

FY 2022 Borough Budget Consultations

Manhattan - Administration for Children's Services

Meeting Date 9/11/2020

AGENDA ITEM 1: General Agency Funding Discussion

The purpose of holding the Borough Budget Consultations is to provide Community Boards with important information to assist in drafting their statement of District Needs and Budget Priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. As you know, Community Board Members are volunteers who may not be familiar with the budget process and how agencies' programs are funded. At the same time, Community Board members are very knowledgeable about local service needs.

This year's Manhattan agendas have three sections:

I. Agencies faced unprecedented cuts and new funding requirements this year due to COVID 19. Can you list the previously unplanned cuts to the FY 21 budget due to COVID and the new initiatives necessitated by the emergency? Please discuss the expected timeline for the new initiatives. What programs and capital projects will be continued uncut. Of the cuts in spending for FY 2021, please identify the most significant cuts that are currently expected to be permanent [or continued at the reduced level into FY 2022].

What is the overall budget decrease for FY 21 adopted budget compared to FY20 budget?

II. Then, the agenda continues with Community Boards asking about specific program funding.

III. Lastly, the agendas include Boards' requests on district-specific budget questions. We request that the agency respond in writing, but have any further discussions on these items with the Community Boards outside of the consultation.

For the first section, please present on the four topics below for 10-15 minutes at the beginning of our Consultation.

Also, please provide written responses or even a PowerPoint presentation that we can use to fully and accurately educate our Board Members.

1. What are your priorities and operational goals for FY21 and projected priorities and operational goals for FY22?

2. What are the current proposed FY21 and FY22 service and operational goals and proposed funding?

3. Which programs is the agency adding, dropping, or changing for FY21 and projected for FY22?

4. What are your benchmarks for new and existing programs and what are your benchmarks/key performance indicators for measuring success?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

ACS is responsible for the safety and well-being of New York City's children and their families by providing child welfare, juvenile justice, primary prevention, and child care services.

- Through **Child and Family Well-being**, ACS offers primary prevention support to families and children including child care vouchers and through our network of Family Enrichment Centers and Community Partnerships.
- In **Prevention Services**, ACS works with nonprofit organizations to support and stabilize at-risk families.
- **Child Protection** responds to reports of suspected child abuse or neglect to assess safety and offer supports to families.
- In **Family Permanency**, ACS contracts with non-profit organizations to provide foster care services.
- **Juvenile Justice** oversees services including detention and residential placement, intensive community-based programs, and services for youth and families.

We were able to avoid cuts to our core programs that promote child safety and support family stability and well-being. We did this by maximizing any and all efficiencies.

ACS remains concerned about the deepening economic crisis facing our city and state, and the impact on the children and families who we serve. Like other agencies, ACS has been asked to prepare plans for workforce reduction and other savings measures to address projected budget shortfalls, and we are doing that analysis now. The City is exhausting all efforts to avoid additional cuts by advocating for federal stimulus relief and long-term borrowing authority from the State, and we remain hopeful in the success of those efforts.

FY21 Adopted Budget

ACS's adopted FY 2021 budget reflects ACS and New York City's commitment to the critical ACS functions that keep children safe and support families. It provides for operating expenses of \$2.66 billion, of which approximately \$869 million is City Tax Levy. ACS's ten-year capital plan is \$440 million from FY 2020 through FY 2029, of which \$63 million falls into FY 2021.

Given the City's need to be fiscally prudent in this time of crisis, ACS's combined FY20 and FY21 PEG amount is \$120 million City Tax Levy (CTL).

ACS was able to meet our PEG amount without significant reductions to core programs that promote child safety and family stability, although the reductions will require some modifications to program operations. Our adjustments are in the following areas:

- Maximize state and federal dollars for child care, to support families receiving child care on child welfare cases, low-income families, and those receiving free, full-day care as part of the City's 3K program operated by the Department of Education.
- Re-estimate funding for juvenile justice residential beds due to lower utilization than projected.
- Maximize federal funding for child welfare by increasing staff participation in a federal survey ("Random Moments Survey") that samples how staff time is used.
- Reduce overtime (\$11.9 million) and the use of consultants.
- Utilize revenue that exceeded projections in prior years to meet this year's budgetary needs.
- Implement payment cards for adoption subsidy and kinship guardianship ("KinGAP") families who do not have direct deposit, which improves efficiency and security for recipients and creates savings through a reduction in check processing costs.

Benchmarks and Key Indicators

Many of ACS's programs and services are subject to city, state, and federal reporting and oversight, and we have robust oversight and performance measurement processes in place internally. A few key areas of performance evaluation are included here.

Frequent Leadership Oversight:

On a monthly basis, ACS's Deputy Commissioners and Commissioner review and discuss key performance indicators including child protective caseloads, numbers of families served in prevention services, foster care census and entry information, court filings, and juvenile justice statistics. This regular, deep dive at the Cabinet level is in addition to the daily management and oversight within our program divisions and working with our contracted provider agencies.

ChildStat:

ChildStat is a cornerstone of the ACS quality assurance and improvement system for child protection. The primary responsibility of the Division of Child Protection (DCP) is to reduce risk and ensure safety and well-being for children and families throughout NYC. Each session includes a presentation of data and case practice, and includes extensive dialogue and Q&A. Each session concludes with a review of recommendations and learnings for both the individual zone and the system as a whole.

Scorecard:

ACS issues annual Scorecards for every foster care and prevention program and agency. The Scorecard is an annual summary of the performance of our contracted services that support New York City's youth and families. In New York City, the Administration for Children's Services manages the prevention and foster care system, under State oversight, and contracts with nonprofit organizations who provide services to children and families.

Scorecard is one of many tools that ACS uses to monitor contract agencies closely, identify areas for improvement, and track ongoing compliance with required changes to practice. The scores alone do not tell the full story of provider performance; they must be combined with other sources of information to fully assess performance, such as the varying complexity of the children and families served by each agency.

Monthly reports for provider agencies:

ACS produces monthly reports for each foster care and prevention program and agency, which provides the agency with a status update on key indicators, including agency progress towards annual targets, programmatic utilization and length of service, as well as system-wide trends and comparative data.

FLASH report and other public reports:

ACS produces a monthly report on key indicators that is distributed widely within ACS and available to the public. The FLASH report is available on our public website at:

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/flashindicators.page>

ACS produces a number of publicly available reports to help stakeholders better understand our work and outcome. These are published at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/acs/about/data-analysis.page>

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Focus during the pandemic was on keeping children in Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice system safe. Adopted budget for this current year focused on maintaining critical and core functions at its current levels.

ACS avoided cuts by maximizing efficiencies, but worked on ensuring the funding for core services was not reduced. However, ACS may need to modify or reduce some program operations to address the \$120M PEG between the last fiscal years, but will reduce overtime and the use of consultants and a few other measures.

The City is divided into zones for ChildStat, ACS quality assurance and improvement system for child protection, and ACS employees are assigned to a zone. They work to resolve any issues that arise where the information is grounded in case review and existing data.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

Any follow up questions from today's meeting can be directed to Rachel Jensen, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Rachel.jensen@acs.nyc.gov

AGENDA ITEM 2: COVID-19 Budget Cuts

1. Please identify the programs funded by ACS whose funding allocations for FY 2021 have been cut, and for each please provide the following information:

- the name of the program or service
- the approximate amount of the reduction in funding relative to FY 2020 or previous years
- the approximate number of youth affected by the cut
- a short explanation of the anticipated impact of the cut (e.g. "reducing the number of children who can be served" or "fewer hours of service" or "fewer enrichment activities" or the like)

2. Please indicate whether the administrative or service coordination budget of ACS has been cut, and provide a brief summary of:

- the number and relative positions or organizational rank of those whose positions have been eliminated or curtailed
- the programs affected by such reductions in force or reduction in hours
- whether those positions are anticipated to be restored in whole or in part in FY 2022.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

As noted above, we were able to avoid cuts earlier this year to our core programs that promote child safety and support family stability and well-being. We did this by maximizing any and all efficiencies.

ACS's FY2020 budget contained one-year funded items that were not restored, or partially restored in the FY2021 budget.

- In FY2020, ACS received a one-time allocation of \$2.8M to fund several recommendations of the Interagency Foster Care Task Force related to Family Time, locating and supporting kinship care resources (e.g., family and friends), and recruiting and recertifying foster parents. We were able to fund pilot programs with 8 foster care agencies to help them enhance Family Time (visiting) practice and increase kinship placements. Although these pilots have ended, we remain committed to these important goals.
- Through our Home Away from Home initiative, which is focused on improving foster care placements, foster care providers will continue to strengthen their practices in the areas of:
 - o Accepting children placed with kinship foster care;
 - o Finding kinship caregivers for children in non-relative foster care; and
 - o Supporting kinship parents.
- ACS is working closely with the foster care agencies to strengthen Family Time. During the pandemic, ACS has hosted two webinars on how to best approach Family Time either in person or virtually. ACS continues to partner with Rise, a parent advocacy agency, to promote effective parent engagement techniques and visiting tips. Lastly, lessons learned from both the kinship and Family Time pilots will be shared with all providers during FY2021.
- ACS also procured software that will now be available to help streamline foster parent recruitment and recertification and move towards a more paperless system.
- In FY2020, we received \$10 million to fund "Fair Futures," a seven month pilot in which our foster care providers offered additional support to children in foster care ages 11 to 21, such as coaches, tutors, educational specialists, and housing specialists. For FY2021, we received \$2.7 million CTL at budget adoption. With the matching funds, as well as one-time additional revenue in the ACS budget, ACS will be able to provide \$12 million to the foster care providers for Fair Futures this fiscal year.
- ACS's FY2020 budget contained \$19 million in one-time funding to support "SCCF" or Special Child Care Funded vouchers, and in FY 2021, this was partially restored at \$4 million. We are currently working with OMB to identify options to serve low-income families in need of child care with available funds.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

During the pandemic, ACS hosted two informational workshops, one for the caregivers and another for the children on coronavirus.

This year ACS had its tightest collaboration with OMB to determine efficiencies and maximize funds to provide direct assistance to the families.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 3: New Programs

Please provide a summary of any new initiatives or programs undertaken by ACS in FY 2020 or anticipated for FY 2021 and FY 2022, and for each:

- Please provide an estimate of the funding needed for such programs;
- Please estimate the number of individuals or families to be served by the program (and the number of individuals or families eligible but unable to be served under current funding); and
- Please provide summary details of the source(s) of funding used for such new program(s).

AGENCY RESPONSE:

Prevention

ACS's new prevention contracts started July 1, 2020. The new system will, for the first time, offer universal access to the full range of programs to all families across the City, regardless of where they live. Additionally, the new system will expand therapeutic supports to families, increase parent voice and choice in service delivery and promote racial equity through mandated efforts to address racial disparities in all programs. The new system, which includes 119 provider programs, builds upon the agency's existing prevention services system, which is already recognized as a national model, and represents the first full and complete restructuring of that system in over a decade. Our prevention programs serve over 20,000 families each year.

The total contract value is \$221 million, with an additional \$5 million allocated for implementation costs, including fees for the prevention model developers. Developers provide trainings, consultation, technical assistance, and fidelity assessments that are key to implementing research-informed and evidence-based models. For the first time, ACS is taking on some of these costs that previously were incurred by providers. Prevention services are supported by the state child welfare funding stream, with 62% state share and 38% city share.

Foster Care

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, and cognizant of the demands on our provider agencies (many of which also have prevention contracts and were transitioning to the new system), ACS postponed the release of our foster care RFP that was originally planned for Spring 2020. We are now extending current contracts for one year, with new contracts to commence July 1, 2022.

New York City began calendar year 2020 with a historic low of fewer than 8,000 children in foster care. Comparatively, 25 years ago, there were nearly 50,000 children in New York City's foster care system, and nearly 17,000 just a decade ago. Foster care services are budgeted at \$641.5 million in FY 2021, and are primarily supported by Title IV-E federal funds, the state Foster Care Block Grant, which is a capped allocation, and city tax levy.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

ACS is focusing on increasing parent voice and choice along the continuum of services provided to the children.

Foster care strategic blue print was written and published by ACS available at <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/about/2018/standAloneReportFosterCareStraegisBlueprinFinalMay152018.pdf>

ACS postponed the release of the Foster Care RFP due to Covid, but they are hoping to release the results in Spring of 2021 and the funds would be released in 2022. ACS is focusing on providing support and resources for youth aging out of foster care. They will not release a youth who has aged out of Foster Care into homelessness, particularly during this pandemic. Therefore, at this moment, ACS has many kids who are over 21 years old in their care.

Starting new programs: a new tutoring program for foster care kids who are 11 years of age or older and a coaching program for foster kids who are 18 years of age or older. The agency is providing additional support and services foster care kids as they get closer to aging out of foster care. ACS provides information about housing, prepare the kids for adulthood and provide workforce development. ACS can now receive and welcome back foster kids who may want to return back. For example, 18 year old who left the program, but then feel like they need to or want to return.

There are less children in foster care system than ever before. This was achieved through efficiencies and education, as well as support from other programs that assist through the implementation of prevention measures that require children to be put in the foster care.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 4: Child Protective Services (CPS)

Please update us on the latest use of the \$1.3 million in baselined funds to celebrate and increase public and professional recognition of Child Protective Services.

In particular:

- Please confirm the baselined amount included in the FY 2021 budget and the anticipated expenditure to be included in FY 2022.
- Does ACS still sponsor a “CPS Appreciation Week” celebration or its equivalent, and if so, please provide a summary including the budget for the celebration.
- Does ACS still produce print or other media advertisements promoting ACS’s CPS? Please provide summary updates including any media buy or other budget highlights.

- Is the baselined amount for this purpose adequate to meet the goals?
- Has any analysis been conducted on the effectiveness or other positive outcomes from the creation of a facility to increase public and professional awareness of CPS?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

Please update us on the latest use of the \$1.3 million in baselined funds to celebrate and increase public and professional recognition of Child Protective Services.

- **Please confirm the baselined amount included in the FY 2021 budget and the anticipated expenditure to be included in FY 2022.**

ACS has \$1 million to support CPS recruitment and awareness campaigns in FY2021 with an additional \$300,000 redirected to support overall child welfare safety campaigns.

- **Does ACS still sponsor a “CPS Appreciation Week” celebration or its equivalent, and if so, please provide a summary including the budget for the celebration.**

Yes, ACS still holds an annual “CPS Appreciation Week,” to recognize the critical contributions child protective staff make in keeping NYC’s children safe and NYC’s families supported. Funding to support CPS Appreciation Week is part of the overall budget to support CPS recruitment and awareness campaigns, which is \$1 million in FY2021. We have found this investment effective to support our CPS recruitment and retention efforts.

In FY2020, due to COVID-19 and the need for social distancing, CPS Appreciation Week was done virtually. Appreciation Week recognized the critical work of CPS in keeping children safe (including during the pandemic) without large or in-person events. The recognition week included virtual events, such as a virtual Family Fun Day and other ways of recognizing the work. This included swag items, dessert treat boxes, and internal and external promotion on social media, press, and internal communications.

- **Does ACS still produce print or other media advertisements promoting ACS’s CPS? Please provide summary updates including any media buy or other budget highlights.**

Yes; CPS recruitment ads were scheduled to run from the end of 2019 through spring 2020 in radio and digital media. Due to COVID-19, the campaign was suspended in March 2020.

ACS shifted focus to run a combined paid social media and pro bono radio advertising that shared urgent information and resources for families in response to COVID-19.

- “Coping Through COVID” (nyc.gov/acs/covidhelp) is our resource page aimed at supporting families through the pandemic. The campaign earned 10.1 million impressions (including a custom video that ACS created) on paid social media and 15,796 clicks to the landing page from April 15, 2020 to June 30, 2020.
- “Teens Take on COVID,” (nyc.gov/acs/covidteen) is aimed at supporting teens, many of whom are struggling with social isolation, and some of whom may be experiencing violence

at home, and need to know where to turn. The campaign earned 10.1 million paid social media impressions and 62,633 clicks to our landing page during June 2020.

We encourage the Boards to share both resources, “Coping Through COVID” (nyc.gov/acs/covidhelp) and “Teens Take on COVID” (nyc.gov/acs/covidteen) widely with your networks.

- **Is the baselined amount for this purpose adequate to meet the goals?**

Yes, this budget has allowed us to broadly spread the message about CPS as our City’s first-responders to protect children, and it has supported our recruitment and retention goals.

- **Has any analysis been conducted on the effectiveness or other positive outcomes from the creation of a facility to increase public and professional awareness of CPS?**

Overall, we have seen a positive impact from our hiring and retention efforts.

CPS recruitment and advertising was suspended mid-campaign in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis but still earned 107.4 million impressions and attracted 1,342 applicants overall.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

\$1.3M that was dedicated for recruitment and mediation was used instead during pandemic on Covid awareness campaign. They have two different campaigns: one for families and the other for youth. ACS has a lot of traffic on their website on these two topics. During the pandemic, ACS changed the CPS Appreciation Week (June 7th - June 17th) to be Virtual during the pandemic. It included a large virtual party one weekend—a fun day.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 5: Foster Care

The Foster Care Strategic Blueprint for FY 2019-2023 outlines progressive increases in the delivery of preventive services designed to keep families together and an apparently corresponding decline in the need for Foster Care services over the period 1996 to 2017.

Please update us on the implementation of the Foster Care Strategic Blueprint for FY 2019-2023, including:

- Has the trend of increasing preventive services and decreasing need for Foster Care placement continued? Please provide a summary of results and any projections for the near future.
- What budget impact does the trends outlined in the Strategic Blueprint have on the type and need for funding at ACS?
 - are the current amounts and line items for ACS funding sufficient and accurate?
 - are the current amounts and line items appropriate and relevant, or should new line items be developed?

Please update us on the delivery of mental health and education services specifically targeted to children in Foster Care.

-- are the funds available for these needs sufficient to ensure all those in need of such services have a reasonable chance of having those needs met?

Please give status of foster care case worker pay parity. Are increases funded for FY 21 and planned for FY22? Is current status causing continued delays in placement?

Please discuss how budget cuts have impacted transitional programs for youth aging out of foster care.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

Please update us on the implementation of the Foster Care Strategic Blueprint for FY 2019-2023, including:

- **Has the trend of increasing preventive services and decreasing need for Foster Care placement continued? Please provide a summary of results and any projections for the near future.**

Yes; New York City began calendar year 2020 with a historic low of fewer than 8,000 children in foster care. Comparatively, 25 years ago, there were nearly 50,000 children in New York City's foster care system, and nearly 17,000 just a decade ago.

Our prevention programs serve over 20,000 families each year. We are thrilled to make prevention services even more accessible, and grounded in family voice and choice under our new system that began on July 1, 2020. The new system builds on our successful models that have been demonstrated to reduce repeated involvement of families in the child welfare system and have safely reduced our utilization of foster care.

Our projections for the coming months assume a continued reduction in the number of children in congregate/residential care settings. Predictions for the system as a whole are uncertain given the unprecedented global pandemic that began in early 2020. Nonetheless, this year we are making intensive and therapeutic prevention services available more widely across the city, which we expect will support a continuing reduction in our foster care census.

What budget impact does the trends outlined in the Strategic Blueprint have on the type and need for funding at ACS?

-- are the current amounts and line items for ACS funding sufficient and accurate?

-- are the current amounts and line items appropriate and relevant, or should new line items be developed?

ACS is committed to providing high quality services to promote the safety and well-being of the children and families who we serve. We are in constant communication with OMB to identify resources as new needs arise so that we are able to meet our programming and service goals.

Please update us on the delivery of mental health and education services specifically targeted to children in Foster Care.

-- are the funds available for these needs sufficient to ensure all those in need of such services have a reasonable chance of having those needs met?

Children who are in ACS's care in a foster care setting have access to a full continuum of medical and mental health supports, including trauma-informed services. During COVID, many of these services have taken place via telehealth delivery to help minimize the spread of the virus. Our foster care provider agencies have financial flexibility to help families adapt to our new virtual landscape by providing technology when needed for youth, parents and foster parents to access services and stay connected.

For children in foster care, ACS continues to work with young people, foster care agency staff, foster parents, the DOE and others to help every child achieve their academic goals. In addition to our work to ensure that thousands of children received DOE devices when needed, our commitment to academic success includes:

- Advocating to help children in foster care receive the education services to which they are entitled through the DOE;
- Providing training and information to foster parents and foster care agency staff so they have the latest information about educational resources and opportunities in the City;
- Partnering to train DOE staff to help them best meet the needs of students in foster care; and more.

In Spring 2020, ACS co-hosted an online forum for foster parents to assist with questions about online learning and planning for the summer and the 2020-2021 school year.

For all children and youth in ACS's care, we are continuing to work with the DOE to strengthen the help and support that our remote learners are receiving, and we're meeting regularly to flesh out plans for re-engagement in anticipation of the fall.

More broadly--we have also worked to make sure that all NYC teens have access to resources they may need, through our "Teens Take on COVID" digital campaign, available at: nyc.gov/acs/covidteen It is a one-stop webpage to let teens know they are not alone, and to connect them to positive activities to do at home, medical and mental health supports, education resources, and more.

Please give status of foster care case worker pay parity. Are increases funded for FY 21 and planned for FY22? Is current status causing continued delays in placement?

The foster care work force, now more than ever, is critical to the well-being of children in foster care. ACS is continuing to work with our providers to strengthen the workforce and agrees that adequate salaries are important to maintain experienced foster care case planners.

Regarding placements, ACS and foster care provider agency staff collaborate closely to ensure children in foster care have safe, nurturing environments to meet their needs. When children are placed into foster care, ACS is intensely focused on placing them with relatives or other trusted adults with whom the child has a connection. These “kinship” placements are known to help reduce trauma, improve outcomes, and they can help a child maintain cultural and language ties. We are seeing excellent results from our efforts and this past year, more than 40% of children and youth entering foster care were placed with kin.

If a kinship placement is not immediately available, or in situations where a child’s medical, mental health, or behavioral health needs require a higher level of care, we place the child in the correct setting with other services or supports as needed. ACS operates the Nicholas Scoppetta Children’s Center, NYC’s foster care intake center that is located in Manhattan CB6. It serves as a temporary placement for youth that have been removed from home for their safety while awaiting placement with kin, a foster family or other foster care setting.

When placing a child, we consider a range of factors that include the type of setting, location related to the child’s community and school of origin, language, age, gender and any other relevant child characteristics (e.g. frequent appointments, developmental disability, dietary restrictions) that we have identified for the child as required for the foster care resource to be a match.

In October 2019, ACS and the State Office of Children and Family Services implemented a new foster care placement module in the Connections system, which is helping us more efficiently match children with the foster care placements most suited to their needs.

Please discuss how budget cuts have impacted transitional programs for youth aging out of foster care.

As noted above, ACS avoided cuts to our core programs earlier this year, including foster care services. We discuss the ways in which we’re supporting older youth in care in Question #6 below.

With City cuts to youth employment opportunities this summer, ACS—through our dedicated Office of Education and Employment Initiatives—worked hard to identify alternatives to ensure that employment and workforce development-related needs of youth in the foster care and juvenile justice system were met. We were thrilled to offer a paid “Virtual Summer Internship Program” for 100 youth ages 18-24 through a \$400,000 grant from the Robin Hood Foundation in partnership with New Yorkers for Children. During the six-week program, which was conducted entirely online, youth gained valuable work experience by being paired with supervisors from ACS, New Yorkers for Children, and foster care agencies. Participants also benefited from skills training, educational workshops, and other career-related activities. Several hundred older and younger youth in foster care also participated in SYEP Summer Bridge, a career exploration and skill building program sponsored by the Department of Youth and Community Development. ACS worked closely with its foster care agencies and nonprofit partners to help recruit foster youth for positions in the program that were allocated specifically for them.

In addition, we have continued recruiting and enrolling older youth in foster care in Advance & Earn, a paid internship program that is a partnership with DYCD and The Door. Launched in March 2020, it provides skills training and paid work opportunities, as well as support with math/literacy skills and HSE prep to those who need it. ACS also facilitated interviews and matched several dozen youth with jobs as a result of the first-ever Virtual Career Fair for Foster Youth that we held in May 2020. More than 275 youth and foster care agency staff attended the Virtual Career Fair,

with participating employers that included Allied Barton, Securitas, UPS, and Manpower.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

Provided equipment or WiFi for families and children to do remote learning.
Worked with DYCD to place kids in SYEP and kids participated in a virtual career fair.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 6: Foster Care and Education

ACS's past responses to the Budget Consultation questions concerning children approaching the end of foster care eligibility have been detailed and insightful. They included information concerning a host of partnerships around such programs as the ACS Fostering College Success Initiative; the ACS partnership with First Star, Inc./First Star Academy; the ACS partnership with CUNY and the Hilton Foundation for Transition Age Youth program; the ACS partnership with NYC DYCD for a Young Adult Internship Program (YAIP+) program; the ACS Office of Education Support and Policy Planning (OESPP); and the ACS Office of Employment and Workforce Development Initiatives (OEWDI).

- Please update us on the fiscal/financial needs for funding to operate these programs, with a focus on whether funding is adequate to meet perceived needs and demands.
- Please identify any new initiatives begun or in contemplation.
- Please describe the manner in which ACS evaluates the effectiveness of its programs to address these needs, and provide a summary of the rate of success revealed by such evaluations in recent years.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- **Please update us on the fiscal/financial needs for funding to operate these programs, with a focus on whether funding is adequate to meet perceived needs and demands.**

It is important to note that in New York City, we do not discharge young people (regardless of age) from foster care until they have stable living arrangements. This continues to be the case during COVID. In NYC:

- Youth can remain in foster care until age 21, which is supported through federal, state and city funding.
- Youth over the age of 21 who do not yet have a permanent living arrangement continue to receive the same supports that are provided during foster care (housing, financial support

and services). The City has opted to fund these services at its own expense, despite the fact that we receive no State or federal reimbursement. There is no specific age cut off limit.

- For youth age 18+ who elect to leave foster care before they turn 21:
 - o ACS has a specialized unit that provides outreach, support and services to these young people.
 - o We work with these young people to facilitate their reentry into foster care when needed.
 - o We have a process in place to make sure a youth can be immediately housed and assisted when needed, pending any further planning with the youth and their attorney and filing in court.

ACS requires our contracted foster care agencies to report to ACS on the work they are doing to help older youth apply for housing, to support youth in their academic pursuits (including college), to provide assistance for young people in obtaining and maintaining employment and to ensure youth are receiving necessary health, mental health and other services.

We support older youth in foster care through all of the programs we've discussed with you previously. We are in constant communication with OMB to identify resources as new needs arise so that we are able to meet our programming and service goals. For FY2021, funding will continue for these programs including FirstStar, YAIP+ (now called "Advance and Earn"), and Fostering College Success.

- **Please identify any new initiatives begun or in contemplation.**

In FY2020, ACS received \$10 million to fund "Fair Futures," a pilot in which our foster care providers offered additional support to children in foster care ages 11 to 21, such as coaches, tutors, educational specialists, and housing specialists. For FY2021, we received \$2.7 million city tax levy at budget adoption. With the matching funds, as well as one-time additional state revenue in the ACS budget, ACS will be able to provide \$12 million to the foster care providers for Fair Futures this fiscal year.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis, and cognizant of the demands on our provider agencies, ACS has postponed the release of our foster care RFP that was originally planned for Spring 2020. We are now planning to extend current contracts for one year, with new contracts to commence July 1, 2022. In the meantime, we are fully committed to aggressively advancing our work to improve case practice and outcomes across the foster care continuum—from family reunification to kinship placement to adoption to safety of youth in care to supporting older youth in care. Through our Foster Care Strategic Blueprint and the work of the Foster Care Task Force, ACS has achieved measurable positive results, including fewer children in foster care; reduced length of stay in foster care; increased kinship placement and kinship guardianship; increased foster home recruitment; and expanded programming for older youth. We made a targeted investment of \$12 million into our residential care continuum to bolster providers' infrastructure and allow us to implement and test evidence-based models ahead of the foster care procurement.

- **Please describe the manner in which ACS evaluates the effectiveness of its programs to address these needs, and provide a summary of the rate of success revealed by such evaluations in recent years.**

Our Office of Education & Employment Initiatives in the Division of Family Permanency Services reviews and monitors all of the programs with our partners (established either via MOU or contract) to ensure that youth are enrolled and participating, and that we support and build provider capacity

to implement the models and provide workforce/education support for youth.

Additionally, ACS conducts an annual survey of older youth in foster care to help us incorporate youth needs and voice into our program planning. This year's survey results (<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/acs/pdf/about/2020/youthexperiencesurvey.pdf>) confirm the importance of the many programs that ACS and our partners offer to help youth in care achieve their educational and workforce goals.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 7: Capital Projects in Progress

Please provide a list of capital projects and their funding for Manhattan for FY 2021 and FY 2022, with cumulative funding changes from the prior Executive Plans.

Specifically, what are the key capital projects being funded with the \$300 million rolled over from FY 2020? What is status of upgrades for telecommunication and data infrastructure?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

ACS's ten-year capital plan is \$396 million from FY 2020 through FY 2029, of which \$63 million falls into FY 2021. While capital projects largely remain on pause due to COVID, our plans in Manhattan include:

- Renovations to increase programmatic space at the ACS Children's Center (Manhattan CD 6), which is a 24/7 temporary care center for children entering foster care, funded at \$14.8 million.
- Renovations at 61 Broadway (Manhattan CD 1) to accommodate the relocation of the James A. Satterwhite Academy from the Children's Center to include audio visual equipment, VoIP, information technology upgrade, and furniture and equipment for \$2.9 million.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 8: Capital - Capacity

Please update us on the status of maintaining capacity for ACS-funded programs and facilities located in buildings that are either:

- purpose-built and approaching the end of their useful lives; or
- approaching the ends of their leases; or
- are otherwise expected or susceptible to be redeveloped.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

All City-leased and City Owned child care space including play grounds was transferred to the responsibility of DOE as of July 1, 2019. This included 69 City-leased sites totaling \$43 million that house EarlyLearn programs. DOE and School Construction Authority (SCA) are handling negotiation and decisions regarding any new leases moving forward.

ACS's current portfolio includes the Children's Center, two secure detention facilities, and 24 office locations. Out of 24 City-leased office facilities, five sites are in the Borough of Manhattan.

1. 110 William Street, New York, NY 10038; Lease commencement date: 6/27/2019; Lease expiration date: 2/14/2040
2. 150 William Street, New York, NY 10038; Lease commencement date: 9/1/2008; Lease expiration date: 8/31/2023 (DCAS has a 5-year lease renewal option)
3. 55 West 125 Street, New York, NY 10027; Lease commencement date: 6/7/2019; Lease expiration date: 6/6/2039
4. 61 Broadway, New York, NY 10006; Lease commencement date: 4/3/2019; Lease expiration date: 4/30/2028
5. 66 John Street, New York, NY 10038; Lease commencement date: 4/1/2001; Lease expiration date: 3/31/2021 (DCAS is currently negotiating a new long-term lease agreement)

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

The City will not reduce any square footage of currently leased space in the borough of Manhattan.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 9: Recommended Priorities for Community Board Budget Priorities or Advocacy

What expense or capital needs would ACS recommend or encourage Community Boards advocate be funded or expanded?

AGENCY RESPONSE:

ACS's mission is to promote the safety, permanency and well-being of New York City's children and young people. We encourage the Community Boards to support our core program areas: primary prevention through our Division of Child and Family Well-being, prevention services, child protection, family permanency services, and juvenile justice.

With COVID and the ensuing economic crisis, we see families struggling to meet basic food, housing, and education needs. Programs like federal stimulus and unemployment remain critical lifelines for families. As we move through reopening and recovery, it will be crucial for the state and federal government to sustain and enhance critical resources for families like food assistance, income assistance, housing support, access to health and mental health services, in addition to ACS's programs that are supporting and strengthening families.

The preservation of these essential programs in the coming months and years will depend on immediate, additional federal resources and the State's grant of long-term borrowing authority for the City. We hope the Community Boards, as the direct voices of the communities and families that you serve, will also consider advocating for these important priorities at both the state and federal levels.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

ACS continues to focus on ensuring child safety and providing as many supportive services to the families since families will need more support now more than ever because of Covid. There is high levels of unemployment. Meanwhile municipalities are waiting for state and federal aid. New York City is looking to long term borrowing as a possibility.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS:

AGENDA ITEM 10: Funding Sources - Federal Shortfalls

In ACS's responses to Budget Consultation questions for FY 2020 concerning the perennially threatened cuts to the federal social service funding streams, ACS reported on (a) the anticipated transfer to DoE of Head Start funding as part of Early Learn programs; and (b) the enactment of the Family First Preventive Services Act ("FFPSA") that was expected to expand the scope of Title IV-E funding from foster care to a variety of preventive services to protect, support and stabilize families where children are at risk of entering foster care.

Please provide an update as follows:

- Please provide the current status of the transfer of Early Learn programming (and associated funding) to DoE.
- Please advise whether the enactment of FFPSA has resulted in a net reduction of funding or the elimination or curtailment of any programs under the aegis of ACS (and if it has, the nature and details of such reduction or elimination of funding and the programs associated with it).
- Please indicate whether any new cuts or changes in funding at the federal or State level are anticipated to result in the reduction of funding of ACS existing programs or the elimination or curtailment of any ACS programs.

AGENCY RESPONSE:

- **Please provide the current status of the transfer of Early Learn programming (and associated funding) to DoE.**

The City's contracted early care and education programs, including Head Start, became part of the Department of Education's (DOE) portfolio as of July 1, 2019. ACS worked closely with the DOE to successfully complete this transition last year.

- **Please advise whether the enactment of FFPSA has resulted in a net reduction of funding or the elimination or curtailment of any programs under the aegis of ACS (and if it has, the nature and details of such reduction or elimination of funding and the programs associated with it).**

NYS is delaying implementation of Family First until September 29, 2021, which is allowed under the federal law. ACS has established a New York City FFPSA implementation workgroup comprised of legal advocates for parents and children, advocacy organizations, and our community-based agency partners to plan for implementation.

ACS and NYC participated in successful advocacy that resulted in Congress passing the Family First Transition Act in December 2019. This will assist states and localities with FFPSA implementation and provide support for localities like New York City, which had Title IV-E waiver programs. The IV-E waiver allowed ACS to reduce foster care caseloads, enabling caseworkers to provide more intensive, higher quality services and achieving more timely permanency for the children in their care

Among other provisions, the Transition Act provides temporary funding to waiver jurisdictions to bridge the time period to FFPSA implementation and avoid federal shortfalls. It specifically guarantees that waiver jurisdictions can claim up to 90 percent of their negotiated 2019 waiver funds in the first year; and up to 75 percent in the second year.

- NYC expects to receive approximately \$50 million in the first year and \$40 million in the second year.
- With support from the Family First Transition Act, we are maintaining our programs that have reduced the length of time New York City children spend in foster care, reduced the likelihood of re-entry for babies into foster care, and improved the well-being of children in foster care.
- **Please indicate whether any new cuts or changes in funding at the federal or State level are anticipated to result in the reduction of funding of ACS existing programs or the elimination or curtailment of any ACS programs.**

ACS remains concerned about the stagnant and/or reduced levels of state funding for our programs, especially as we and our provider agencies face even greater demands to support children and families throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

- The state budget included a \$40 million TANF cost shift along with a \$25 million reduction to the child welfare funding stream, which will require our sister City agencies to reduce or eliminate current programs that serve needy families, and that reduces our ability to access state child welfare services funds.
- Although the State's share of child protective and prevention services reimbursement is 65% by statute, the budget once again reduces this share to 62%, which costs NYC about \$20 million.
- The State has not restored prior year cuts of \$62 million in foster care and \$41 million in Close to Home funding, nor do we expect that the City will qualify for Raise the Age funding

that is available to every other county, due to property tax cap limits that prevent the City from accessing those funds (as has been the case since the outset of Raise the Age implementation).

- The funding for Kinship Guardianship Assistance payments (KinGAP) for relatives who become permanent guardians after children are in foster care, continues to be paid for out of the Foster Care Block grant, which should be dedicated to support children in foster care.
- Lastly, the State received broad authority to reopen the budget and make further cuts if the state budget is imbalanced, and we are closely monitoring this for any further impact to our programs and services.

Finally, the state has signaled additional budget cuts that may be looming due to the state's economic crisis, and ACS remains concerned about the potential impact of such cuts on our programs.

MEETING NOTES:

NEW INFORMATION:

EarlyLearn which includes HeadStart was transferred to DOE from ACS. However, ACS will continue to distribute the vouchers for these programs but DOE will have oversight.

ACS focusing on reducing Congregate Care and increase Kinship Care.

The State is withholding 20% of funding to all localities. This would be a big problem for ACS if they are only reimbursed 80% of expenses instead of 100%.

FOLLOW-UP COMMITMENTS: