

**Portland Children's Levy  
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes  
September 8, 2014 2:00 p.m.  
Location: Portland City Council Chambers**

---

*The full record of the meeting may be viewed on the Portland Children's Investment Fund website:  
[www.portlandchildrenslevy.org](http://www.portlandchildrenslevy.org).*

**Attending:** Mitch Hornecker, Deborah Kafoury, Dan Saltzman (Chair), Serena Stoudamire-Wesley, Julie S. Young

**Welcome/introduction of Allocation Committee and Children's Levy staff**

**Saltzman:** Welcome to County Chair Deborah Kafoury who returns to the Allocation Committee today.

**Approval of minutes from June 2 meeting**

**Stoudamire-Wesley:** So moved

**Young:** Second

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Public Comment** - none

**Culturally Specific Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention Funding Decision**

**Saltzman:** In our spring meetings, we made a decision to request new proposals for child abuse prevention and intervention programs which would serve African American children and families. Today we will be awarding grant funding to one of those proposals.

**Hansell:** The request for investment was issued in late June. Applications were reviewed by 6 volunteers, all of whom have reviewed applications for us in the past and all of whom are African American. Reviewer scores were averaged and bonus points were awarded to applications serving 51% or more children and families from East Portland and for agencies that met the criteria of being culturally specific. Bonus points were determined by Levy staff. Full applications and staff summaries were provided to the Allocation Committee prior to this meeting. Applicants were informed of their scores on August 25.

Staff recommends that only one grant be funded, because none of the programs would be viable with reduced funding.

Staff recommends that the application from Morrison Center not be considered for funding because it did not meet the minimum criteria for being culturally specific in the eyes of reviewers and staff.

The third recommendation is to consider the evidence of cultural specificity in making your funding decision. The application from Pathfinders received a score of 92; it was the only application to receive bonus points for serving majority East Portland. Volunteers of America received a score of 91. With both of these high scoring programs, staff had a concern whether the program met the criteria for being culturally specific. However, all of the reviewers believed that both of those programs were culturally specific. If you are convinced that one of those programs met the criteria for being culturally specific, we recommend you fund one of those programs. If you do not believe either of those programs is culturally specific, we recommend you fund one of the next highest scoring applications which both received scores of 83; those applications were from Self Enhancement, Inc. and Rosemary Anderson High School/POIC. Everyone believed those two applications met the criteria for being culturally specific. It is a very difficult decision.

The committee set a goal of 60% of funds going to the parenting strategy and 40% going to therapeutic intervention. To date, 65% of the funds have been allocated for parenting and 35% to therapeutic intervention. Today, the funding represents about 5% of funding. Staff is not concerned about a variance of 10%.

**Stoudamire-Wesley:** What makes Pathfinders and Volunteers of America more of a culturally specific program even more than Morrison? I am trying to figure out how that works.

**Hansell:** The information in the applications was more persuasive than in the Morrison application. For VOA's application, they proposed to partner with a culturally specific organization. Pathfinders' application they are partnering with a culturally specific church to house the services.

**Stoudamire-Wesley:** That is where my question comes into play. Just because you are partnering with a culturally specific organization, does not make you a culturally specific organization. That means you are partnering with a culturally specific organization. But that does not make you as an organization, as the main one, a culturally specific organization. I think that needs to be addressed. I think that needs to be noted. You are partnering with one, but your organization itself is not a culturally specific organization.

**Hansell:** As stated, staff had concerns about the cultural specificity of those organizations. It was the reviewers who believed that both of those proposals were culturally specific. I asked them, "How do you consider these to be culturally specific proposals?"

**Pellegrino:** Our application requires that you present evidence that you are a culturally specific organization or program. You could present evidence that you are a culturally specific program housed in a mainstream agency and still qualify as culturally specific. The issue was not just the organization, it was also the programming, the staff ...

**Stoudamire-Wesley:** I understand that you are saying the program, not just the organization is considered culturally specific. I just think that is playing on some words.

**Hansell:** Staff had concerns about the cultural specificity of the programs proposed. The reviewers felt they were culturally specific. They felt the strength was by partnering with culturally specific organizations that they were enhancing the capacity for the programs. They felt that both of these proposals were culturally specific.

### **Testimony of Applicants**

**Saltzman:** As I have noted before, there are many worthy organizations and not enough funding to go around. It is important that you all know that your work is vitally important to the City and its children. We encourage you to continue in your efforts. We will now take testimony from applicant organizations who wish to speak. Each organization will have three minutes.

My name is **Michelle Wright** from **Pathfinders** and I am the early childhood coordinator and the African American family advocate at the center. I am reading a statement on behalf of **Michelle Lewis** who would be the manager of this program. Michelle has worked for Pathfinders for ten years and collaborates closely with Glenna Hayes and the staff at the Center for Family Success before transitioning into her current position as Afro-centric mental health counselor at OHSU center for healing. As a mental health counselor, Michelle has worked with the African American community. Many of the parents she sees as well as their children face many challenges in terms of coping with racism and oppression while helping their children maintain a positive cultural identity. The PIO curriculum is evidence based and has been proven to work effectively with African American parents by a study of the National Institute of Mental Health in the Oregon correctional system where African Americans are overrepresented. PIO provides an achievement orientation to child rearing in terms of helping parents to build a

pyramid of success for their children. The center for family success has a model that is culturally responsive to the needs of the African American community.

We partner with organizations that are highly trusted, such as Highland Christian Center, Healthy Birth Initiative and Albina Early Head Start. We work with families long term. Services do not have an end date. We moved to Rockwood seven years ago in response to our clients moving there. This is just an example of the ways we tailor our program to our clients where they are. Should Pathfinders receive this funding, the program will focus on historical and contemporary issues that are important to raising African American children such as the impact of slavery on traditional disciplinary approaches; building positive self-images and self-esteem of African American children, parent involvement, nutrition and family. In this funding program, Portland Children's Levy has the opportunity to provide African American families another option for services and build capacity to meet the needs of East Multnomah County.

I am **Glenna Hayes**. I am the director of the center. I don't really have a lot to add other than, I often get way more credit than I deserve for the Center for Family Success. It is really these amazing frontline practitioners that work with the families. They really have developed the program. Pathfinders is a mainstream organization that is really proud and excited to be able to support a program like this. We would not be able to do that without the leadership of the African American practitioners that we have worked with over these years.

**Saltzman:** I have one question. Could you articulate the relationship of the Highland Christian Center and the Center for Family Success in this proposal?

**Glenna Hayes:** We looked to Highland in response to many conversations I have had with community members in east Multnomah County in the Rockwood area who are struggling to find a center for African American identity in that community. It is kind of hard to find a center for anybody. It is a very unorganized community in a lot of ways, even though we are working on that. Highland came up as a geographically central and culturally responsive community that people would feel comfortable with. We reached out to them. Several of our staff have a connection in that community. They embraced us. We have a mini Center for Family Success in their counseling center. There is a huge potential there. It has just started. We just moved there.

**Michelle Wright:** It is a good relationship. We offer services to the members of the church. We have taught a couple of parenting classes there. Our first class was half members of the church. We were flexible. A lot of them did not have the issues a lot of our clients have, but needed to take a parenting class. We were flexible enough to offer them services at the church. Our offices are there so we do intakes at the church.

**Glenna Hayes:** They are making referrals to us as well. As well as providing services because it is a little hub in itself with a food bank and day shelter and many things that the county and city are probably partnering with them on. One of our goals is to connect people to their community. Social service agencies are not the solution. The community is.

I am **Alisha Moreland-Capuia**, the chief medical director for **Volunteers of America Oregon**. We thank you for this opportunity to let you know why we believe we are strong candidate for this funding and think we could do wonderful things with it. Volunteers of America and Miracles Club collectively and combined has over 22 years of expertise in serving families of color in the areas of trauma-informed and therapeutic child care services. VOA has served a specific niche population ages six weeks to five year, which you know is the most critical age group in terms of early intervention. We also have over 22 years of experience in parent-child reunification, education and parent wellness. In the application, VOA did not get points for presence in East Portland, but one of our family relief nurseries is in East Portland attached to the Gateway Center. We have successfully served a clientele of over 32% African American families at that site. The VOA Miracles partnership will allow for effective expansion of scope and capacity to serve the African American community in East Portland. Over 80% of Miracles Club's current clientele is African American. 80% of Miracles Club's clientele live in East Portland.

VOA and Miracles' staff is well trained in trauma-informed care. We are taking an approach that changes the way we pose questions with families. Instead of looking at what may be wrong with families, we are saying what happened to families. By doing that, we change the context in which we engage. We are working with the County's richest resource, which is our children, which requires a high level of expertise. We do have well trained staff that have been doing this work in providing therapeutic intervention. We are looking forward to the opportunity to successfully demonstrate these outcomes, to employ cutting edge, evidence based practices for the good of the African American community around child abuse intervention and prevention.

**Herman Bryant of Miracles Club:** The Miracles Club has been involved with VOA for over two years with the east county project. We feel strongly that we can continue to serve with an empowerment approach with each individual that comes through. We have had a great success rate with reuniting families. Miracles does take a direct angle at how do you help a child without helping the parent.

**Tony Hopson, President and CEO of Self Enhancement, Inc.** Let me go back real quickly. We got here today based on a decision that was made last time by a three two vote to put the dollars back out. I would just remind you that that three two vote was the two people of color voted not to put it back out. The three white folks voted to put it back out. Last time we were before you, we had a 91 score – one of the highest scores at that time. We left a piece out. We wrote the proposal again; did the same proposal; took the recommendations from your staff; added all of that to the proposal and this time we get an 83. I am not sure how that happened.

Your staff goal is to have at least 30% of the dollars be culturally specific. I think you are somewhere around 20%. Much of this dialogue is going to be what do we consider culturally specific to be. Communities of Color Coalition put out a report; African American report, Native American report, Latino report. All of them say the same thing about what culturally specific really is. Don't know what five African Americans you had on your group, but they were not the people who do services. Culturally specific services are agencies that provide direct services to people that look like them. Their mission is about that. Anybody can have a program. As long as we are doing this from a program standpoint, those of us who do culturally specific services will always be competing with your large, mainstream organizations who go get some folks of color and put them in place and serve them. Nothing against the two organizations; these are great organizations. These are my friends out here. Pathfinders are my friends. Miracles – these people are my friends. They do great work. But they are not culturally specific in terms of the agency.

Your staff recommended that you think about Pathfinders and VOA from the standpoint of basically are they black enough? Are they culturally specific enough? That is the decision you get to make. I will be honest with you. I am offended that white staff and a predominantly white panel would feel so privileged as to decide for black people what is black enough. We should be deciding that for ourselves. This is the year 2015. We can decide for ourselves what is best for us. We don't need white folks telling us that. Here we are again in 2015 with you guys going to decide which organization is black enough to serve black people. Culturally specific services are alive and well. It is the wave of the future. If you don't understand that, you are going to miss history.

Last thing I will say is that we have friends out here. These agencies are friends. The way in which you have set this up makes it difficult for us to work together. We are trying to figure out ways to work with Pathfinders, but you would put us in a position to have to compete against them. Highland Church – that is my pastor. I go to Highland Church. We are involved in all of this stuff together, but you guys set up a scenario for us to fight each other. It is not going to help children and families in the future. We need to be more clear about what culturally specific really is and we need to be able to decide that for you. You should not decide that for us.

My name is **Julie Mitchell** from **POIC**, **Joe McFerrin** could not be here today. He requested I read this prepared statement on his behalf. I believe whichever of the three highest scoring organizations is ultimately chose to

receive funding of their culturally specific child abuse prevention/intervention program, the City of Portland and the African American community will benefit from it tremendously. Two of the organizations which applied for this grant share a combined 75 years of experience providing culturally specific services to Portland's African American community; that would be POIC and SEI. These services have taken various forms in response to the community's needs including education, employment training and placement opportunities for youth, as well as youth development and support services. POIC has worked with both SEI and Pathfinders over the past few years in different capacities, with Pathfinders providing hot dogs at our backpack event in East Multnomah County. And SEI through our community healing initiatives wraparound services to gang impacted African American youth and their families. Considering POIC's history of service and the limited overall resources available to serve Portland's highest risk individuals, if the Portland Children's Levy Allocation Committee believes preventing child abuse begins with caring for parents, especially young parents, then we are that organization. The trusting relationships we have within the African American community, combined with our existing system of wraparound care, enable us to begin effectively preventing and treating the causes of child abuse immediately. POIC's unique approach of focusing on young parents working toward high school completion and career training puts us in contact with the highest risk parent population. Teenage, African American parents demonstrate higher risk factors associated with child maltreatment, compare to other parent populations. Some studies of physical abuse in particular have found that teen mothers exhibit higher rates of child abuse. Over our 40 years of experience providing services to African American families, we have developed trusting relationships within this community. Our services have now extended to meet the great need at the outer edges of Portland into East Multnomah County. We are proud to say that we are rapidly gaining respect and recognition as a valuable resource there as well. We have been in East Multnomah County for two years and we did not receive the points for working out in that community.

My name is **Charles Smith** and I am a consultant with the **Black Parent Initiative**. I want to raise a couple points that were also raised by Mr. Hopson. I think they really get to the crux of the situation here. Our proposal apparently did not make the cut, so we weren't in the five that were listed to you. The first one I want to bring up I think is a more global issue. It seems like the criteria has a way of trying to evaluate culturally specific services from a dominant cultural paradigm. A program that proposes a culturally specific approach, which we did, actually ended up losing points because we could not justify it on a dominant cultural paradigm. Let me give you a specific for instance here. Black Parent Initiative redesigned all its programming over the last year to be ground in principles of optimal health based on African cultural traditions. This is very similar to the developmental assets and other ideas out of groups in Minnesota and places you hear about developmental assets for children, for youth, for communities. That is the dominant cultural version of what has been known and been practiced within African cultures for years. So we propose that same idea, made a slight reference to the 40 assets, but you can't spend all your time talking about the dominant culture when you are talking about culturally specific services, and in fact got lower points as a result of that. That is just one example.

The second thing I want to bring up is, in our analysis, and we did send this out some people on the panel, there seemed to be some clear reviewer bias among a few reviewers where the range in score was over 40 point difference between one reviewer and another just with our proposal. Now, I don't want to get into too many statistics here, but you couldn't have that happen with the other proposals and have them score in the 90's and 80's. So, that raises questions about how were reviewers prepared and what were they really looking for when it comes to the idea of what is culturally specific; what is a culturally specific organization; and how do you evaluate those aspects of it. My concern in looking at the process is that the review process was not changed to adapt to culturally specific services, and so the same one was used for all other proposals as was for culturally specific proposals, which means to me that maybe the reviewers weren't prepared to evaluate culturally specific proposals, and in fact lead to the situation where a lot of good friends and colleagues are competing for a small pot of money in a competitive way rather than a cooperative nature that is part of our culture to begin with. Thank you.

**Saltzman:** Now is time for the committee to deliberate and make a decision.

**Hansell:** Would it be helpful to review the elements of culturally specific program/organization?

**Saltzman:** Sure.

**Hansell:** There were five elements used in defining culturally specific program and organization. The first, the majority of clients served are from a particular community of color. Staff, management, & board reflect the community served. The organization or program is culturally focused and identifiable by the community members as such. The organization has a track record of successful community engagement and involvement with the community being served. The community being served recognizes the organization or program as culturally specific.

**Kafoury:** I have a question. I appreciate that staff has taken a lot of time and done a lot of work to come up with these definitions. Can you remind me how those definitions came to be.

**Hansell:** It was not just staff. We worked with the Coalition of Communities of Color. Primarily, that is where the definitions came from.

**Pellegrino:** That definition is from the Coalition of Communities of Color. The only difference is, as I said at the beginning, that they were defining culturally specific organizations only. We did allow and have allowed a program to be considered a culturally specific program for a particular community offered by a mainstream agency. They would still need to meet those definitions with regard to the program.

**Young:** I just want to note to my colleagues here that one of the things that I considered very seriously as I reviewed the information from staff and looked at the applications themselves is making sure we are attending to the real issue here of this is about child abuse prevention and intervention. It is important we are talking about the issue of being culturally specific and we are talking about serving the African American community, but I want to remember that we are talking about a specific service and I don't want us to leave that conversation out. It is my understanding that children under the age of 6 are far more vulnerable to child abuse than any other age child. I weighted more heavily those programs that are serving those parents and the children of that young age. So that is something I encourage my colleagues here to also be looking at. Some of the programs are serving a broader range.

**Saltzman:** Did you have a recommendation?

**Young:** I would go with funding for Pathfinders, largely based on the fact that they had the highest score, they are serving children zero to eighteen. They had a very strong application with very little concern by staff about the program itself. I like that they got the extra points for serving the East part of Portland.

**Stoudamire-Wesley:** Right now in the DHS system, Native Americans and African Americans have the highest number of kids in our DHS system in our state. Oregon is at the bottom. We have had the same people. They have been served at a white, middle class level. Changes need to be made. Those changes cannot be made if we continue to serve and we keep putting dollars at those same organizations. We will still end up being at the bottom out of all 50 states. We will still continue having a high number of African American kids and a high number of Native American kids in our DHS system. So, when I think about that, I think about who has been serving our kids? When I think about who has been serving our kids and why and when that those levels increase, I have to start thinking about we need to do something different. Maybe people that look like the kids that are in those systems, maybe they can serve and be a better asset to those kids. Or maybe there needs to be some type of training. We can go around and around in circles, but we still come up with the same thing. I am not saying that white cannot serve African American kids because there are studies that show that some do an excellent job. What I am talking about is in the state of Oregon not making any movement in our kids off our DHS rolls. So, listening today, my recommendation is for Volunteers of America.

**Saltzman:** I am genuinely torn. I see four good proposals here, at least. I see good partnerships. Pathfinders and Volunteers of America have found some good partners to work with. I am also certainly a fan of both SEI and POIC. I feel they can all do the job here. I don't have a strong feeling one way or the other.

**Hornecker:** It is a very important topic and it feels like we are rubbing up against this program versus agency issue around being culturally specific. It seems a little late in the game for us to change that since it was written into the program. That is how we graded all the other proposals. I am prepared to proceed with the understanding that a program that has partnered with a culturally specific organization meets our criteria. Based on what I heard today, we ought to take a look at that before we do our next round of funding. We will have three years of experience to see if we choose a culturally specific program, to see if they are doing good work. It is too close to call, so I would go with the highest scoring proposal.

**Kafoury:** I too struggled with this decision today. They are all wonderful organizations that we fund through the Children's Levy and the County. I am intrigued with the percentages going to therapeutic intervention and parenting. I was persuaded by the Volunteers of America proposal as they had a higher number of dollars going into the therapeutic services. But, similar to other folks here, I could be persuaded in a multitude of ways, which makes this decision more difficult.

**Young:** There was a concern about whether the therapeutic classrooms proposed by VOA are not culturally specific. Can someone from VOA tell us about that situation?

**Dr. Moreland:** VOA in the East Relief Nursery serve about one third of our families are African American and we do have staff that reflect those particular cultures. We have African American staff on board and specifically, we have been using an evidence-based curriculum called Nurturing Parenting. That curriculum has been shown to be effective in working with specifically families of color in increasing attachments and reducing factors that contribute to child abuse.

**Michelle Reynolds** from VOA: Within our therapeutic classroom, we really work on meeting each child and family where they are. As Doctor Moreland said, we are at about 33% right now. I think the partnership with Miracles will really add so much to our therapeutic classroom.

**Young:** In the proposal you are projecting about 66% in the classroom?

**Moreland:** It is our expectation that we could increase that to about 50%. I have Diane Dorfman to address that question.

**Dorfman:** The Miracles relief nursery would be a nursery within a nursery. That particular nursery within a nursery would be 100% African American children. We are projecting about 25 the first year. Most of the services provided to the parents would certainly be with Miracles Club – mentoring and parenting on site at Miracles. The therapeutic childcare that we provide now is culturally specific in that we look at various kinds of curriculum and as Michelle said trauma informed child care is very much focused on the individual and meeting that person's needs where they are, both in terms of their emotional, physical and other developmental growth, but also in terms of culture. We do have African American child care providers. We work with various curricula that adapt to different cultures. We work within the classroom to build those developmental assets in ways that are relevant and important. We also will have guidance from Miracles in working to build some of those strengths in terms of the interactions between the parents and the children, so that relationship is culturally specific as well.

**Moreland:** In addition, I think the strength is that I assumed my position as Chief Medical Director on July 1, and my particular area of expertise is trauma informed care specifically with cultures and communities of color. I

could probably speak to that at length and in depth given my level of training and personal expertise. We are taking strong consideration of issues around historical trauma and intergenerational trauma. As a board certified psychiatrist, I will be having direct, clinical oversight over the administration of this particular program.

**Herman Bryant:** It is all about ground work. That is what the community knows. The inreach versus the outreach. The outreach is amongst organizations where African Americans feel excluded anyway. The inreach that Miracles does is inclusive. More importantly, is knowing these systems as well as we might know them. For instance, 70% of those employed at Highland were trained at Miracles Club. Miracles is working its tail off to try to take care of its own. Not looking at outside solutions when the solution is within us. I really appreciate this opportunity. The thing that stresses me out more is that here the African American community is fighting for 5% of the funding. That is an issue that hopefully in the next three years we will be looking at. Miracles has survived for 20 years on enough money to fail but we haven't failed. Hopefully we will look at something different in the future.

**Hornecker:** Can we have staff articulate what their concern was about the therapeutic classroom.

**Hansell:** In the RFI we requested that the applicants indicate what percentage of resources would be used for each strategy. In this case, the application did not present that information. So, staff estimated the percent that would be therapeutic versus parenting. As staff understood the application, it did not sound like the services for the children in the nursery would be culturally specific, but rather it would be a general classroom. The culturally specific piece of the service would be the parenting classes and the home visiting would be done in partnership with Miracles. Those were the pieces that staff understood would be culturally specific.

**Hornecker:** I move that we fund the Volunteers of America Miracles Club Relief Nursery program for \$350,000.

**Wesley-Stoudamire:** Second.

**Vote:** All in favor.

**Saltzman:** Congratulations to VOA and Miracles Clubs. Thanks to all who applied. I want to thank the volunteer reviewers, the Levy staff and my colleagues on the Allocation Committee for your work on this process.

### **Staff Presentation**

**McElroy:** Staff takes seriously the feedback that comes from the community including what we heard today.

Given the 5% administrative cap, we sought to limit the grant administration load by limiting the number of grants. We ended up with 59 grants, similar to what we funded in the past.

### **1. Results of 2013/2014 Funding Process**

Now that the funding process is complete, staff has calculated how allocations compared with goals set at the beginning of the process. Data is displayed in the charts below and major themes are as follows:

- **Program Area Investment Goals:** Allocation of Levy resources to program areas did not vary significantly from goals set at the beginning of the process. Slightly more was allocated to early childhood and child abuse prevention/intervention; and slightly less was allocated to foster care and after-school.
- **Investment in Culturally Specific Organizations/Programs:** 33% of total Levy allocations were made to culturally specific programs/organizations as compared to an average of 30% over the last levy period.
- The Levy set a goal of investing 30% of resources in each program area to culturally specific programs/organizations. It met this goal 4 of 6 program areas. Substantially more resources were



invested in culturally specific programs/organizations in after-school and mentoring. No resources were invested in culturally specific programs/organizations for hunger relief.

- Investment Goals for Program Area Strategies: In early childhood and foster care, investments did not substantially vary from the goals set for each strategy.
- In after-school, the fact that the City and County had agreed to put more resources into new SUN sites meant that fewer resources were needed from the Levy to fund these sites. This allowed resources to be shifted to other strategies in after-school, the bulk of which were used to fund more enrichment programming.
- The greatest portion of hunger relief investments were made in the alternative approaches strategy.

#### ***Program Area Allocations***

<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Allocated to Cult. Specific Org/Program</b>	<b>Variance from Goal for Cult. Specific</b>
Early Childhood	31%	31.4%	0.4%	34%	4%
Child Abuse P&I	19%	19.7%	0.7%	26%	-4%
Foster Care	12%	11.6%	-0.4%	33%	3%
After-School	19%	18.3%	-0.7%	48%	18%
Mentoring	11%	11.0%	0.0%	39%	9%
Hunger	8%	8.0%	0.0%	0%	-30%

#### ***Allocations to Strategies within Program Areas***

<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Early Childhood</b>				
	<i>Intensive Home Visiting</i>	50%	53%	3%
	<i>Preschool/Head Start</i>	35%	33%	2%
	<i>EC Mental Health</i>	15%	14%	-1%
<b>Child Abuse P&amp;I</b>				
	<i>Parenting</i>	60%	65% (to date)	
	<i>Therapeutic Intervention</i>	40%	35% (to date)	
<b>Foster Care</b>				
	<i>Academic Support</i>	40%	43%	3%
	<i>Transition Support</i>	30%	23%	-7%
	<i>Permanency</i>	30%	35%	5%
<b>After-School</b>				
	<i>SUN</i>	20%	12%	-8%
	<i>Academic Support</i>	60%	55%	-5%
	<i>Enrichment</i>	20%	33%	13%
<b>Hunger Relief</b>				
	<i>Increase access/utilization of existing programs</i>	N/A	26%	N/A
	<i>Increase access to food during summer/OST</i>	N/A	12%	N/A

	<i>School-based food pantries</i>	N/A	23%	N/A
	<i>Alternative Approaches</i>	N/A	39%	N/A

Note: PCL did not adopt specific strategies for mentoring program investments, and did not set goals for investment in particular hunger relief strategies.

## **2. Staff Reflections on 2013/2014 Funding Process**

After completing the bulk of the funding process for the renewed Children's Levy, staff has some reflections on what worked and what could be improved to offer the Committee. Reviewers also provided written feedback after completing the review process. Staff has summarized reviewers' comments and included them here as well.

In addition to these reflections, staff plans to survey stakeholders and community members who participated in the public input process, and all applicants for their feedback on the public input phase, the RFI design, and the decision making process. Last, staff will meet individually with Committee members to hear their feedback. Staff will summarize all of the feedback received and make recommendations for future changes at a meeting later in the fall.

### **A. Adopting Goals and Strategies**

Adopting levy-wide and program area goals and strategies that were specifically informed by public input worked well as a framework for funding. Goals and strategies create a logical rationale that makes what we are doing more transparent to the larger public, and provides more explicit information to potential applicants on whether programs are a good fit for Levy funding.

While it was helpful to articulate strategies in the Requests for Investment, some applicants ended up not being considered for funding because they did not propose a program that was a good fit for the strategy. When this occurs, it wastes everyone's time. In order to avoid this, it might be helpful to develop a two-stage process with a brief first stage in which potential applicants submit a one-page summary of the program they want to propose for funding, and staff provides feedback solely on whether the proposal fits the strategy or strategies for which the program intends to apply. This would give applicants a chance to modify what they propose, decide not to apply, or decide to apply without changing the proposal but with the knowledge that staff is unlikely to recommend funding in cases where the program is judged not to be a good fit for a particular strategy.

### **B. Funding Process Timeline**

While both staff and the Committee managed to complete the entire funding process (from public input to funding decisions) within a year, it is difficult to do so and requires that some portions of the process be more truncated than many of us would prefer. More time to carry out the public input process, discuss and develop strategies, carry out a two-step process as articulated above, additional time for applicants to respond, and for reviewers to score and discuss applications would all be useful. Conducting the funding process over 1.5- 2 years would ease the burden on staff, the Committee, applicants and the Community.

### **C. Requests for Investment**

Generally, staff thought that the restructured RFI worked well. Combining the program design and proven program sections helped eliminate duplicative content in applications. Increasing the points for the cultural responsiveness section raised the bar on expectations for programs, and will give staff a much more detailed starting point for monitoring improvements over time.

That said, our request for meaningful examples in many sections of the RFI did not yield as much as staff had hoped. Staff and reviewers repeatedly noted that applicants either did not include examples as requested, or gave examples that were not particularly relevant or responsive to the section. Staff may need to refine the language of the requests, and/or change the scoring rubric to further flesh out this requirement.

Last, at least one additional refinement on the eligibility requirements should be included in the RFI. The text of the RFI should specifically state that in order to be eligible for funding, an organization must have had at least \$150,000 in revenues during the last closed fiscal year. This fact is implied by the requirements that applicants apply for at least \$50,000 per year in PCL funding, and that PCL funding can only make up 30% of total organizational revenues earned in the last closed fiscal year. However, some applicants missed the effect of these requirements, and applied despite lacking \$150,000 in revenues for the last closed fiscal year. In addition, the RFI should specifically state that if an organization is relying in part on in-kind revenue in the last closed fiscal year, they must consult with staff regarding eligibility prior to submitting an application because only certain types of in-kind services may be counted as revenue under GAAP.

#### **D. Minimum Points Requirements**

Requiring that applicants get an average of at least 39/55 points in the proven program design section, and at least 16/25 points in the cultural responsiveness section in order to qualify for funding was new in this funding process. This requirement is used in other funding processes and staff recommended that the levy adopt these minimums to eliminate weaker applications from consideration. The data shows that this pretty much worked as intended: 14 applications representing 12% of total applications were eliminated, and all but one of the disqualified applications scored in the bottom quartile of the applications in the program or sub-program area in which they were competing for funding. It is unlikely that any of the disqualified applications would have been funded due to the concentration of funding among higher scored applications in each category. However, requiring achievement of minimum points based only on a written application means that good grant writing becomes more important, and poorly written applications will be disqualified even if the underlying program would, in fact, meet PCL requirements for funding. In addition, smaller, newer and less well-funded organizations may be significantly penalized if they cannot afford professional grant writers. Staff and the Committee may need to revisit this issue to assure that an appropriate balance is being struck that doesn't unfairly penalize some applicants.

#### **E. Cultural Specificity**

PCL adopted the definition of culturally specific programs/organizations used by the Coalition of Communities of Color that required the following:

- The majority of clients served are from a particular community of color.
- The staff, management and board of the applicant organization reflect the community that is served.
- The organizational or program environment is culturally focused and identifiable by community members as such.
- The organization has a track record of successful community engagement and involvement with the community being served.
- The community being served recognizes the organization as a culturally specific organization.

Several issues emerged for both staff and reviewers in trying to apply this definition in scoring the application as discussed below.

##### Lack of Definition of "Reflective"

Both staff and reviewers had difficulty determining whether the staff, management and board of applicant organizations were "reflective" of the population served because reflective is not further defined. Reviewers consistently raised this issue in review meetings and asked staff for guidance. Since PCL had not adopted any further definition, and neither had the coalition, staff asked reviewers to use their best judgment. This resulted in widely varying interpretations of what constitutes reflectiveness and thus differing scores for the same applications in this subsection of the application.

Staff encountered the same issue in trying to determine whether an applicant had met this standard for purposes of awarding the 3 bonus points to culturally specific organizations/programs. The examples listed

below illustrate the difficulty in trying to determine whether staff, management and board were reflective of population served:

- Organizations/programs designated themselves as culturally specific in the application, provided good evidence of meeting other aspects of the definition, but had a majority white board.
- Programs designated themselves as culturally specific programs of mainstream organizations, had 100% of direct service staff of the culture served, but majority white management and board.
- Organizations designated themselves as culturally specific, did not clearly state for which populations this definition applied, served two different cultural populations (e.g. Latinos and African immigrants), and had only one of the two cultural groups represented in management and board.
- Organizations designated themselves as culturally specific, served a majority of clients from a particular cultural group, but had only one member of that cultural group on a board of directors that otherwise did not reflect the population served.

The lack of community discussion and agreement on what should constitute “reflectiveness” of the population served made it impossible for staff to draw these lines on any defensible grounds. Staff chose to award the 3 bonus points to all applicants that designated their organizations/programs as culturally specific except those where less than 50% of the funding requested was to be used for culturally specific services.

#### Organization/Program Serves Multiple Cultural Groups

If the majority of clients served must come from a particular community of color in order for the organization/program to be culturally specific, staff lacked further guidance on whether organizations/programs that served multiple cultural groups should be deemed culturally specific, and if so, for which groups. Should an organization/program be required to meet all elements of the definition for each group served in order to be deemed culturally specific, or is meeting the definition for only one group served sufficient?

#### Quality of Evidence Provided

The determination of cultural specificity requires that the community being served see the organization/program environment as culturally focused, see the organization/program as culturally specific, and that the applicant have a successful record of engagement/involvement of the cultural group served. While applicants can provide evidence of these elements of the definition in their application, it is difficult to make any judgment regarding how any particular community sees an organization/program based only on the written evidence supplied by those that are requesting funding.

#### Failure to Distinguish between Culturally Specific Organizations and Services

Staff also noted that the PCL did not articulate on the front end whether it was seeking to increase investment in culturally specific organizations or services, or both. And if PCL is seeking to do both, whether it has different goals for each, and/or specific goals for each in particular program areas. As published, the RFI did not ask applicants whether the proposed services were specifically tailored to particular cultural groups, and if multiple groups were served, whether services, staffing etc. would be tailored to each group served. As a result, bonus points were given to applicants in the following situations:

- Where a culturally specific organization proposed to offer culturally responsive services that did not primarily serve the population for which the organization was culturally specific.
- Where a culturally specific organization/program served multiple cultural groups, and where the organization/program only met the definition of culturally specific for one group.
- Where it was not clear from the application how the services delivered to multiple cultural groups served would be made culturally specific for each.

#### Consideration for Other Disadvantaged Groups

Both applicants and reviewers noted that the cultural responsiveness section and the bonus points for cultural specificity were focused primarily on race/ethnicity, and not on other characteristics that have historically disadvantaged people such as disability and sexual orientation. Groups with these characteristics or conditions

also require organizations delivering services be sensitive to their unique situations in order to deliver quality services. The Levy may want to consider enlarging its definition of cultural specificity to include such groups or to provide other ways to prioritize services to these groups in the funding process.

#### **F. Review Process**

Reviewers requested improvements to the orientation process and the scoring rubric including the following:

- More guidance on how to score applications with examples of scored applications provided as part of the instruction packet.
- Specific instruction on when a section should be given “0” points.
- Review of sample responses to RFI questions and sample scoring during the orientation session.
- More gradation in the score ranges available for each section to allow the scoring to be more reflective of the information provided.
- Adapt the scoring form to account more for the quality of the information provided.

Staff agrees with reviewers on these suggestions and also thinks that the Committee may want to consider professionalizing the review process further by doing the following:

- Recruiting a smaller number of reviewers;
- Screening reviewers ahead of time;
- Requiring attendance at training;
- Providing more in-depth training and opportunities to practice scoring;
- Requiring that reviewers score a greater number of applications;
- Providing a small stipend for participating in the process.

These steps would likely increase inter-rater reliability and overall quality in reviewing.

#### **G. Decision Making Process**

Splitting the testimony phase and the decision making phase was new in this funding process and arose out of the suggestion by a former Allocation Committee member. Staff thought the change was positive, along with other modifications that included providing staff recommendations in advance of the testimony meeting, and allowing time between testimony and decision making for applicants to provide further information, either verbally or via email, to the Committee. Staff will be interested to get feedback from applicants on this change, and to hear from the Committee about their experience of the current process.

**Adjourned 3:30 p.m.**