youth and housing involved using the campus for an educational or vocational training setting such as a school for students with complex IEP's or behavioral needs or a job corps program. It could also be a day treatment center for youth in the child welfare system.
SPA Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many SPA Alumni felt strongly that SPA should remain as is, for the current foster youth who live there and that it could expand to be a place for all foster youth. They asked that decision makers reconsider the approach that only four foster youth sub-populations could stay eligible to reside at SPA, most feel it's an artificial separation as an individual foster youth could identify with multiple categories. There are some SPA alumni that did consider there could be significant enough differences between the four sub-populations that mixing them could be traumatizing. If SPA needs to be repurposed, it could become homes for foster parents, especially those that are also former foster youth and that SPA should maintain the home-like environment. They asked that keeping



siblings together be paramount and that SPA residents still have easy access to the breadth of services offered and that youth have the right to be engaged in choices with their care.



SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

November 5, 2021



SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY (SPA)

Agenda Item #6



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO



OPERATIONAL STATUS OF SPA



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

February 8, 2021

- CWS was notified that the SPA Pilot Project and supporting MOU would terminate effective October 1, 2021 and there will no longer be federal Title IV-E funding to operate SPA.

March 16, 2021

- The Board directed the CAO to request an extension for the MOU through June 30, 2022.

May 3, 2021

- CDSS offered an extension to the term of the MOU through June 30, 2022 subject to several conditions.

May 18, 2021

- The Board directed the CAO to enter into an agreement with CDSS for the MOU extension and meet with stakeholders to identify ways to expand the use of the SPA campus.

May 27, 2021

- HHSA signed the agreement for the extension of SPA and returned the agreement to CDSS.

CURRENT SPA OPERATIONS



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

On June 1, 2021, there were 72 youth placed at SPA and since that date:

- **28** transitions were made to the following settings:
 - Home-based environment
 - Out of County College Housing
 - Transitional Housing Programs
 - Supervised Independent Living Placements
 - Polinsky Children's Center or Juvenile Hall
- **43** Child and Family Team Meetings were completed
- **13** youth graduated high school

As of October 26, 2021, 44 youth are placed at SPA.



RE-ENVISIONING SPA

Key Stakeholder Focus Groups convened to contribute input on the suggested use of the SPA campus and included:

- Former Foster Youth
- Relative and Resource Families
- SPA Partners
- Foster Family Agencies, Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP), and Transitional Housing providers
- Community Partners and the Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board
- County and Legal Partners
- CWS Staff



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Strong emphasis on keeping the campus serving foster youth
- Suggestions for other potential populations to be served included unaccompanied minors, youth involved with juvenile justice, families experiencing homelessness, refugees, veterans, and families at risk of entering the dependency system
- Some concerns about mixing various foster youth populations, although alumni youth pointed out that youth often overlap in the categories allowed under FFPSA, so it might not be difficult to manage multiple populations
- Maintaining education services will be important – both on-site and coordination with off-site schools
- More college prep, career prep, and independent living skills services are needed
- Mentoring should continue to be part of the programming – both from peers and grandparents
- Having access to mental health and substance abuse services on site is necessary; youth should also be able to access off site services as specialized treatment is needed
- Healthcare services should be available on site
- Maintaining family connections, visitation, and ongoing family finding should be a central component
- Enhance transportation services to strengthen opportunities for youth to go off site

MULTIPURPOSE CAMPUS OPTION



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

FOSTER YOUTH POPULATION

Temporary Shelter
Care Facility

Crisis Residential
Treatment Program

Short-Term
Residential
Therapeutic Program

Pregnant or
Parenting Youth

Youth Victims Of Or
At-Risk of Sex
Trafficking

Family Stabilization/
Transitional Housing

ALTERNATIVE USE OPTION



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

POPULATIONS OTHER THAN YOUTH IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Unaccompanied
Minors

Juvenile Justice
Youth

Adults & Families
At-Risk of
Homelessness

Refugees

Veterans

Families Needing
Housing & At-Risk of
Entering the Child
Welfare System



NEXT STEPS

- Incorporate feedback from CFSAB.
- On December 7, 2021, CWS will request the Board to receive the options for SPA and determine the course of action for the SPA campus.
- CWS will continue to engage the community and strategically plan for inclusive outreach through the various phases and process, aligned with the determined vision for the SPA campus.



SAN PASQUAL ACADEMY

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

November 5, 2021





COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Summary of Ad-hoc Committee Meeting

Ad-hoc Committee:

Race & Equity	5:00 - 6:30 pm
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Date: Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Facilitators: Sandra McBrayer

Meeting Staff: Jocelyn Núñez, Kayla Iliff

Race & Equity Ad-hoc Committee Summary: 34 attendees took part in the Ad-hoc Committee.

Advisory Members Participating: Kimberly Giardina, Scott Huizar, Anna Espana, Carolyn Griesemer, Melissa Villagomez, Stephen Moore

Sandra McBrayer opened the meeting and passed it over to Jocelyn Nunez to provide an overview on the attendee poll. Jocelyn informed participants that the poll will assist understanding who is participating. While participants completed the poll Sandra conducted roll call. Sandra then provided a brief overview of the agenda and the purpose of the Ad-hoc committee. Sandra then explained how the meeting was being conducted via the Zoom platform and provided attendees multiple ways to ask questions during the meeting.

Sandra reviewed the results of the introduction poll.

- 50% of attendees identified as community members
- 45% of attendees identified as County of San Diego employees
- 14% of attendees identified as a current or former foster youth
- 5% of attendees identified as a current foster parent
- 5% of attendees identified as a former foster parent

note: the poll allowed participants to select all that apply

CWS Race Data Presentation

Sandra opened the agenda item explaining that all the data that will be presented at this meeting is in response to the data requested from the last Race and Equity ad-hoc committee and turned it over to Kim Giardina to present on the agenda item. Kim provided data points on the below.

- Number of County of San Diego Child Welfare Services key measures broken down by race for each topic
 - Population
 - Allegations
 - Substantiations
 - Entries
 - In-care

- Allegations of abuse or neglect
- Substantiated allegations of abuse or neglect
- Entries into foster care
- Children in foster care on July 1
- Children in out of home care

During the presentation several questions were brought up to the Ad-hoc committee.

- Is there a way to know what the root cause of allegations of abuse or neglect?
- How can we learn more about the children that entered the foster care system? Taking a deeper dive into these numbers will help us find the root cause to then make a change to the system.
- Is the data being collected so that we can see some of the underlying causes?
- One member of the public was concerned that drops in a lot of the data points is due to school being held virtually. This is a great start, but we need to ensure that these data points do not go back up.
- We need to work on getting more resources to our black families. There has been a lot of conversations during this ad-hoc committee on how many resources there are but the resources are not getting to the families and communities that need them.
- Can we get the age spread of the children in foster care and what zip code they have been placed in?
- How many black children have been placed in non-English speaking foster homes?
- What are the risk factors that are driving black children into foster care?
- When will we all recognize that CWS is racist?

UCSD NGT Process – Community Feedback Request

Sandra opened the item and turned it over to Kim Giardina to provide an overview of NGT. Kim then turned it over to Danielle Fettes and Keisha Clarke to present on the item.

- Danielle and Keisha provided the below information:
 - Overview of NGT
 - Small group discussion which centers community voice
 - Prioritizing and ranking activity which answers one focus questions
 - Multi-step process, every person talks and participates
 - Systematically document perspectives
 - How the process will work?
 - UCSD summarizes results to share with community and CWS leadership
 - Ongoing process with CWS & community representatives to co-create the action plan
 - Actionable, measurable change = accountability
 - Purpose of the sessions
 - To brainstorm and collect feedback discuss processes and address questions and concerns.

Sandra opened the item for discussions and questions.

Several members of the ad-hoc had concerns and issues with the NGT Process.

- “At the end of the day one of the issues we have within our own community is how Child Welfare and other systems come in and use processes and means of slow walking lots of stuff and that has been the history of Child Welfare within our communities. I am absolutely happy that this process is going to look at each ethnic group and how they are, not so much targeted by child welfare but the negative impact on children. Our whole goal here is if we are part of human

services, I would like to believe everybody is doing this because they care about children and families. That is not a message that is resignation from the data in all of that stuff. By the way if you guys can get data on contracts, because one of the problems that I keep hearing and I got on very late. The contract system really kind of ensures that black providers are not employed or getting contracts from the county. So, I would like to know just how many black contractors, literally that purchasing, and contracts have given out within this community. I am not talking about contracts that literally do stuff like mentoring. I am saying contracts that really address the mental health of these families. Contracts that really have an impact on children and their lives. So please that is what I am looking for. I don't have a problem with UCSD. My feedback way I didn't want Child Welfare to do it. I would much prefer a university. I was always thinking about Berkley, but I will accept UCSD. I got family that graduated from UCSD, so I am all good with that. The issue is with UCSD is that whole process will be led by some white women. So that again is a negative impact on how we see and how we interact or engage with African Americans and their families. So that is something UCSD has to sit with not me. If I can get the information on contracts, I would appreciate it."

- Sandy informed the participant that information is not available. Purchasing and contracting can't legally ask the race of their contractors.
- "If you are talking about changing the way you interact with families, you need to start with why don't you have resources that reflect the folks that live in these communities. I think the frustration with the black people in general is we keep having the same conversation and you guys run from the process because you don't want to make real change. Child Welfare is doing a whole lot of stuff that who cares what they are doing it really isn't having a major impact on black families or families of color. What you need to do is change the way you perceive families. You need to change how you value children and at this point you don't value how your black children, black moms, or any of that. Until that changes, nothing else is going to work."
- "I have the race and equity report from 2010 and UCSD has their own problem, my god. I mean they almost had a riot on how they mistreat African American students and it is still going on. I do not want to participate in another study making us think it will bring change. Let's be real about it, it is not going to bring change. I am going to step out of that one but I will step into one that Kim talked about and that one is going to talk about measurable and observable changes. I don't care about those UCSD studies like SOS. We are just sick of them. How many studies do you need to do this? We have done these small groups over and over. Just stop. Do something that will give measurable and observable results."
- "I want to also echo what the other two individuals stated. I certainly hear and understand their frustrations. So many studies have taken place. So much research has taken place. It sort of feels like recreating the wheel. Right? If we are gonna continue to recreate the wheel and not include African American people in this recreating, we are not including people who look like us in the research process then we are going to end up with the same result. It is what it is. Now what are we going to do about it and end the function of doing something about it. We have to have people who look like us and who are invested in our community. So, don't get me wrong everybody who is black is not invested in the black community. In order for such a study to take place and be effective it all depends on who is at the table, doing the research and are they invested in our community and making sure our black babies are not coming into the system, that services are available, that our pregnant black women are getting the appropriate treatment. If we talk about systemic racism it is so very much still in our medical system. So, in order for such a program to take place you gotta have people who are truly invested in the black community, people that look black, that are black that are willing to get their hands dirty. If not then we are going to continue to spin this wheel and spend money and waste time.

Danielle responded to the comments from the ad-hoc committee.

- “I whole heartily agree and that is where I come from as not a person who is going to lead or dictate the process or even necessary facilitate it. That is why this is the beginning of the conversation because I fully agree that I am not the right or only person that should be in the room. It has to be in partnership with the community and that is the premise of this. It is the active involvement of you all as leaders in the community and having your voice be leading the conversation that makes this process integral.”

Sandra concluded the meeting by providing a meeting review and discussing December agenda items.

- Additional Data request:
 - Look at allegations and what were the pressing issues of the allegations?
 - Taking a deeper look at the kids who enter foster care.
 - Representing the baseline on the petitions filed
 - Number of African American children who are not in English speaking homes
 - Look at the zip codes children came from and what zip code they were placed in.

Next Meeting: December 8, 2021 1:00 pm



CHILD AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING ADVISORY BOARD



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Consult with outside experts, such as the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD), National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI), and Kempe Center, to conduct a workload analysis and determine best practices to achieve optimal caseloads and staffing levels. (8)



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

IN PROGRESS

- Policy and Program Support collaborated with regional leaders to develop a consistent template for workload tracking.
- This template is being piloted in November.
- Adjustments will be made as necessary.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Create public recognition for staff at all levels whose work personifies these values. (4)



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

IN PROGRESS- ONGOING

- HEART recognition internally for coworkers to recognize each other
- Staff newsletters
- QPI provides resource parents with an opportunity to recognize social workers
- Social Worker Appreciation events annually
- Annual Report

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



LIVE WELL
SAN DIEGO

Develop a comprehensive and unified approach for the recruitment of resource families in partnership with Probation, the philanthropic community, and FFAs. To include data and demographic analysis to conduct targeted campaigns specific to geographic location, skill, and experience. (29)



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

COMPLETED- ONGOING

- Meetings with Probation regarding FFAs
- FFA and CWS partnership
- Channel 8, digital streaming services for recruitment
- Unified SDCares4Kids website
- Targeted community recruitment events
- Emergency RFA Orientation video to be uploaded to BINTI





COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Summary of Subcommittee Meeting

Ad-hoc Committee:

Foster Alumni and Youth Community Empowerment Subcommittee (FAYCES)	6:00 -7:30 pm
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Date: Thursday, October 14, 2021

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Facilitators: Sandra McBrayer

Meeting Staff: Jocelyn Nunez, Kayla Iliff

Foster Alumni and Youth Community Empowerment Subcommittee Summary:

48 attendees took part in the Subcommittee.

Advisory Members Participating: Simone Hidds-Monroe, Ana Espana, Carolyn Griesemer, Joy Singleton, Stephanie Gioia-Beckman, Scott Huizar, Stephen Moore, Sade Burell, Khylan Bolden

Sarah Mostofi opened the meeting and passed it over to Jocelyn Nunez to introduce the introduction poll. Jocelyn informed participants that the poll will assist in directing the conversation and tracking participation over time. Sarah then asked for individuals to introduce themselves in the chat. Sarah then introduced Simone Hidds-Monroe and Stephanie Gioia-Beckman to provide an introduction and overview of FAYCES.

Sarah reviewed how the meeting was being conducted via the Zoom platform and provided attendees multiple ways to ask questions during the meeting. Sarah encouraged participation via the chat and raise your hand feature. She also reminded current foster youth to turn off their camera for confidentiality purposes.

Career Pathways for Foster Youth

Sarah introduced Simone to present on Career Pathways for Foster Youth. Simone provided an overview of Career Pathways for Foster Youth and what she is asking from the FAYCES subcommittee.

- The goal of Career Pathways for Foster Youth is to provide educational & career exploration, experiences, and expertise to current and transition age foster youth.
- Role of FAYCES in this project:
 - To provide recommendations and input on the impact, opportunities, and implementation of the funding (5 million dollars) for the Career Pathways for Foster Youth program.

To begin the discussion Simone posed several questions to the group.

- How old were you when college was introduced to you?
- How old were you when explored careers/jobs of interest?

- How old were you when you could answer, “What do I want to be/do when I grow up?”
- What resources/support/opportunities helped you get to these answers?
- What impact do we want the funding to have on our community?
- What are potential areas of impact?

Simone also shared a poll to determine priority areas for funding.

- Poll results
 - 80% of participants selected Paid internships/student worker positions
 - 74% of participants selected financial assistance
 - 71% of participants selected mentoring/coaching
 - 69% of participants selected certifications/trainings
 - 60% of participants selected emotional support
 - 49% of participants selected College tours
 - 40% of participants selected Job Shadowing
 - 31% of participants selected Business/company tours
 - 14% of participants selected other

This prompted a robust discussion with meeting participants. Meeting participants came up with several other focus areas for the funding.

- Legal Assistance
- Readiness Assessment
- Nutrition/Nourishment
- Providing a navigator or liaison to connect individuals to resources
- Education scholarships
- Interview readiness
- Banking (savings, checking's, purchasing a car or house)
- Housing
- Programs that assist in breaking the generational chain of incarceration
- Providing luggage
- Daycare
- Graduate School
- Vocational School opportunities

The group also discussed in detail the age requirements to receive the above services. The meeting participants were unable to come to a consensus on this topic but provide the below recommended age ranges.

- 12 years and older
- 9-27 years of age
- 12-24 years of age
- 12-30 years of age
- 13-18 years of age
- 14-22 years of age
- 17 years and older to focus on career development
- 18-24 years of age
- High school aged youth and above
- Any foster youth to 30 years of age
- No age limit to receive these services

Due to time constraints all other agenda items were tabled for next meeting.

Story of SPA - Through the Lens of Alumni & Youth - Survey Development

Tabled due to time constraints. This agenda item will be discussed at the November meeting.

2022 Future Meeting Days and Times

Tabled due to time constraints. This agenda item will be discussed at the November meeting.

Simone concluded the meeting by providing next steps and reminding everyone of the next meeting.

Next Steps:

- Continue reaching out to SPA alumni to test the survey to continue it moving forward.
- Follow up with the County of San Diego to determine who are the youth that went to San Pasqual Academy (SPA).
- Determine the deadline for the Career Pathways for Foster Youth proposal to ensure FAYCES continues to be part of the conversation.

Date of Next Meeting – November 18, 2021 (instead of November 11, Veterans Day)

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Agenda Item #10

Subject	<u>Policy Number</u>	<u>Page</u>
Out-of-Home Placement for Children	E-12	1 of 4

Purpose

To establish a policy for the provision of out-of-home placement whenever a child cannot remain in the home of a parent, custodial relative, or legal guardian. This policy outlines the types of placement options available to children in foster care with guidelines that ensure that placement decisions are made through a family-centered, trauma informed, and culturally responsive assessment.

Background

Out-of-home placement refers to any arrangement made by one of the County's of San Diego's (County) placing agencies for a child to live apart from their ~~his/her~~ parent or legal guardian in ~~an~~ Resource Family Approved relative or non-related extended family member's home, in a Resource Family Approved community home, or in a licensed residential facility on a 24-hour basis. The County's placing agencies, the Probation Department and the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), are authorized to provide placement services by State law and do so through one of these organizational units:

Youth Development and Community Support Services ~~JUVENILE DIVISION~~ (PROBATION DEPARTMENT):

Out-of-home placement services are provided to children adjudicated as delinquent wards of the Court pursuant to Section 602 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

CHILD WELFARE SERVICES (HHSA):

Out-of-home placement services are provided to children adjudicated as dependents of the Court pursuant to Section 300 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

Voluntary out-of-home placement services may be provided to children pursuant to Section 16500 of the Welfare and Institutions Code.

ADOPTIONS (HHSA):

Out-of-home placement services are provided to children pending relinquishment and adoptive placement, and may include ~~residential~~ congregate care when the need arises pursuant to Section 8704 of the Family Code and Section 1500 et seq. of the Health and Safety Code.

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Agenda Item #10

Subject

Out-of-Home Placement for Children

**Policy
Number**

E-12

Page

2 of 4

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that County placing agencies will focus on strengthening families, and thereby place children in out-of-home care only when all available resources for providing necessary services in-home have been utilized or the level of risk is too high for the child to be maintained in their own home or that of relatives, extended family members, or guardians. The primary criteria to be used in the evaluation for placement will be the individual needs of the child based upon a thorough assessment of risk and needs and based on a consistent, culturally responsive system that works in collaboration to improve the overall experience of children and caregivers. This may be accomplished by focusing on family finding, placement stability, relative care, and support to all caregivers. This policy supports *Live Well San Diego* by promoting healthy, safe and thriving communities by ensuring that children who must be placed out-of-home will be placed in the most family-like setting possible, thereby supporting the child's safety and addressing their overall well-being. Out-of-home placement also should assist justice involved youth in preventing placement in a secure detention facility.

Guidelines

1. The decision to place a child in out-of-home care will be made only after a thorough, professional review of the child's and family's circumstances and the development of a case plan.
2. Children in need of placement will be evaluated in terms of their needs and the level of care available. Children shall be placed in the least restrictive placement that provides the ~~minimum~~ level of care required.
3. The suitability of each placement will be reviewed and evaluated on an ongoing basis, as specified by State regulations.
4. ~~Local in-county~~ placements are generally preferred to out-of-county placements so that children can maintain ties to their families and communities.
5. The out-of-home placement of children will follow best practice guidelines, in this order of priority: relative; ~~nonrelative extended family member (NREFM) family known to child or relative to the child ("nonrelative extended family member")~~; approved resource family licensed foster home within the community from which the child was removed; other approved resource family ~~licensed foster home~~; foster family agency home; ~~group home~~; short-term residential therapeutic program.
6. All efforts will be made to place siblings together.
7. Whenever more than one suitable out-of-home care placement/program is available ~~with an equal quality of service delivery~~, preference will be given to the most effective placement/program meeting the needs of the child.
8. The goal of out-of-home care is the timely, safe and successful return of the child to their family and/or community. If it is not possible to return the child to the parent, relative, or guardian, then a permanent plan for a stable family life through adoption, guardianship, fit and willing relative, or Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement ~~other long term plan~~ will be implemented in a timely

manner, as specified by law.

9. Children shall be placed in out-of-home care placements ~~that are certified, licensed, or approved by HHSA in accordance with standards as referenced in Welfare and Institutions Code 309(d); and that are regularly inspected.~~ as referenced in Welfare and Institutions Code 361.2 when the court orders removal of the child and care and control is vested with HHSA.
10. County placing agencies shall work to recruit and retain out-of-home placement resources to address the disproportionality faced by children of color who come to the attention of HHSA or Probation.
11. Consistent with a continuum of care, development of additional facilities for children and adolescents with special needs is required through an integrated effort of the County placing agencies and the California Health and Human Services Agency, by addressing licensing, regulatory, and funding resources.
12. Consistent with the diversity, equity, and inclusion needs of children in out-of-home care; service providers will match the demographics of children in foster care.
13. The identification, onboarding and support of caregivers and placement staff will be done with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.

Funding

The cost of placement services is shared by a wide variety of funding sources, primarily: Federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children - Foster Care (AFDC-FC), State AFDC-FC, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Emergency Assistance (EA), and County General Funds. In certain situations, parental contributions, private or third party coverage, and even special public school funding may offset or supplement the primary funding sources.

Definitions

The out-of-home programs for children represent a continuum in the level of care ranging from less restrictive, less intensive foster care, to more restrictive, more therapeutic residential care. The cost of care increases according to the higher level of care:

RESOURCE FAMILY APPROVED HOME-LICENSED FOSTER HOME:

The placement of a child into a resource family home ~~foster home~~, licensed approved by the County HHSA Child Welfare Services per Resource Family Approval (RFA) Written Directives as specified in Section 16519.5 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) ~~the State (contracted to Foster Home Licensing - HHSA)~~, when circumstances exist that make it unsafe for the child to remain in the home of his/her parent or guardian. (Funding Source: AFDC-FC, EA, SSI, County General Funds)

RELATIVE OR NON-RELATED EXTENDED FAMILY MEMBER:

The placement of a child into the home of a relative who is related to the child by blood, adoption, or affinity within the fifth degree as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 361.3 or a non-related adult caregiver who has an established familial relationship with a relative of the child or a familial or mentoring relationship with a child as defined in 362.7 ~~as defined in paragraph (2) of subdivision (c) of Section 361.3, or a familial or mentoring relationship with the child~~, when circumstances exist that make it unsafe for the child to remain in the home of his/her parent or guardian. The caregiver must be "approved" by HHSA or the Probation Department via the RFA Written Directives (WIC 16519.5) before a child is placed in the home. ~~through a formal process;~~ A child may be placed as an emergency placement per WIC 309 including an in-

home safety inspection and criminal and child abuse history clearances, pending RFA approval, ~~before a child is placed in the home.~~ (Funding Source: AFDC-FC, EA, SSI, County General Funds)

FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY SUPPORTED FOSTER CARE:

The placement of a child into a treatment-level resource home approved by a Foster Family Agency via the RFA Written Directives (WIC 16519.5). ~~certified homes, in which Resource foster~~ parents receive additional training, support services and financial incentives to support children who present with intensive mental and behavioral health needs ~~unusual difficulties due to emotional disturbances and/or behavioral dysfunction,~~ and are therefore unable to benefit from placement in regular, County-approved resource ~~licensed foster~~ homes. (Funding Source: AFDC-FC, EA, SSI, County General Funds)

~~RESIDENTIAL~~ CONGREGATE CARE:

The placement of children who are in need of professional treatment and supervision related to developmental disability, serious emotional disturbance, delinquent behavior, etc., and who are at risk of ~~of~~ abuse, further juvenile justice involvement, neglect or exploitation, into professionally-staffed, State-licensed facilities commonly referred to as ~~group homes or short-term residential therapeutic programs residential treatment facilities/centers.~~ The programs range from private facilities that are contracted with the County of San Diego to out-of-county ~~and out-of-state~~ programs. (Funding Source: AFDC-FC, EA, SSI, County General Funds)

TEMPORARY CARE PROGRAMS:

The placement of children into these programs may be made by a placing agency, but can also be made by self-referral. The needs of temporary shelter and crisis intervention in a community-based setting are met in these programs. This includes subsidized foster care, and Emergency Shelter care. (Funding Source: Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Funds, AFDC-FC, EA)

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by ~~12-31-24~~ 12-31-2028.

Board Action

7-1-80 (30)
11-13-84 (8)
3-3-88 (24)
6-15-93 (41)
12-5-95 (36)
12-3-02 (8)
10-24-07 (5)
01-06-15 (5)

CAO Reference

1. Health and Human Services Agency
2. Probation Department



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: November 16, 2021

XX

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

AUTHORIZE A-87 EXCEPTION TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT FOR CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC. AND SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC FOR SERVICES TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

Indian Health Council, Inc. (IHC) and Southern Indian Health Council, Inc. (SIHC) have had an established partnership with the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services (CWS) since 2009. IHC and SIHC provide family strengthening and prevention services to San Diego County's Native American community to ensure equitable access to child abuse prevention and awareness of resources, services and supports. In Fiscal Year 2020-21, IHC and SIHC received a combined 250 referrals for family strengthening and prevention services. Of the 250 referrals, 218 Native American families received case management services. Furthermore, of the 218 families receiving services, 152 (70%) participated in outcome surveys and assessments, and had an increase in resiliency and protective factors and a reduction in isolation through increased social supports.

IHC and SIHC are accredited Federally Qualified Health Centers under the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act and currently provide a full spectrum of comprehensive on site and outreach services to a combined total of 16 tribal nations to meet the needs of Native American families within their respective service regions. IHC and SIHC are the two closest clinics to the rural areas of the county and both have out stationed clinics to help serve the most remote families in Santa Ysabel and Campo. IHC and SIHC qualify for a single source contract to provide family strengthening and prevention services pursuant to Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement

Section 1D-3: The procurement is for services from a provider with unique knowledge, skill, or ability not available from other sources.

The current contracts expire on June 30, 2022. Today's action requests the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to enter into negotiations, on behalf of CWS with IHC and SIHC, for family strengthening and prevention services to increase child abuse prevention awareness and services to Native American families,

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE A-87 EXCEPTION TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT FOR CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC. AND SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC FOR SERVICES TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

reduce Native American disproportionality in child welfare services, provide equitable access to services that are culturally responsive, and leverage complimentary approaches to maximize community impact. This action supports the County's *Live Well San Diego* vision and the Framework for our Future by ensuring fiscal management and contracting processes align with community priorities, providing comprehensive and culturally responsive services and supports, and a focus on improving equitable outcomes for Native American families interacting with the child welfare system.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement, and Administrative Code section 401, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting to enter into negotiations with Indian Health Council, Inc. (IHC) and Southern Indian Health Council, Inc. (SIHC) and upon successful negotiations and a determination of fair and reasonable price, award contracts for family strengthening and prevention services for Native American communities, for the period of up to one year and up to four option years, and up to six additional months if needed, subject to the availability of funds; and to amend the contracts as required to reflect changes in services and funding allocations, subject to the approval of the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

Of the 109 federally recognized Indian tribes in California, 17 are located in San Diego County – the most in any county in the United States. The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services (CWS) honors the partnerships with tribal nations and has demonstrated a commitment to uphold the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978 that requires states and courts to protect the best interest of Indian children by keeping their connections to family, community, and culture intact. ICWA is in response to a substantial amount of American Indian and Alaska Native children being removed from their families and placed in non-Native homes. Nationally, American Indian/Alaska Native children are disproportionately represented in child welfare systems.

In Calendar Year 2020, 35,152 abuse/neglect reports were made to the Child Abuse Hotline. Of those reports, 380 involved Native American children. This indicates a 31% decrease from the 553 abuse/neglect reports involving Native American children received in 2015. Additionally, of the 380 abuse/neglect reports made for Native American children, 44 (12%) were substantiated, a 2 percent decrease from the 82 substantiated in 2015. Furthermore, in Calendar Year 2020, 15 Native American children entered into foster care, a 48% decrease from the 29 foster care entries in 2015.

In a collaborative effort to advance racial equity, strengthen Native American families and build capacity to prevent child abuse and neglect, CWS partnered with Indian Health Council, Inc. (IHC) and Southern Indian Health Council, Inc. (SIHC) in 2009 to provide tribal families with equitable access to culturally responsive community-based prevention services. In Fiscal Year 2020-21, a combined 250 referrals for prevention services were received by IHC and SIHC, a 61% increase from the 155 referrals received in Fiscal Year 2018-19.

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE A-87 EXCEPTION TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT FOR CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC. AND SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC FOR SERVICES TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

The partnership with IHC and SIHC supports a continued pathway for racial equity work, and provides a participatory process to engage and involve the Native American tribal community in identifying and providing input on types of services and supports that best meet the needs of tribal youth and families. Monthly meetings with CWS and tribal consortiums allow for more intended and targeted discussions about family interactions with CWS and culturally responsive prevention services and supports needed or available at tribal health centers and in communities. This collaborative process evaluates the impact of services on Native American children, youth and families, and community. CWS continues the commitment to work in partnership with the tribal community to communicate and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data and assess services and supports using an equity lens to maximize collective outcomes within the Native American communities and measure the advancement of racial equity.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year 2021-2023 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in no change in costs and revenue in Fiscal Year 2021-22 and costs and revenue of approximately \$750,000 in Fiscal Year 2022-23. The funding sources are Social Services Administrative Revenue and Realignment. There will be no net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

This item was presented to the Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board as an informational item on November 5, 2021.

BACKGROUND

Indian Health Council, Inc. (IHC) and Southern Indian Health Council, Inc. (SIHC) have had an established partnership with the County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Child Welfare Services (CWS) since 2009. IHC and SIHC provide family strengthening and prevention services to San Diego County's Native American community to ensure equitable access to child abuse prevention and awareness of resources, services and supports. Partnering with IHC and SIHC will also support implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA). FFPSA is new federal legislation that allows child welfare jurisdictions to utilize federal Title IV-E funding to pay for substance abuse, mental health, in-home parenting, and kinship navigation services to prevent children from entering or re-entering foster care. Services must be evidence-based and approved by a Federal Clearinghouse. Several programs being reviewed by the Federal Clearinghouse focus specifically on serving Native American families. If these programs are approved for use, CWS will work with IHC and SIHC to utilize these evidence based practices with families.

IHC is a consortium of nine tribes and provides services and programs to the North Eastern San Diego County reservations of Inaja-Cosmit, La Jolla, Los Coyotes, Mesa Grande, Pala, Pauma,

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE A-87 EXCEPTION TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT FOR CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC. AND SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC FOR SERVICES TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Rincon, San Pasqual, and Santa Ysabel. Similarly, SIHC provides a full spectrum of comprehensive on site and outreach services to the South Eastern San Diego County reservations and serves a seven-member tribal consortium that includes Barona, Campo, Ewiiapaayp, Jamul, La Posta, Manzanita, and Viejas.

Tribal social workers provide prevention services to families that belong to their tribal consortium and reside on or off the reservation. Tribal social workers directly engage, support, and partner with families to increase familial strengths and achieve the best outcomes for Native American children and families. They are familiar individuals and a supportive resource often from the same communities as tribal families. Tribal social workers are family advocates and a supportive resource for Native American families and foster a teaming approach to help build engagement and trust with CWS. They adhere to child welfare services laws while respecting tribal sovereignty and preserving tribal customs and traditions. Services provided by tribal social workers include and are not limited to:

- Collaborating with CWS social workers on joint child maltreatment investigations involving tribal families;
- Providing follow-up and case management services and linkages to supportive services;
- Transporting family members to appointments/services and attending court hearings for support; and
- Providing cross-training opportunities to CWS social workers to increase cultural responsiveness and awareness of tribal traditions and customs.

In Fiscal Year 2020-21, tribal social workers from IHC and SIHC received a combined 250 referrals for family strengthening and prevention services. Of the 250 referrals, 218 Native American families received case management services. Furthermore, of the 218 families receiving services, 152 (70%) participated in outcome surveys and assessments, and had an increase in resiliency and protective factors and a reduction in isolation through increased social supports.

Today's action requests the San Diego County Board of Supervisors to authorize an exception to competitive procurement for family strengthening and prevention services, in accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurements, and to award contracts to IHC and SIHC for up to one year and up to four option years and an additional six months if needed, subject to the availability of funds, and to amend the contracts as required to reflect changes in services and funding allocations, subject to the approval of the Agency Director, HHSA.

IHC and SIHC qualify for a single source contract to provide family strengthening and prevention services pursuant to the Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement:

Section 1D-3: The procurement is for services from a provider with unique knowledge, skill, or ability not available from other sources.

If approved, IHC and SIHC will continue to deliver family strengthening and prevention services to 16 tribal nations throughout the North East San Diego County and South East San Diego County

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZE A-87 EXCEPTION TO COMPETITIVE PROCUREMENT FOR CONTRACTS WITH INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC. AND SOUTHERN INDIAN HEALTH COUNCIL, INC FOR SERVICES TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

reservations. Continued partnerships with IHC and SIHC will support the ongoing collaborative effort to increase family strengthening and prevention services to Native American families, reduce Native American disproportionality in child welfare services, provide equitable access to services that are culturally responsive, and leverage complimentary approaches to maximize community impact.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed action supports the Healthy Families and Safe Communities initiative of the County of San Diego's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, as well as the *Live Well San Diego* vision and the Framework for our Future by ensuring fiscal management and contracting processes align with community priorities, providing comprehensive and culturally responsive services and supports, and a focus on improving equitable outcomes for Native American families interacting with the child welfare system.

Respectfully submitted,

USE "INSERT PICTURE"
FUNCTION TO INSERT
SIGNATURE

HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A