



## Contents

**PRIORITY 1: FULLY FUND THE PLAN FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH. ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**PRIORITY 2: EXPAND IMPLEMENTATION OF 12N CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING AND EFFORTS TO TRACK LGBTQ YOUTH IN CITY SERVICES..... 7**

BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
RECOMMENDATION.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**YOUTH COMMISSION’S 2013 RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SFUSD-SFPD MOU ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.**

UPDATES IN 2013-2014.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**PRIORITY 4: POLICE TRAINING .....13**

BACKGROUND .....	13
UPDATES .....	13
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	14

**PRIORITY 5: SUPPORTING UNDOCUMENTED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT .....15**

RECOMMENDATION:.....	16
----------------------	----

**PRIORITY 6: FREE MUNI FOR YOUTH .....16**

BACKGROUND .....	17
UPDATES .....	18
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	18

**PRIORITY 7: SUPPORT CITY COLLEGE OF SAN FRANCISCO .....19**

BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**PRIORITY 8: CHILDREN’S FUND.....23**

BACKGROUND: .....	23
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**PRIORITY 9: DECRIMINALIZE STATUS OFFENSES LINKED TO HOMELESSNESS.....28**

BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

**PRIORITY 10: INVESTIGATE THE NEEDS OF AND EXPAND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS**

.....	31
BACKGROUND .....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>

RECOMMENDATIONS.....	<b>ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.</b>
PRIORITY 11: YOUTH VOICE .....	34
BACKGROUND .....	34
RECOMMENDATIONS:.....	35
PRIORITY 12: DISABILITY AWARENESS .....	35
BACKGROUND .....	35
RECOMMENDATIONS:.....	37
PRIORITY 13: SFMTA 18 YEARS OLD YOUTH FARE .....	38
RECOMMENDATIONS:.....	39
PRIORITY 14: FOLLOWING UP ON URGING AGAINST THE ARMING OF JUVENILE PROBATION OFFICERS .....	39
RECOMMENDATIONS:.....	40

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# Youth Commission Policy & Budget Priorities

2014-15 & 2015-16

## 1. Fully Fund the Plan for Affordable Housing for Transitional Age Youth and Expand Supports for TAY Seeking Housing.

Ensure that the city follow through with the 2007 citywide recommendations proposed by the Transitional Youth Task Force, specifically urging the city to develop evaluation tools that measure the quality and effectiveness of TAY housing for youth.

### Background

In San Francisco, it is estimated that there are between 5,000 and 8,000 disconnected transitional-aged youth – youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who will not make a successful transition into adulthood:[1] 6,000 TAY lack a high school diploma, 5,500 are completely uninsured and 7,000 neither work nor go to school.[2] As a result, many TAY experience substantial periods of unemployment, homelessness, and a disproportionately high number of these young people have some degree of involvement with the criminal justice system.

In response to these numbers, the Youth Commission adopted a resolution in 2005 calling on then-Mayor Gavin Newsom to create a task force that would propose methods to better serve this population.[3] Mayor Newsom created this task force in 2006 and after a year of intensive, collaborative work between City officials, community-based service providers, and TAY themselves, the Mayor's Transitional Youth Task Force (TYTF) released its report in October

2007, *Disconnected Youth in San Francisco: A Roadmap to Improve the Life Chances of San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults*. This document contained 16 comprehensive recommendations for City agencies "to address the problem of the current fragmented policies and programs, with a comprehensive, integrated approach towards disconnected transitional age youth."<sup>[4]</sup> Among the report's 16 recommendations to the city's policy makers, "more accessible housing for disconnected TAY" was a high priority.

Some City Departments responded to the TYTF report with great vigor. For example, the Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) convened a TAY Housing Work Group with a variety of stakeholders to create a plan to meet the housing goals established by the Task Force. The goal of the TAY Housing Plan is to create 400 additional units for TAY by 2015, using a variety of housing models. This priority was recently re-affirmed by a recommendation in the TAYSF Policy Priorities for Transitional Age Youth 2014-16 document released in Spring 2014, which called for plans to continue the pipeline of housing for TAY to meet or exceed the 400 unit goal by 2015.<sup>1</sup>

The TAY Housing Work Group concluded that there is no one "best model" of housing for youth, rather that a wide range of models is needed for different populations. MOH went ahead and issued its first Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) exclusively for projects serving TAY in 2009. Unfortunately, due to stigma against homeless youth, some proposed affordable housing projects that would include TAY units have faced considerable neighborhood opposition, as in the case of the Booker T. Washington project. Today, one year before the projected deadline, 242 TAY units have been identified. 140 are complete, while the rest are in pre-development. 158 units still need to be identified to meet the 2015 goal.<sup>2</sup>

Realizing that the housing and affordability issues will be encountered by many young people in the city as they attempt to transition to independence, youth commissioners hosted a youth town hall on housing and affordability on May 7, 2014, which was attended by over 50 youth and advocates. Youth participants were joined by several City staff who came to share their insights: Glenn Eagleson, Senior Planner and Citywide TAY Lead with DCYF; Teresa Yanga and Anne Romero, of the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development; Alison Schlageter, Youth Programs Coordinator of HSA's Housing and Homeless Division; and Jeff Buckley, the Mayor's Senior Advisor on housing issues. In the TAY breakout at this event, participants noted that in addition to limited slots in dedicated TAY housing programs, TAY also

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<sup>1</sup> TAY SF

<sup>2</sup> Teresa Yanga, May 7, 2014.

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face other barriers when searching for housing, including: age discrimination, a lack of credit history, and not being aware of their rights as tenants.<sup>3</sup>

## Recommendations

The San Francisco Youth Commission encourages the Mayor's Office of Housing, the Department of Public Health, and the Human Services Agency to implement the housing recommendations of the Transitional Youth Task Force and the TAYSF TAY 2014-2016 priorities document,<sup>4</sup> including identifying the remaining 158 units.

The commission recommends the development of an evaluation tool that measures the quality and effectiveness of TAY housing and its supportive services which includes direct feedback from TAY, and would like to extend our own resources to contribute towards this process.

Finally, while we recognize the paramount importance of creating housing units for our City's most disconnected and extremely low-income young people, we recommend analyzing housing outcomes for TAY who would not normally be eligible for TAY housing programs, and considering additional less resource-intensive supports for them achieving positive housing outcomes, including financial education, move-in costs or rental subsidies, apartment-hunting support, and tenants' rights education.

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[1] Disconnected Youth in San Francisco: A Roadmap to Improve the Life Chances of San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults (2007), Mayor's Transitional Youth Task Force, City & County of San Francisco

[2] Transitional Age Youth—San Francisco (TAYSF) initiative, TAYSF 2011 Progress Report, page 2 [http://www.heysf.org/download/taysfpublications/TAYSF\\_Progress\\_Report.pdf](http://www.heysf.org/download/taysfpublications/TAYSF_Progress_Report.pdf).

[3] Youth Commission Resolution 0405—005, Resolution urging the Mayor to Ordain a Transitional Youth Task Force.

[4] Disconnected Youth in San Francisco: (p50)

[5] Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH), Transitional Age Youth Housing, MOH website, <http://sf-moh.org/index.aspx?page=771>.

[6] Documents from Mayor's Office of Housing, June 2011.

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<sup>3</sup> A full report from the town hall will be released by youth commissioners in June 2014. For more information about the town hall, refer to the Housing committee report in the Youth Commission's annual report.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.sfbos.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=48565>

[7] San Francisco Housing Inventory 2011 (May 2012), San Francisco Planning Department (p 2).

[8] Jeff Buckley, Mayor's Office of Housing. Power point presentation to the Full Youth Commission meeting of July 16th, 2012.

<http://www.sfbos.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=42252> "Legislative Digest." (p 1).

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## Priority 2: **Expand Implementation of 12N Cultural Competency Training and Efforts to Track LGBTQ Youth in City Services**

Dedicate support to ensure that youth-serving City Departments are undertaking efforts to identify the needs of LGBTQ youth, use inclusive intakes, assume best practices, and train staff in accordance with section 12(N) of the San Francisco admin code

### Background

Adopted in June of 1999, Chapter 12N of the San Francisco Administrative Code—entitled *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Youth: Youth Services Sensitivity Training*—mandates training with very specific criteria regarding Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) youth sensitivity of all City employees who work with youth and all City contractors who receive \$50,000 or more in City (or City-administered) funds.[1]

For the past thirteen years, this well-intentioned mandate that was designed to help queer youth access culturally competent services has been an unfunded mandate. In 2012, the Department of Public Health (DPH), the Human Rights Commission (HRC), and the Youth Commission prepared a training tool which is being piloted at DPH sites. However, there are few resources to support other departments in developing relevant staff trainings, developing capacity to make appropriate referrals for LGBTQ youth, or identifying administrative barriers that keep queer and trans youth from equally accessing their services. Notably, most city departments and

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contractors do not currently collect information regarding the sexual orientation or gender identity of youth they serve.[2] As a result, there are few means of determining how and whether queer and trans youth are accessing services, let alone determining what outcomes they experience.

In June 2013, Supervisor Avalos, along with co-sponsoring Supervisors Campos and Wiener, sponsored a hearing in Neighborhood Services and Safety regarding various city department's efforts to implement 12N. DPH, HRC, DCYF, DHR, JPD, and HSA were all in attendance. While several departments had initiated notable efforts to create supportive environments for LGBTQIQ youth, none had means of tracking service outcomes for LGBTQIQ youth and save for DPH's pilot training, none of these efforts were aligned with the scope of the ordinance.

This effort made clear the need for a well-supported implementation plan for the ordinance. In January 2014, Youth Commissioners, Supervisor Avalos' office, and staff from the Human Rights Commission, DPH, and DCYF teamed up to begin hosting working group meetings with members of key youth-serving city departments. To date, staff from the Juvenile Probation Department, Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, Department of Public Health, Human Services Agency, Recreation and Parks Department, San Francisco Public Library, the Human Rights Commission, TAY SF, the Youth Commission, and Supervisor Avalos' office have participated in meetings to discuss their respective efforts to implement best practices for serving LGBTQ youth as well as to share insights about what types of competency trainings would be most supportive of staff in their departments. We commend these departments for their participation and look forward to our continued work together.

Several departments submitted questionnaires detailing the nature, scope, and setting of youth services they provide, including providing key insights regarding gender-segregated, residential, detention, and contracted services. These insights will be critical in ensuring that the ordinance is implemented in a way that substantively impacts the lives of LGBTQIQ youth.

San Francisco's LGBTQ youth are still very in need of excellent services. Nationally, 20-40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ.[3] LGB youth in San Francisco are harassed more (Figure 4)[4] and are more likely to consider suicide (Figure 5)[5] than their heterosexual peers. There is a lack of research on how suicide risk affects transgender youth, but one study among adults and young adults found that 30.1 percent of transgender individuals surveyed reported having ever attempted suicide; this is 6-7 times higher than the general young adult population.[6]



### School-Based Harassment Due to Sexual Orientation (Figure 3.1)

During the past 12 months, have you ever been harassed because someone thought you were gay, lesbian or bisexual?

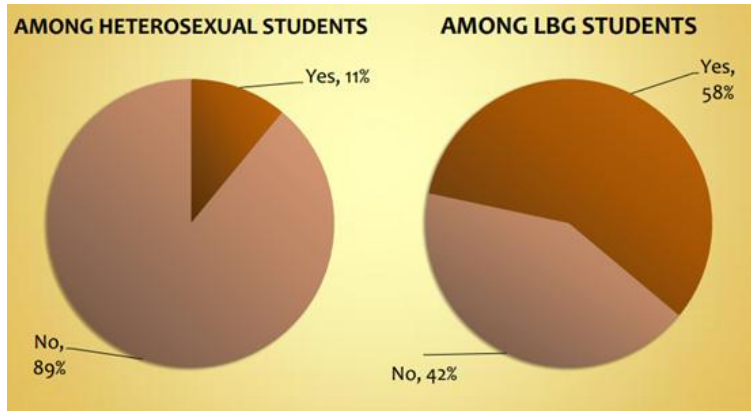


Figure 3.1 School-Based Harassment Due to Sexual Orientation

### Suicide Risk (Figure 3.2)

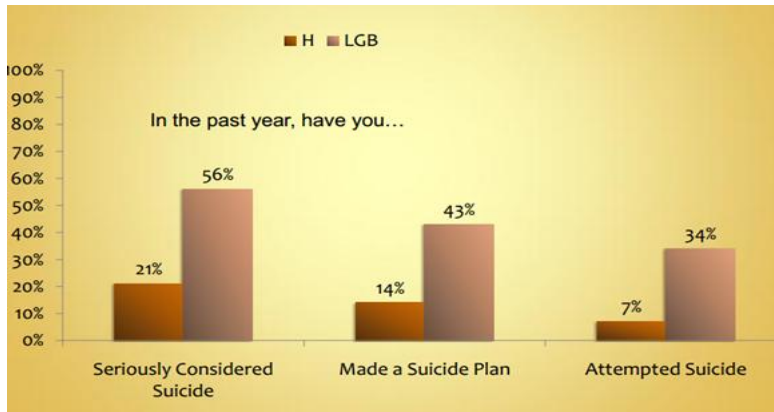


Figure 3.2 Suicide Risk

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### **Recommendation**

The Youth Commission would like to thank members of the Board of Supervisors for attention to this matter, as well as key youth-serving city departments for participating in the 2014 working group meetings.

The Youth Commission respectfully urges Mayor Lee, the Board of Supervisors, and City Departments to identify and dedicate funding sources to support implementation of 12N competency trainings and to support planning and coordination of 12N implementation efforts.

The Commission additionally requests that the Mayor and Board of Supervisors call on City departments to begin collecting information on sexual orientation and gender identity in intake forms, beginning in the upcoming fiscal year.

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[1] San Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 12N: *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Youth: Youth Services Sensitivity Training*, [http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/administrative/chapter12nlesbiangaybisexualtransgender?f=templates\\$fn=default.htm\\$3.0\\$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco\\_ca](http://www.amlegal.com/nxt/gateway.dll/California/administrative/chapter12nlesbiangaybisexualtransgender?f=templates$fn=default.htm$3.0$vid=amlegal:sanfrancisco_ca)

[2] To our knowledge, only certain DPH sites collect this demographic data and data on sexual orientation and gender identity is not being collected by other youth-serving city departments. 2013 personal communication between YC staff and Michael Baxter and Jodi Schwartz.

[3] See: <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2010/06/21/7980/gay-and-transgender-youth-homelessness-by-the-numbers/>

[4] San Francisco Unified School District, Student Support Services for LGBTQ Youth, <http://www.healthiersf.org/LGBTQ/index.php>.

[5] Ibid.

[6] See: [http://www.suicidology.org/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?folderId=232&name=DLFE-334.pdf](http://www.suicidology.org/c/document_library/get_file?folderId=232&name=DLFE-334.pdf)

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### **Priority 3: Full implementation of the MOU signed between SFUSD and SFPD**

#### **Background**

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The Youth Commission's long standing commitment to improving youth and police relations and ensuring that youth have a voice in youth justice advocacy efforts is rooted in our charge to focus on "juvenile crime prevention" policies.

On March 7th, 2012, the Youth Commission highlighted its focus on youth and police relations by initiating and holding the first ever joint hearing with the Police Commission<sup>5</sup>. This successful hearing, held in the Legislative Chamber of the Board of Supervisors, included presentations from experts in youth and criminal justice and staff from the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) and Office of Citizen Complaints (OCC). Commissioners heard from testimony from over seventy speakers--many of them youth sharing compelling stories. During the hearing, commissioners heard repeated suggestions for a commitment to improving youth and police relations.

Youth Commissioners synthesized information gathered from this hearing and months of research into a formal memo to the Police Department laying out specific policy recommendations to improve police relations with youth. One of these recommendations was a call to establish an active Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SFPD and SFUSD, which at minimum states the procedures for arresting and interrogating students on campus, the manner in which policy will notify parents or guardians when a student has been taken into custody by police, and how the student will be informed of their rights and responsibilities. Commissioners were ecstatic to hear at the April 4th, 2012, Police Commission meeting Police Chief Suhr indicated his commitment to implementing the Youth Commission's recommendations<sup>6</sup>.

Commissioners believed that having an MOU in place would help to establish a system for the community and youth, school district, and police department to work together to monitor student contacts with law enforcement in an effort to develop alternatives that addresses student behaviors in school, alternatives which limit the number of negative contact between youth and police in their schools. The establishment of a joint document between the school district and police department would in turn, serve as the basis for respective department orders and administrative regulations.

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[1] Page 3 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01" and Page 6a of DGO 7.01 under "Procedures"

[2] Page 2 of DGO 7.01 and Page 1 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01"

[3] Page 3 of DGO 7.01 and Page 2 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01"

[4] Page 3 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01" and Page 7, Sec 3E of DGO 7.01

[5] Page 3 of Page 3 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01" and Page 7, Sec. 3D of DGO 7.01

[6] Page 3 of SFPD Bulletin: "Application of General Order 7.01" and Page 6a of DGO 7.01 under "Procedures"

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=13277> Joint Youth and Police Commission hearing on youth and police relations, March 7th, 2012

<sup>6</sup> <http://sf-police.org/index.aspx?page=4073> SF Police Commission meeting of April 4th, 2012

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[7] See model trainings for police and students conducted by Lisa Thureau at: [www.StrategiesForYouth.org](http://www.StrategiesForYouth.org).

[8] 'Exigent circumstances' are clarified in the DGO 7.01.

### **Updates in 2013-2014**

This year, Youth Commissioners continuously pushed for an active MOU between school district and police department at every opportunity possible. Commissioners worked actively with other youth leaders and advocates from the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center and Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth in coalition to add urgency to the issue. Commissioners and their peers regularly met to build momentum and strengthen their cause. They brought their voices to various public meetings including the Police Commission, the Board of Education; and held outreach meetings with other youth organizations, city officials, and school district representatives. They even held regular meetings with representatives of the police department, including a meeting with Chief Suhr in February 2014 to try to convince him to include mandated language in the final MOU draft.

The Youth Commission is thrilled to share that after years of hard work and issue awareness building with other youth leaders had finally resulted in the signing of an MOU agreement between the school district and police department in January 2014.

### **Recommendations**

The Youth Commission is grateful to the SFPD and Police Chief Suhr for establishing an active MOU with the school district, as we are to members of the Board of Education. We believe in strengthening youth and police relations via positive and improved youth and police interactions.

Now that an MOU exists between school district and police department, the Youth Commission calls for an identified timeline and expedited full implementation of the MOU at school sites. The Youth Commission calls for the continued collaborative relationship between the police department, youth stakeholders who have been invested in this process, and the school district such that there is a youth inclusive process to the implementation of the MOU.

The Commission recommends commencing training of SFPD School Resource Officers, in collaboration with SFUSD. These trainings should include a focus on: special education law, juvenile law, adolescent development, asserting authority effectively, de-escalation, and the school district's restorative practices. The trainings should also include examples of real-life scenarios, as well as youth-led training components. The Youth Commission is enthusiastic about supporting the development of these trainings.

Additionally, the Commission recommends the inclusion of the additional following content in future revisions of the SFPD-SFUSD MOU:

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- The mandatory use of graduated offenses, which includes two warnings issued by police to students for non-emergency school-based offenses, before arrests are made.
- The inclusion of additional language from DGO 7.01, SFPD's Juvenile Policing policies, regarding arrest, interrogation, and parental notification.

#### Priority 4: Police Training

Assist and assure that the Police Department follow-through on commitment to Youth Commission's recommendation to provide police training on interacting with youth.

#### Background

For much of its 17 year history, the Youth Commission has focused its attention to the arena of youth-police interactions--from sponsoring two Citywide hearings in June of 2000 regarding the adopted state Constitutional Amendment and statute on Juvenile Crime known as Proposition 21; to putting on a town hall in December 2002 that drew over 200 youth, many of whom spoke about their experiences with police in schools; to working with the Police Department (SFPD) and the Office of Citizen Complaints staff to develop revisions adopted by the Police Commission in September 2008 to the SFPD's protocol on youth detention and arrest and interrogation codified in Department General Order (DGO) 7.01; to holding the first ever joint hearing with the Police Commission on March 7th, 2012 where over 70 speakers shared their testimony.

At many points of its history, the public--a great many whom were youth, service providers, teachers, and parents--offered Youth Commissioners their riveting personal experiences and interactions with police officers. At the March 7th, 2012 joint hearing, many community members and department staff discussed the positive and life-changing

work in which SFPD is involved in each day. There were also numerous stories of miscommunication and seemingly unnecessary escalations between police officers and youth. Gathering all of the input and research provided, Youth Commissioners have shared with Chief Suhr and the Police Commission, a formal memo recommending policy changes to improve relations with youth.

#### Updates

In 2013, the Police Department confirmed that newly hired officers had begun volunteering with youth organizations throughout their training period at the police academy. Additionally, the police department is involved in drop-out prevention efforts and encourages ongoing youth athletic coaching commitments

among its officers. We applaud the police department's commitment to developing relationships with youth-serving organizations, especially with the Boys and Girls Clubs. We also appreciate the department's commitment to achieving public safety through prevention strategies, such as encouraging school success.

Comprehensive police training on youth-police interactions remains an important factor in avoiding unnecessary escalations between police and juveniles, and is a strong priority for the San Francisco Youth Commission. Such training has already been implemented successfully, in other police departments, including Portland, Oregon and with SRO's in San Diego.[1]

**Youth Commissioners believe this training should:**

1. Be provided to new hires, as well as be incorporated into advanced officer training.
2. Be prioritized for sergeants and patrol officers.
3. Focus on policing tactics unique to juveniles, and offer a comprehensive overview of the department's policies surrounding juvenile policing outlined in the Department General Order 7.01.
4. Offer practical communication skills and best practices for working with youth that are grounded in developmental psychology. Topics that should be included are: adolescent cognitive development, mental health issues among youth, and recognizing and interacting with traumatized youth.
5. Include de-escalation skills and strategies for asserting authority effectively with youth.
6. Address the issue of racial profiling and disproportionate police contact with youth of color.
7. Incorporate scenarios of real life police-youth interactions and include youth in training components.
8. Offer officers an opportunity to practice and apply their skills.

We believe that efforts towards increasing police training on youth development, adolescent cognitive development, de escalation, and positively interacting with youth will help to create a productive and consistent dialogue between youth and police in addressing youth-culturally competent issues within law enforcement.

### Recommendations

The Youth Commission is calling upon the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, Police Chief Suhr and the Police Commission to follow through on the following training related recommendations as outlined.

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The Youth Commission is calling upon the Mayor, Board of Supervisors and Police Commission to support and urge the police department to implement a new training for all police officers, with a priority for sergeants and patrol officers that address topics and policing tactics unique to juveniles. This training should include topics such as adolescent cognitive development, mental health issues for youth, asserting authority effectively with juveniles, recognizing and interacting with traumatized youth and responding to accusations of racial profiling.

The Youth Commission strongly suggests that the training incorporate scenarios of real life police-youth interactions and emphasize effective communication and de-escalation tactics during police interactions with youth.

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#### Priority 5: Supporting Undocumented Youth Employment

[Insert Description Here!](#)

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, roughly 30,000 of San Francisco's 809,000 residents are undocumented immigrants[1], and over 5000 of San Francisco's undocumented residents are youth ages 14-24[2]. Historically, Undocumented youth have faced barriers in accessing employment, scholarships, loans, state and federal services, and other opportunities. As a result of federal hiring requirements, San Francisco's public sector youth employment programs, such as JVS[3] and Youthworks[4], historically have not offered employment to undocumented youth who would otherwise be eligible.

Employment for the undocumented youth population of San Francisco has repeatedly been identified as a need of the community. The May 2011 DCYF Community Needs Assessment—produced in accordance with the Charter mandates of the Children's Fund by the Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF)—reports that participants in DCYF's community input sessions consistently articulated the need for young people who are immigrants to have access to top-tier youth workforce development programming[6]. In March of 2011, the Transitional Age Youth San Francisco Initiative's Young Adult Advisory Board's (TAYSF-YAA), in conjunction with the Workforce Investment San Francisco (WISF) Community Advisory Committee (WICAC), organized a Youth Employment Forum at City College of San Francisco in which participants consistently identified the requirement of U.S. citizenship as one of the top barriers to accessing employment[5]. Additionally, the surveys and focus groups conducted by the San Francisco Youth Commission produced similar results; at the Immigrant Youth Summit in October of 2011, students—almost all of whom were first or second generation—from seven San Francisco Unified School

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District (SFUSD) and County high schools all pointed to citizenship status as one of the main barriers to attaining meaningful employment[7].

President Barack Obama announced a summer jobs initiative known as “Summer Jobs+” in January 2012 to call on businesses to work with non-profits and government to provide workforce development opportunities for low-income and disconnected youth in the summer of 2012. While the 2012 Summer Jobs+ Program provided employment opportunities for over 5,200 young people[10], many of San Francisco’s most marginalized young people—in particular, San Francisco’s 5,000 undocumented young people ages 14-24—were barred from accessing employment opportunities throughout the program[11].

At the urging of the San Francisco Youth Commission, during the 2013 San Francisco Summer Jobs+ program, Coleman Advocates For Children & Youth, and other community-based organizations, the United Way and DCYF jointly funded a pilot program run by community partners CHALK, LYRIC, and the Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA) to provide paid job-readiness training and internships to 42 undocumented youth throughout the city, ensuring that they were prepared for summer and long-term work opportunities[12]. While the aforementioned pilot program was successful, it only provided opportunities to 42 out of approximately 5000 undocumented youth ages 14-24 in San Francisco (0.84% of the population) compared to 6,817 jobs out of approximately 94,325[13] youth ages 14-24 in San Francisco (7.23% of the population).

While Youth Employment Programs using federal and state funds must comply with federal and state hiring requirements, many of San Francisco’s employment programs use general fund dollars and other funds with less restrictions—especially given San Francisco’s commitment as a Sanctuary City—which would allow for undocumented youth to participate in the programs. Youth Employment Programs can pay participants using alternative methods such as prepaid gift cards, educational scholarships, and separate individual stipends from multiple employment entities in amounts smaller than \$600 (the main form of payment during the aforementioned SF Summer Jobs+ 2013 undocumented youth pilot program).

**Recommendation:**

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and the Mayor to do whatever possible to allow undocumented youth to participate in upcoming San Francisco Summer Jobs+ programs or locally funded public sector Youth Workforce Programs, whether by coordinating stipends or issuing gift cards as payment.

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Priority 6: Free MUNI for Youth

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## Making an ongoing institutional commitment to the existing free Muni for Youth program as a fare policy and expanding the program to include 18 year olds.

### Background

Working on free Muni for youth has been the result of a multi year effort and policy priority of the Youth Commission. It involved a long and extensive community process, plenty of data deliberation and hours of poring over student surveys and reports, and youth driven advocacy. The following is a summary of of this recent history and updates.

Youth in San Francisco are among the most loyal and consistent riders of public transportation. Youth are deeply dependent on the City's municipal railway (MUNI), taking it to and from school, after school jobs, and leadership and recreational programs and activities throughout the City. As young people charged with "identifying the unmet needs" of children and youth in San Francisco, Youth Commissioners became distressingly concerned starting in 2009 with the increased cost of San Francisco's public transit fare for young people and its effects in all aspects of a young person's life.

The price for youth fastpass rose from \$10 in May 2009 to \$15 in December 2009 to \$20 in May 2010 to \$21 in July of 2011. While this was going on budget cuts within the SFUSD resulted in severe cuts to yellow school bus services for non special education students. As a response, the Youth Commission passed several resolutions urging the City and County of San Francisco to take action. Youth Commissioners raised awareness amongst their peers and joined with other youth leaders in multiple organizations such as POWER, Chinatown Community Development Center's Adopt-an-Alleyway program, Jamestown Community Center, Urban Habitat, the Student Advisory Council and many others to form a coalition to advocate for free Muni for youth.

Resolutions in support of a free Muni for youth program were then passed by the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Education. A coalition of community based organizations and youth continuously wrote, called, and spoke about the issue eventually prompted action from the SF Municipal Transportation Agency to address the needs of San Francisco's youth for accessible public transportation. Youth Commissioners joined their counterparts in Berkeley, San Mateo, and Marin County to convince the regional MTC body to approve funds for San Francisco which would be allowed use for such a pilot program as free muni for youth.

Finally, on December 4th, 2012, the SFMTA approved the free Muni for youth pilot program with additional funds from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. The free MUNI for low to moderate

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income youth program kicked off on March 1, 2013, set to pilot for 16 months until June 2014 where the program would be revisited for consideration of extending the program.

### Updates

Since the pilot program launched, youth have signed up in droves! As of February 2014, over 31,000 youth were registered for the free Muni for youth program, or 78.2% of the estimated 40,000 eligible youth in San Francisco.

Free Muni for youth was further strengthened when in February 2014 Google agreed to donate \$6.8 million to support the continuation of the program over the next two fiscal year.

The Youth Commission and free MUNI for youth coalition continue to push for an institutional commitment from the SFMTA. In a unanimous vote on April 15, 2014, the SFMTA approved a budget for 2015-2016 that prioritized the needs of low and moderate income youth. The new budget ratifies the continuation of the Free Muni for Youth program, and expands the program to include 18 year olds. The MTA Board also removed all "pilot" language from the youth pass program, and passed a resolution that expresses the MTA commitment to continuing free Muni for youth as an on-going program far into the future.

The Youth Commission is extremely grateful for the implementation of the pilot program after we addressed the issue in 2010. With a growing economic divide in San Francisco, access to public transportation has increasingly risen as a key issue throughout the city, particularly for transit dependent communities. Youth in San Francisco are among the transit dependent communities, especially youth in the low to moderate income range. The commission will continue to be involved in the ongoing discussion and work around free Muni for youth.

The Youth Commission commends the SFMTA, the City and County of San Francisco, and support of the SFUSD for the amazing success of the free Muni for youth pilot program. We are thankful for the SFMTA leadership in initiating the program last year. With over 31,000 youth now enrolled, the need for this program could not be clearer. The program stands out for making an impactful and immediate difference in the lives of many San Francisco families.

### Recommendations

The Youth Commission supports a permanent free Muni for low to moderate income youth, not only for 5-17 year olds, but 18 year olds, as many are still in high school. The Youth Commission calls on the

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Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, the SF Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors to make an institutional commitment to free Muni for youth in San Francisco.

The Youth Commission also recommends an ongoing partnership between the SFUSD and SFMTA in providing outreach and education to youth. We believe that the strong collaboration and involvement with SFUSD helped with the increase of youth participation in the FMFY program and Muni youth ridership. The Youth Commission recommends continued efforts of collaboration on outreach, education, and application intake process with free Muni for youth.

The Youth Commission also recommends that the program continues to be administered in such a way that is not overly burdensome for our most vulnerable populations, including immigrant and undocumented young families.

We believe the City's institutional commitment to free Muni for youth with the inclusion of 18 year olds will help youth access every corner of San Francisco for years to come.

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## Priority 7: Support City College of San Francisco

Support a diverse, democratically-run, affordable, accessible, and financially stable City College that serves all students.

### Background

City College of San Francisco (CCSF) is one the largest community colleges in the country and enjoys a proud record of successfully helping students complete their GEDs, preparing students to transfer to 4-year colleges, and graduating students in the fields of food preparation, nursing, radiology, fire fighting, health education, and many more. Since opening its doors in 1935, CCSF has played an active role in the lives and educational achievements of Bay Area residents of all ages, ethnic, academic, and socio-economic backgrounds, and plays a particularly vital role in providing high-quality, affordable instruction to San Francisco's working class and immigrant communities of color through its open-access mission.

City College boasts a progress rate for ELL students that is double that of California community colleges in general, a high student completion rate, and stronger-than-average outcomes for

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students transferring to CSU's.<sup>7</sup> City College of San Francisco is known for providing model programs supporting students who did not complete high school or who are veterans, former prisoners, working parents, and/or English language-learners. Additionally, CCSF educates a large number of students from the San Francisco Unified School District. California students are currently facing rising tuition costs and reductions to in-state enrollment within the California State University and University of California systems, leaving many young people in San Francisco and throughout the state increasingly dependent on the educational opportunities provided by community colleges.<sup>8</sup>

In early July, 2012, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) released a devastating report calling into question the future financial viability of CCSF and demanding that CCSF institute changes to address over a dozen structural issues.<sup>9</sup> The ACCJC placed CCSF's academic accreditation under threat despite the fact that City College maintained a consistently high level of instructional quality.<sup>10</sup> The ACCJC's recommendations focused on building the college's financial reserves, restructuring its governance, and hiring more administrators, with resulting cuts to faculty and staff wages and benefits, cuts to classes, and the consolidation of academic departments and streamlining of course offerings in such a way as had the potential to reduce the diversity of programs at the college, especially courses like ethnic, women's, and LGBT studies, as well as course offerings for non-traditional students and English Language Learners.<sup>11</sup> Despite the college's best efforts to comply with the commission's recommendations, the commission ruled to revoke the College's accreditation, effective July 2014.

The state's for-profit post-secondary institutions with much lower graduation and career success rates have not been sanctioned by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, ACCJC's parent organization, at a rate nearly commensurate with the accelerated sanctioning of

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.sfcityattorney.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1335>

<sup>8</sup> Asimov, Nanette. "Cal State to Close Door on Spring 2013 Enrollment." *SFGate*. SF Gate, 20 Mar. 2012. Web. 15 Mar. 2013.

<sup>9</sup> ] Koskey, Andrea. "City College of San Francisco Working to Keep Accreditation, Avoid Closure." *San Francisco Examiner*. San Francisco Examiner, 10 July 2012. Web. 14 Mar. 2013. <<http://www.sfexaminer.com/local/education/2012/07/city-college-san-francisco-working-keep-accreditation-avoid-closure>>.

<sup>10</sup> By the accrediting commission's own account, CCSF's instructional quality and commitment to its mission were high. See the accrediting commission's report: *CCSF Evaluation Team Report May 2012*. ACCJC, n.d. Web.

<sup>11</sup> "CCSF Activists Demand City Hall's Aid." *SFGate*. SF Gate, 15 Mar. 2003. Web. 15 Mar. 2013

California's public colleges.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, ACCJC has placed 37% of California community colleges on sanctions during a period of intense state budget cuts,<sup>13</sup> and the commission maintained its sanctioning of City College following the passage of Proposition A, inhibiting the democratic allocation of voter-approved supplemental funds for the college. Indeed, in a suit later filed by the city attorney against the accrediting commission substantiated that the ACCJ's has aggressively advocated for a junior-college degree-focused community-college model in such a way as would limit broad educational offerings and remedial courses that benefit underserved communities and ELL students, and would limit fee-waivers for non-traditional students.<sup>14</sup> The City Attorney also found that members of the ACCJC maintain significant ties to for-profit educational ventures and student lender interests that maintain an interest in narrowing the open-access mission of California Community colleges.<sup>15</sup>

In Spring and Summer 2013, AFT 2121 and California Federation of Teachers filed a series of complaints against the ACCJC, resulting in an investigation by the U.S. Dept. of Education. In August 2013, the federal DOE found that the ACCJC has violated standards required of accreditation bodies throughout the course of the commission's review of CCSF in the following ways: 1) Failing to provide an evaluation team with a balanced composition of academicians and administrators 2) Failing to adhere to a policy preventing conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest 3) Failing to differentiate between compliance indicators and recommended areas for improvement, or lay out clear compliance guidelines the college would need to adhere to in order to retain accreditation 4) Failure to enforce previously-noted areas of non-compliance—later cited as reasons for issuing a show-cause status to the college—within accordance with the required two-year enforcement timeline.<sup>16</sup> The ACCJC has been given twelve months to demonstrate compliance before having its recognition terminated by the DOE.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> "CSAC to Examine Impact of "Wild West" Online Degrees on Cal Grants." Press Release. *California Student Aid Commission Press Advisory*. 14 Mar. 2012. And "What Is the ACCJC? Facts and Analysis." Web. <<http://www.saveccsf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ACCJC-Facts-and-Analysis.pdf>>

<sup>13</sup> The level of sanctioning was incongruent with national levels. Since 2011, ACCJC sanctions of California community colleges represented 64% of college sanctions nationwide. See: Hittelman, Marty. "ACCJC Gone Wild." (n.d.): 3. Web. <<http://www.saveccsf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ACCJC-Gone-Wild.pdf>>.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.sfcityattorney.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1335>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.sfcityattorney.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1335> See Also: According to an article by Josh Keller, "Accreditor of California Colleges Lacks Conflict of Interest Protections, Federal Review Says," originally published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 31, 2010

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.saveccsf.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/WASC-jr-decision-letter-081313-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> The DOE issued a decision in January 2014 to continue ACCJC as a recognized accreditor. The ACCJC must still pass its twelve month follow up report. See: "Press Release," Accrediting Commission for

In August 2013, City Attorney, Dennis Herrera, filed suit against the accrediting commission to prevent the closure of CCSF and to compel “the state governing board charged with evaluating college standards and eligibility for public funding to resume its legal duties.”<sup>18</sup> Mr. Herrera asserted conflicts of interest and unfair political bias had affected accreditation evaluations; that the ACCJC had engaged in political retaliation against the college; and that the State Board of Governors had unlawfully delegated public duties to an unaccountable private agency.<sup>19</sup> State legislators approved an audit of the commission and have introduced several pieces of legislation to aid the college, including establishing more just and transparent accrediting processes, reestablishing the elected Board of Trustees, and stabilizing funding amidst enrollment drops that have occurred throughout the accreditation crisis.<sup>20</sup>

## **Updates**

In January, youth commissioners attended a decision by a Superior Court judge to grant an injunction blocking the commission’s decision to revoke the college’s accreditation, which will go to trial in October 2014.

Following the disempowerment of the democratically elected Board of Trustees, and the installation of the special trustee with extraordinary powers, decisions as to the college’s educational future have become less transparent and student and faculty leadership and voice have been undermined. In July 2013, student trustee, Shanell Williams, was barred from the chancellor search committee meeting. In March 2014, student protesters were pepper-sprayed and arrested while protesting a new student payment policy and a proposed 19% raise for top administrators. Youth Commissioners attended and spoke at public forums, rallies, and workshops and in March 2014, Youth Commissioners co-hosted a workshop with Chinese Progressive Association and conducted outreach for a youth and student survey both focused on increasing transparency, participation, and representation of youth concerns in the CCSF educational master planning process.

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Community and Junior Colleges,” January 29, 2014. Retrieved at: [http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/ACCJC\\_Receive\\_Formal\\_Letter\\_of\\_Recognition\\_01\\_29\\_2014\\_2.pdf](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/ACCJC_Receive_Formal_Letter_of_Recognition_01_29_2014_2.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.sfcityattorney.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1335>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.sfcityattorney.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=1335>

<sup>20</sup> AB1942 by Assembly member [Rob Bonta](#), D-Alameda, secures transparent, fair accrediting practices for all community colleges. AB2087 by Assemblyman [Tom Ammiano](#), D-San Francisco, defends local, democratic accountability. State Sen. [Mark Leno](#), D-San Francisco, authored SB965, would stabilize City College’s funding while its enrollment recovers from the damage caused by the accreditation commission’s decision.

Seeing that the lack of democratic governance had neither appeased the demands of the accrediting commission, nor sustained the unique abilities of the college to serve the needs of San Francisco's diverse communities, the Youth Commission supported a resolution by Supervisor Campos, later unanimously passed by the Board of Supervisors in March 2014, calling for the re-instatement of City College's duly elected Board of Trustees (File No. 140123).

We would like to thank Mayor Lee and other elected leaders in calling on the accrediting commission to grant an extension on the deadline for revoking the college's accreditation.<sup>21</sup>

### **Recommendations**

There are few issues that have such an impact of young San Franciscans' ability to develop as engaged and critical citizens; achieve equal access to the economic opportunities San Francisco has to offer; or remain and work in the city they call home as the presence of a affordable, accessible City College that is dedicated to serving the needs of diverse students. Given the stake young people and the community at-large have in the college's future, we urge the City's elected leaders to take all possible measures to restore democratic governance to the College.

We further urge the City to explore all possible means to supporting the college, both politically and financially, through this difficult time especially by exploring ways to reduce drops in enrollment.



## Priority 8: Children's Fund

### Background:

#### **Background**

The Children's Fund, a dedicated stream of funding for youth services in San Francisco, was first approved by San Francisco voters in 1991, reinstated by the electorate in 2001, and is now up for

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<sup>21</sup> <http://www.sfgate.com/education/article/Accreditors-firm-on-deadline-for-closing-City-5482174.php>

reauthorization again. The Youth Commission has a history of policy advocacy that reflects the pressing needs of the youth community, and has traditionally had a commitment and involvement to the city's reauthorization process of the Children's Fund. The Youth Commission affirms the value of youth voice and participation in the crafting of youth related policies including the Children's Fund to ensure a meaningful decision making process, which includes input from the very young people the Fund serves.

This year, the Youth Commission has engaged in ongoing community conversations and discussions about the current reauthorization process of the Children's Fund. They played a critical role in planning a Youth Town Hall led by youth for youth. Over 60 youth and advocates attended this town hall and shared their input on what they would like to see for youth services, as well as provided their own feedback on issues raised at other community town halls<sup>22</sup>. Outside of this town hall, commissioners facilitated youth focus groups to solicit input on what could be improved with youth services and what were ongoing challenges in navigating services provided by the Children's Fund. Commissioners also met with youth groups and participated in many different meetings regarding the Children's Fund in City Hall and out in the community. Over and over again, commissioners heard the need to include disconnected TAY in Children's Fund services.

The Children's Fund has been the primary source of funding for programs and direct services for the more than 56,000 youth in San Francisco who are 18 years and younger<sup>23</sup>. Currently, the Children's Fund does not include services that benefit disconnected transitional aged youth that are between the ages of 18 and 24. Disconnected transitional aged youth is defined as "youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who need additional support and opportunities to make a successful transition to adulthood"<sup>24</sup>.

According to TAY-SF, a collaborative network of city departments, service providers and youth working to improve outcomes for transitional age youth in SF, there are up to 9,000 disconnected TAY in San Francisco who are out of school and out of work and in need of coordinated services<sup>25</sup>. Disconnected TAY may also be experiencing or be at risk of: living in poverty or being low income; being homeless or marginally housed; being unemployed or underemployed without substantial financial support; being academically off-track or dropping out of school; having been in contact with public systems including foster care, the justice system, and/or special education, are disabled or struggling with other health and wellness issues such as substance abuse, trauma, and mental health issues; are victims of violence; are young parents; are undocumented; are recent immigrants and/or English Language Learners; or are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQQ) youth who have experienced family rejection.

<sup>22</sup> *Our Children, Our City Stakeholder Engagement Wiki*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Mar. 2014. <<http://ourchildren-ourcity.wikispaces.com/>>.

<sup>23</sup> San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families. *Snapshot of DCYF's Investments, Population Served and Participation Survey Results*. San Francisco: n.p., n.d. PDF. <<http://www.dcyf.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=710>>

<sup>24</sup> *Disconnected Youth in San Francisco: A Roadmap to Improve the Life Chances of San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults* (2007), Mayor's Transitional Youth Task Force, City & County of San Francisco (p 3). Also viewed on web: <<http://www.taysf.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/TYTF-executive-summary.pdf>>.

<sup>25</sup> San Francisco TAY Statistics - Transitional Age Youth (TAYSF)." *Transitional Age Youth TAYSF*. TAY-SF, n.d. Web. 13 Mar. 2014. <<http://www.taysf.org/who-are-san-francisco-tay>>.



Young people in the TAY population have aged out of government programs that serve youth who experience the barriers listed in Appendix ##,<sup>26</sup> as current City programs receiving money from the Children's Fund do not serve youth over 18. The formal exclusion of TAY from existing youth-serving programs leads to a loss of data integrity and does not allow us to fully assess the demand and efficacy of existing community programs. The Department of Children, Youth, and their Families' (DCYF) 2011 Community Needs Assessment reported that at community meetings across San Francisco, service providers identified disconnected-TAY services as priorities for older youth.

Although city departments currently provide and fund services for people 18 and over, the findings from DCYF's Community Needs Assessment, the Mayor's Transitional Youth Task Force's 2007 report "A Roadmap to Improve the Life Chances of San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults", and youth feedback during various community input sessions clearly shows that there is an urgency to continue investing and prioritizing the disconnected TAY population.

In April of 2012, Mayor Ed Lee sent a "Policy Directive: prioritizing disconnected TAY services across the city," establishing disconnected transitional age youth as a priority population citywide.

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<sup>26</sup> Cited from multiple sources and reports on: "San Francisco TAY Statistics - Transitional Age Youth (TAYSF)." *Transitional Age Youth TAYSF*. TAY-SF, n.d. Web. 13 Mar. 2014. <<http://www.taysf.org/who-are-san-francisco-tay>>.

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## Who Are San Francisco TAY

### San Francisco TAY Statistics

We estimate **up to 9,000 transitional age youth in San Francisco** are out of school & out of work, and in need of coordinated services. [Minnesota Population Center, 2010]

**Population by category      Numbers of San Franciscans ages 16 to 24**

#### Involved in Public Systems

**1,160** TAY on Adult or Juvenile Probation  
**800** Current or Former Foster Care Youth

#### Homeless

**5,700** Homeless or Marginally Housed Youth [Larkin Street Youth Services, "Youth Homelessness in San Francisco" report, 2010]

#### Living with a disability or other special need

**5,000** Youth with Disabilities

#### Education

**7,700** 18-24 year olds have not obtained a High School Diploma or GED [Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota 2010]  
**Over 700** students drop out of middle and high school each year [CA Dropout Research Project, 2009-10]  
**554** high school students at SFUSD are currently off-track by 1 or more years [SFUSD Curriculum and Instruction Department, November 2013]

#### Workforce

**5,000** undocumented 14-24 year-olds have little to no legal options for employment  
**1,400** 18-24 year olds receive cash welfare [HSA, 2012]  
**4,000** receive food stamps [ibid]

#### Health & Wellbeing

**6,000** 16-24 year-olds without health insurance [CA Health Interview Survey, 2009]  
**42%** of San Francisco's homicide victims were age 25 and younger [San Francisco Police Department, 2013]

#### Housing

**1,902** Homeless youth and young adults are under 25 years old [San Francisco Homeless Point-in-Time Count and Survey, 2013]  
**25%** of the homeless population is children and youth under 25 years old [ibid, 2013]

## Recommendations

The Youth Commission believes that investing and placing all youth at the center of our City's priorities will serve to enrich the landscape of our city and place we call home. The cultivation of youth leadership leads to a prosperous future and should involve empowering youth to partake in public engagement and evaluation of Children's Fund services. We believe that young people directly receive the services of the Children's Fund and should be at the forefront of any decision-making process regarding the Fund. We adopted a resolution stating our recommendations on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014<sup>27</sup>.

The following are our policy recommendations for the Children's Fund:

- Allowing the use of the fund for transitional age youth to be served by existing youth-serving community programs and for serving the specific needs of disconnected TAY;
- Reserving 25% of seats on any body that is in charge of Children's Fund oversight for youth, with half of the total youth seats represented by youth under 18 years old and the other half represented by disconnected transitional aged youth. These seats would be appointed and supported by the San Francisco Youth Commission;
- Proactively supporting and facilitating better coordination between the City, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD), and community based organizations serving youth by increasing the sharing of cultural competency best practices, making available complementary spaces for youth programs to convene youth town halls and meetings, and considering other potential points of collaboration;
- Resourcing youth leadership groups to design and facilitate annual youth town halls to identify their unmet needs, and to evaluate the programs and services they receive as part of the Community Needs Assessment and evaluation plan;
- Increasing the fund allowing services to provide for and support the unmet needs of youth, including disconnected transitional age youth population.

We also recommend that the following unmet services should be prioritized and expanded in the Children's Fund where possible:

- Increase dedicated services, support, and employment opportunities for undocumented youth;
- Extend mentoring programs currently provided to juvenile detainees and probationers to transitional aged youth in the adult probation system;
- Increase support for 17 and 18 year olds transitioning between juvenile and adult systems, including support interviewing for eligibility for release and entry into diversion programs and community programs used as sentencing alternatives

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<sup>27</sup> <http://www.sfbos.org/index.aspx?page=15313>

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## Priority 9: **Ensure Respect for the Human and Civil Rights of Homeless Residents**

Ensure the human and civil rights of homeless residents are protected by supporting a Homeless Bill of Rights and decriminalizing offenses linked to homelessness

### **Background**

“Homeless” is defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, or having a primary nighttime residence in a shelter, on the street, in a vehicle, in an enclosure or structure that is not authorized or fit for human habitation, substandard apartments, dwellings, doubled up temporarily with friends or families, staying in transitional housing programs, staying anywhere without tenancy rights, or staying with one or more children of whom they are the parent or legal guardian in a residential hotel whether or not they have tenancy rights.

The 2013 San Francisco Homeless Point-In-Time Count & Survey found 7,350 homeless people in San Francisco, 1,902 of who were unaccompanied homeless youth and children under 25.[2] The San Francisco Unified School District serves upward of 2,500 students who are currently or formerly homeless or transitionally housed[3]--700 more students than in 2010.[4] These 2,500 homeless SFUSD students compose about 4% of enrollment, and were living in single-resident occupancy hotels, long-or short-term shelters, or in apartments with one or more other families, sleeping on couches or floors.[5]

According to the 2013 San Francisco Homeless Point-In-Time Count & Survey, 87% of homeless youth in San Francisco were unsheltered, as compared to 59% of homeless people in general.[6] Of the 169 youth surveyed for the count: 25% have been in foster care, 18% were currently on parole or probation, 51% reported usually sleeping outdoors, 21% have reported exchanging sex or drugs for sleeping arrangements, 31% were in “fair or poor” health, and 27% suffer from depression[7]

We are experiencing a deepening of San Francisco’s affordability crisis and the rise of housing costs, leaving many of the City’s residents and families uncertain about their housing future. San Francisco does not have enough shelter beds or affordable housing to meet residents’ needs and 269 families were on the waiting list for placement in temporary shelter in October 2013.[8] There are many homeless people who sleep in public parks, such as Golden Gate Park, which has an estimated homeless population of between 50-400 homeless individuals who are disproportionately LGBTQ individuals who may not feel safe in shelters due to discrimination[9]

Over the past 25 years, the national trend toward addressing homelessness has favored the increasing use of the criminal justice system and the passage of measures that “target homeless persons by making it illegal to perform life-sustaining activities in public.”[10] San Francisco has enacted multiple ordinances in the last four years that have criminalized sitting, lying, or sleeping on public sidewalks, in public parks, or in publicly-parked vehicles, and has enacted such laws despite the fact that public nuisances are addressed by existing laws. An analysis of the application of the Sit/Lie ordinance showed it is not uniformly applied and that it is primarily homeless people who are ticketed--including homeless youth.[11] The majority of offenses that homeless people are cited and arrested for are sleeping, sitting or lying down, and loitering.[12]

Homeless people do not have the money to pay for tickets and the subsequent fines, often leading to warrants, jail time, criminal records, and garnishment of wages--which are impediments to their finding employment and housing, stabilizing their lives, and getting off the streets.[13] In San Francisco, the cost to jail a homeless person is about \$94.00 per day and the cost to imprison a homeless person is about \$87.74 per day, and these costs are two to three times as much as providing supportive housing (\$42.10 per day), or shelter (\$27.54 per day)[14].

When asked in the 2013 San Francisco Homeless Youth Survey, a staggering 66% of homeless youth reported having been harassed in their recent interactions with the police or law enforcement.[15] These interactions with the police and law enforcement serve to underscore that homeless young people are not wanted and that their existence is an affront.[16] In addition to the grueling constant search for a safe place to sit or to sleep, the fear and the reality of an encounter with the police or law enforcement may add to homeless people’s stress and exhaustion. Instilling fear and mistrust of law enforcement by criminalizing the homeless population for utilizing public space may prevent them from reporting crimes they are victims of. Homeless people deserve for their civil and human rights to be respected, and do not deserve to be criminalized for being in public.

## **Recommendations**

In January 2014, the Youth Commission passed a resolution supporting the statewide Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign, which seeks to provide a voice for homeless people who are a stigmatized and underrepresented population in local, state, and federal government.

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to urge the California State legislature to support and establish a Homeless Bill of Rights. The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to stop enforcing offenses linked to homelessness, and to support the rights of homeless individuals to move freely, rest, sleep, pray and be protected in public space without discrimination; The right to occupy a legally parked vehicle; The right to share food and eat in public; The right to legal counsel if being prosecuted; and The right to 24-hour access to hygiene facilities.

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- [1] Western Regional Advocacy Project, *A Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign*. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Jan. 2014. <http://wraphome.org/images/stories/pdf/HBRUpdatedVersionWedDec11.pdf>
- [2] Applied Survey Research (ASR). "2013 San Francisco Homeless Count and Survey." 2013. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.sfgov3.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=4819> (p 10).
- [3] Personal communication, Danielle Winford, *Families and Youth In Transition (FYIT) Coordinator* at SFUSD Office of Pupil Services, on December 27, 2013.
- [4] Tucker, Jill, *SF Schools Struggle with More Homeless Kids*, SF Chronicle, December 4, 2011. Retrieved January 3, 2014 at: <http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/S-F-schools-struggle-with-more-homeless-kids-2345204.php#page-1>
- [5] Personal communication, Danielle Winford, *Families and Youth In Transition (FYIT) Coordinator* at SFUSD Office of Pupil Services, on December 27, 2013.
- [6] Applied Survey Research (ASR). "2013 San Francisco Homeless Count and Survey." 2013. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.sfgov3.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=4819> (p 10).
- [7] Ibid. (p 17).
- [8] SF Human Services Agency "Family Waiting List," Supporting Document for the Shelter Monitoring Committee's November 20, 2013 meeting. Retrieved January 6, 2014 at: <http://www.sfgov3.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=5949>
- [9] October 24, 2013 San Francisco Board of Supervisors Government Audit and Oversight, 130605 Hearing – Civil Grand Jury Report – "Golden Gate Park's Homeless Population: Are San Francisco's Policies Serving Us Well?" [http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view\\_id=11&clip\\_id=18645](http://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=11&clip_id=18645)
- [10] Bernstein, Nell, and Lisa K. Foster. "Voices from the Streets: A Survey of Homeless Youth by Their Peers." 2008. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-004.pdf> (p 53).
- [11] City Hall Fellows, "Implementation, Enforcement and Impact: San Francisco's Sit/Lie Ordinance One Year Later; March 2012; Retrieved January 3, 2014 at: <http://wraphome.org/downloads/sitLieCHFReport.pdf>
- [12] Western Regional Advocacy Project, *A Homeless Bill of Rights Campaign*. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Jan. 2014. <http://wraphome.org/work/civil-rights-campaign>.
- [13] Bernstein, Nell, and Lisa K. Foster. "Voices from the Streets: A Survey of Homeless Youth by Their Peers." 2008. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-004.pdf> (p 57).
- [14] The Lewin Group. "Cost of Serving Homeless Individuals in Nine Cities." 2004. Web. 3 January 2014. [http://www.lewin.com/~media/Lewin/Site\\_Sections/Publications/2991.pdf](http://www.lewin.com/~media/Lewin/Site_Sections/Publications/2991.pdf) (p 5).
- [15] Applied Survey Research (ASR). "2013 San Francisco Homeless Count and Survey." 2013. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.sfgov3.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=4819> (p 12).
- [16] Bernstein, Nell, and Lisa K. Foster. "Voices from the Streets: A Survey of Homeless Youth by Their Peers." 2008. Web. 3 January 2014. <http://www.library.ca.gov/crb/08/08-004.pdf> (p 55).

## Priority 10: Investigate the Needs of and Expand Support Services for Children of Incarcerated Parents

Ensure that youth and children with currently and formerly incarcerated parents receive the support needed to maintain a relationship with their parents, stay at their schools, and maintain their academic performance and mental and emotional wellbeing.

### **Background**

During the 2013-14 term, Youth Commissioners began a close working relationship with youth leaders of Project WHAT, a Community Works youth leadership and organizing program comprised of youth with currently or formerly incarcerated parents. On March 17, 2014, the Youth Commission passed a motion 1314-M-05, calling on the Board of Supervisors to hold a timely hearing regarding the unmet needs of youth with an incarcerated parent(s) and the efforts of various City departments--including, but not limited to, the Department of Children, Youth and Their Families, the Juvenile Probation Department, the Adult Probation Department, the Human Services Agency--to provide services and support for young people with incarcerated parents.

According to the 2011 DCYF Community Needs Assessment, 17,993 children and youth were estimated to have had a parent who spent time in either county jail or state prison in 2010.[1] As this number does not include youth and children who had a parent that was incarcerated at any time during their childhood, and does not include transitional age youth over age eighteen, parental incarceration may affect an even greater number of San Francisco's young people.

At his February 27, 2014 State of Public Safety Address at the San Francisco Hall of Justice, District Attorney George Gascon acknowledged three decades of high incarceration rates have not made our communities safer, and that "Restorative justice holds great promise for a modern justice system." In recognition of these values, the D.A, Adult Probation Department, and Juvenile Probation Department have all begun to pursue alternatives to out-of-home detention for both youth and adults. This has led to a drop in the overall population at the San Francisco county jail,[2] Juvenile Hall,[3] and a drop in the number of charges filed for non-violent drug offenses.[4]

In February 2014, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors took historic action to curb discrimination against formerly incarcerated people with the unanimous passage of the Fair Chance ordinance (File No. 131192), which was later signed by Mayor Lee and limits the use of criminal histories in employment and housing applications. Youth Commissioners supported and advocated on behalf of the passage of SFPD Department General Order 7.04 “Children of Arrested Parents,” which establishes permanent protocols for arrests in front of children. The order was unanimously passed at the Police Commission on May 7, 2014. We are grateful to members of the San Francisco Police Commission for unanimously voting to support the SFPD general order 7.04. We commend Police Chief Suhr and SFPD for enacting the general order.

Alongside these notable efforts, youth commissioners and youth advocates with Project WHAT (We Are Here and Talking), a youth leadership program working with children of incarcerated parents, recognize an outstanding need to review how reliance on incarceration has affected a generation of young people, and specifically, the impact of parental incarceration on the wellbeing and life outcomes of young people in San Francisco.

Even though law enforcement, the criminal justice system, and Child Welfare regularly interface with children when their parents are arrested or incarcerated, it is our impression that no agency is charged with comprehensively collecting data about the prevalence of children with incarcerated parents, their wellbeing, how they are affected by their parent’s incarceration, or what additional services they may need. We see an urgent need to review existing policies and develop concerted efforts to meet the unique needs of children with incarcerated parents.

We are grateful to members of the Board of Supervisors, including sponsor Malia Cohen, and co-sponsors Supervisors Breed, Avalos, Campos, and Kim for introducing a hearing on the unmet Needs of Children and Youth in San Francisco with Currently or Previously Incarcerated Parent(s) (File No. 140298) on March 25, 2014. The item is scheduled to be heard in the Neighborhood Services and Safety committee on June 19, 2014.

### **Recommendations**

The Youth Commission recommends this upcoming hearing be used as an opportunity to investigate issues including, but not limited to: Efforts to collect data on needs and outcomes of youth with incarcerated parents who access city services; Notifying families and children when parents are transferred and/or released from jail or prison; What type of additional support services are offered and/or needed to support the health, wellbeing, and educational success of youth with incarcerated parents; Efforts to mitigate stigma and discrimination against formerly imprisoned people and its’ impact on families; Implementation of protocols for arrest of adults in front of children or youth and support for youth during and after the arrest and litigation process; Programs and services specifically designed to support and build the leadership of youth with incarcerated parents; Phone call and family- and child-visiting privileges and policies that affect the ability of youth to see and speak to their incarcerated parent; Support services for parents in both the adult probation and juvenile probation departments; Considerations of family impact at

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the time of sentencing and during parole hearings; Considerations regarding placement proximity for parents placed in out-of-home detention; The effect of parental incarceration on youths' housing stability and the impact of incarceration on the City's anti-displacement efforts; and family impacts of parental deportations as a result of incarceration.

The Youth Commission also wishes to urge the Mayor and Board of Supervisors take the following measures to support and better meet the needs of youth and children with currently and formerly incarcerated parents:

- Establish ways of collecting data on the prevalence, distribution, needs, and life outcomes of youth and children with incarcerated parents
- Take measures to promote family unity and encourage sustained relationships between children and their incarcerated parent by encouraging family-positive visiting policies in county jails, enhancing protocols for consideration of family impact in sentencing, and providing and funding support services for youth needing to physically transport themselves or navigate complicated bureaucratic systems associated with visiting their parent in state and federal prisons.
- Prioritize funding housing and supportive services for children of incarcerated parents that support their continued residence in San Francisco, their academic success, and their mental and emotional wellbeing.

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[1] 1,797 San Francisco children had a parent in California State prison. An estimated 16,196 San Francisco children had a parent in custody for some period of time in 2010 at San Francisco County Jails. See: San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, "2011 Community Needs Assessment," Published May 2011 and available at:

<http://www.dcyf.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=11> , Page 101.

[2] The San Francisco jail population in 2008 was 2,015. In 2013 it was 1,413, with 1,127 would-be prisoners in diversion. See: Roberts, Chris, "Smaller new jail might meet SF's needs, report finds," Published in the *San Francisco Examiner*, January 24, 2014. Retrieved on February 28, 2014 at: <http://www.sfexaminer.com/sanfrancisco/smaller-new-jail-might-meet-sfs-needs-report-finds/Content?oid=2686090>

[3] At a February 19, 2014 meeting with youth commissioners, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Allen Nance reported a 40% reduction in the population at Juvenile Hall over the last five years.

[4] District Attorney George Gascon, at his February 27, 2014 Public Safety Address acknowledged that our communities were no safer as a result of decades of high incarceration rates. He announced that in 2009, 63% of charges filed in San Francisco were for drug offenses and that in 2013, that figure had dropped to 32% as a result of efforts to distinguish violent vs. nuisance offenses. For an overview of his address see: <http://www.sfdistrictattorney.org/index.aspx?page=338>

Priority 11: Youth Voice

Insert Subtitle Here!

Background

Public participation, and specifically youth participation, in local public hearings is at the core of our democratic process and is essential for municipal government to work effectively. The Ralph M. Brown Act has for decades ensured that meetings held by local agencies are open to the public and that all members of the public have a meaningful opportunity to observe and take part in the decision-making process of local governmental bodies[1] Specifically speaking, pursuant to section 54954.3 of the Brown Act, the public is guaranteed the right to provide testimony at any regular or special meeting on any subject which will be considered by the legislative body before or during its consideration of the item.[2]

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors additionally has a stated commitment to encouraging public testimony before it takes action on municipal issues.[3] The committee system of the Board of Supervisors is designed to hear effective public testimony for and against proposed legislation before the specific committees and to hear suggestions for amendments.

However, while in policy every meeting of the Board of Supervisors and City Commissions are open to the public, in practice there exist structural barriers preventing the attendance and participation of youth 18 years of age and younger and those within the education system – namely, the scheduling of public hearings during regular school day hours. The problem is made worse by the fact that youth are typically underrepresented in municipal governments, and are unable to participate in democratically electing public officials until age 18.

According to the Spring 2012 Youth Vote survey, 43% of surveyed SFUSD students ‘don’t care at all’ about government and politics and 25% are only ‘a little interested’ about government and politics[4]. This is troubling data, and more opportunities to testify in front of public officials could increase youth engagement in government and politics. Youth civic engagement is incredibly important as it can lead to reduced risky behavior, increased success in school, and leads to greater civic participation later in life.[5]

At the March 6th, 2012 meeting of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, of 37 speakers providing public comment starting just before 2:00 PM and ending at 3:42 PM regarding the proposed “Free MUNI for Youth” Program, only two were youth[6] At the same meeting, of the 39 speakers providing public comment after 3:42 PM, 32 were youth.[7] Additionally, at a subsequent meeting of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency on April 17th, 2012 at 1:00 PM, of the 17 speakers

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providing public comment at the beginning of the meeting on the proposed “Free MUNI for Youth” Program, one was a youth.[8]

Section 54953.7 of the Brown Act says that elected legislative bodies may impose requirements upon themselves or on agencies under their jurisdiction which allow greater access to their meetings than prescribed by the minimal standards set forth with the Act.[9] The Board of Supervisors and youth-serving City Commissions therefore can set policy to specifically allow for increased civic engagement of young people.

#### Recommendations:

The San Francisco Youth Commission urges the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and youth-serving City Commissions to affirm their commitment to ensuring that public meetings are accessible to all children and youth of 18 years and younger and those within the education system by making a reasonable effort to accommodate this population. This can be done by adopting new guidelines for public meetings, including a provision explicitly authorizing the Youth Commission to request hearings or discussions on legislation referred to the Youth Commission according to Charter Section 4.124 to be scheduled at an hour of the day that can accommodate youth, preferably at a start time no earlier than 4:00 PM on a given day. However, should such a policy be adopted by the Board of Supervisors and youth-serving City Commissions, the San Francisco Youth Commission shall be held accountable for outreaching to increase youth participation at these public meetings.

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### Priority 12: Supporting the San Francisco Unified School District’s Disability Awareness Efforts

Supporting the Initiatives the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) has taken to Increase Disability Awareness and Supporting the District’s Promotion and Outreach of These Efforts.

#### Background

Drawing from their personal experiences in observing the prejudices and issues, as well as the benefits and uniqueness of special education, the Education, Health & Wellness committee decided to learn more about the San Francisco Unified School District efforts to make our public schools more inclusive. One area of opportunity they saw was the limited awareness that students in general education have of students in special education. They decided to better understand who people with disability are, what the School District and San Francisco community at large are doing, and come up with recommendations.

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People with disabilities face negative attitudes, limited physical access, limited access to communication and/or resources, and other barriers to rights as individuals (Brown, 1995;<sup>28</sup> Gilson & Depoy, 2000).<sup>29</sup> Hidden or invisible disabilities including learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, mental illness, brain injuries, epilepsy, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, cancer, chronic health pain, AIDS, and others, are not readily apparent to the general population. Approximately 56.7 million people (18.7 percent) in the United States have a disability;<sup>30</sup> making this group the largest minority group in America;<sup>31</sup> and they continue to face discrimination and negative stereotypes.

As of 2010, the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) serves 6,296 students with disabilities (PreK-12), which is 11% of the total district population.<sup>32</sup> The SFUSD has demonstrated in many ways their willingness to make their learning environments as inclusive as they can for all students. They provide a Resource Page<sup>33</sup> on their website for their schools to refer to when administrators or teachers are interested in utilizing best practices for inclusion. In collaboration with the City's Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF) and the non-profit organization, Support for Families with Disabilities, they provide workshops to after-school program leaders, site coordinators, and students on supporting students with disabilities through professional development days.<sup>34</sup> In addition, the School District is in the process of implementing and expanding "Behavioral Response to Intervention (RTI)"

<sup>28</sup> Brown, S. E. (1995). *Disability culture/rights/pride paradigm*. Las Cruces, NM: Institute on Disability Culture.

<sup>29</sup> Gilson, S. F., & Depoy, E. (2000). Multiculturalism and disability: A critical perspective. *Disability & Society*, 15(2), 207-218.

<sup>30</sup> Brault, Matthew V. *Americans With Disabilities 2010*. Rep. N.p.: US Census, n.d. Web. 3 Mar. 2014. <<http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p70-131.pdf>>.

<sup>31</sup> "Disability Stats and Facts." *The Social Justice Movement of the 21st Century...Building a Bridge Between Disability and Community*. N.p., n.d. Web. 23 Feb. 2014.

<sup>32</sup> *An Audit of Programs & Services for Students with Disabilities in the San Francisco Unified School District*. Rep. Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative Education Development Center, Inc., Sept.-Oct. 2010. Web. 24 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/about-SFUSD/files/audit-programs-students-with-disabilities.pdf>>.

<sup>33</sup> San Francisco Unified School District. "Resources." *SFUSD: Resources*. N.p., n.d. Web. 09 Mar. 2014. <<http://www.sfusd.edu/en/programs/special-education/inclusive-schools/inclusive-schools-resources.html>>.

<sup>34</sup> Salvador Lopez Barr, Student Advisory Council Coordinator. "SFUSD's Disability Awareness Programs/Cuuriculum." Memorandum to the Youth Commission & Student Advisory Council, Joint Committee. Wednesday, May 14th, 2014.

strategies which include Restorative Practices, Trauma Sensitivity, Cultural Competency, De-escalation Strategies, and Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies. All SFUSD schools also develop school wide behavior matrices by identifying what it means to “Be Safe,” “Be Respectful,” and “Be Responsible,” in all physical spaces within the schools’ facility.

The SFUSD also has many programs that are open or are geared towards direct education about disability awareness. One program is called “Second Step” which teaches students from preschool to grade 8 core social-emotional skills such as empathy, emotion management, problem solving, self-regulation, executive function skills, and skills for learning. Another is the “Rethink Curriculum” provides caregivers, teachers, and parents training to engage a child’s fundamental skills such as making eye contact, requesting items, answering questions, following instructions, playing with other children, engaging in conversation, and understanding the emotions of others. In addition, the “Beyond Differences” program is being piloted at Aptos Middle School and trains students on how to create safe and inclusive learning environments for their peers. The SFUSD also has a “Best Buddies” program at Balboa, Lowell, Washington, Mission, and Everett public schools fosters one-to-one friendships between students with and without intellectual and development disabilities with the goal of breaking through social barriers for students with disabilities. Well known to many students, the “Peer Resources” program empowers youth to engage with one another to create a positive school climate, and to change the system so that there is justice for all students. Lastly, the “Wellness Center” program promotes respect for all students including those with disabilities, such as physical limitations, learning differences, and sexual orientation. All of these programs support the mission of the SFUSD, “to provide each student with an equal opportunity to succeed by promoting intellectual growth, creativity, self-discipline, cultural and linguistic sensitivity, democratic responsibility, economic competence, and physical and mental health so that each student can achieve his or her maximum potential.”<sup>35</sup>

The SF Youth Commission’s Education, Health, and Wellness Committee designed and distributed an informal survey about disability awareness and people with disabilities to 85 SFUSD high school students. They wanted to assess and get a better understanding of the student’s perspectives around disability awareness. Their findings show that 46% of the students would like to learn more about special education, and only 17% of the students consider themselves very familiar with special education.

#### Recommendations:

Giving the youth the opportunity to understand disability will allow them to see disability more positively, which will allow them to create change in the world around them. Youth will be the leaders of the future and will be the ones who will create a San Francisco where all people are respected and valued for their

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<sup>35</sup> “Mission Statement” SFUSD:Overview. San Francisco Unified School District, n.d. Web Accessed March 11, 2014, <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/overview.html>.

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individual abilities and strength. The Youth Commission appreciates and commends the San Francisco Unified School District's commitment to inclusion and support for all students who all have different learning styles, learning speeds, a range of mental, intellectual, and developmental abilities. We encourage and support the implementation, promotion, and expansion of programs that builds understanding, acceptance, and friendship between students with disabilities and students in general education.

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### Priority 13: SFMTA 18 years old youth fare

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Since 2008, the Youth Commission has voiced that the cost of public transportation is a major concern for San Francisco's youth population\*. Even before 2008, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously supported legislation in 2005 sponsored by District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty to make all enrolled San Francisco high school students eligible for MUNI's youth rate\*. This year, the priority to expand MUNI's discounted youth rate to include 18-year olds resurfaced during the Free MUNI For Low-Moderate Income Youth pilot program.

In San Francisco's Unified School District, 3,000 of 4,014 high school seniors turn 18 during their senior year. (There is also approximately 400 18 year-old high school students in SF county schools and even more 18 year-olds in the city's private and parochial schools.\*) Many of these youth are low-income as demonstrated by the 57,860 students (67%) enrolled in SFUSD's free or reduced lunch program\*. On their 18th birthday, these young people's financial barriers continue to exist; their hardships do not suddenly disappear. In fact, those who participated in the Free MUNI For Low-Moderate Income Youth program suddenly had to pay either a \$2 bus fare or \$66 monthly adult pass on their 18th birthday when they had previously relied on zero-cost public transportation. Undoubtedly, this was a burden not only to these young individual, but the families of children and youth in San Francisco.

The SFMTA youth rate is designed to encourage youth riders to use public transportation and to afford public transportation.\* Interestingly, the SFMTA had defined "youth" as being between the ages of 5-17\*, while other Bay Area transportation agencies, such as the East Bay's AC Transit and North Bay's Golden Gate Transit included 18-year olds in their youth fare discounts\*. While modifying SFMTA's youth fare structure to include solely 18-year-olds still in high school (rather than all 18-year-olds) sufficiently addresses the financial hardships of most high school students, this policy could impose a significant administrative burden on MUNI. When asked about the expansion of youth fares to include 18 year olds in their youth fare, the Senior Manager of Revenue Collection and Sales for SFMTA has stated that they

don't believe there would be any significant administrative issues with increasing SFMTA's eligibility for youth fares to include all 18 year olds.

#### Recommendations:

The Youth Commission calls upon the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) to expand MUNI's discounted youth rate to include 18-year-olds. We are encouraged to see the SFMTA Board include 18 year olds in the Free MUNI For Low-Moderate Income Youth Program for FY 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Additionally, the Youth Commission calls on the Mayor, the Board of Supervisors, and the SFMTA to look into ways in which the population of high school students older than eighteen years of age and transitional aged youth (18-24) can also qualify for free or reduced fares.

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#### Priority 14: Following up on Urging Against the Arming of Juvenile Probation Officers

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In January 2013, Chief William Sifferman presented at the Juvenile Probation Commission a new plan for JPD probation officers safety in the field. One of the suggested changes was equipping probation officers in the Serious Offenders Program (SOP) with firearms. In response, in February 2013, the Youth Commission passed a resolution urging against the arming of JPD officers.

While one of the stated values and beliefs of the JPD is that "data-driven decision-making ensures positive outcomes," they have proposed to have officers equipped with firearms, which has not yet been substantiated by any body of evidence, nor has evidence been presented suggesting that arming juvenile probation officers with firearms will lead to a reduction in violent incidents or an enhancement of public safety. One of the main premises behind making the Juvenile Probation Department (JPD) an entity separate and distinct from other adult law enforcement agencies—an act that distinguishes San Francisco from all other counties in the state of California—was the importance of differentiating JPD from an armed approach to juvenile justice, and also to provide a more specialized focus on youth rehabilitative service needs.

On February 19th, 2014, the Youth Justice Committee met with Chief Nance of JPD. In discussion about arming of JPD's, he said that though the program wasn't in the budget for this year, it was still an option on the table.

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**Recommendations:**

The Youth Commission would like to continue to urge against the arming of Juvenile Probation Officers. We call on the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to urge the Juvenile Probation Department not to begin arming juvenile probation officers with firearms as part of any revised safety protocol, and to hold Juvenile Probation Chief to his assertion that the Juvenile Probation Department will not take on arming protocols for its probation officers in this upcoming budget.

The Youth Commission is grateful for the leadership of the Board of Supervisor's Neighborhood Services and Safety committee in holding a hearing on May 2, 2013 aimed at clarifying several aspects of JPD's proposed safety protocol revisions. The Youth Commission would like to submit that any plan to handle high-risk juvenile offenders should work to preserve the social work ideals of the only stand-alone juvenile probation department in the state. Under no circumstances should an armed juvenile probation officer act as the primary case contact for a juvenile probationer, and JPD should undertake all possible efforts to minimize contact between police and juvenile probationers to avoid incidences of recidivism. Therefore, the criteria for youth referral to the proposed task force, and number of youth affected should be made clear.

We also urge the Juvenile Probation Department to identify practical tools and alternative practices, other than firearms, that will help to address personal safety concerns for probation officers whose caseloads include high-risk juveniles. The Youth Commission urges the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to urge the Juvenile Probation Department, per the DPOA's recommendation, to provide new training for probation officers who will supervise high-risk offenders.