



FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT WELFARE AGENCIES

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2008 - 09 New York State Legislative and Budget Agenda Outcomes Report

The Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies (FPWA) promotes the social and economic well-being of greater New York's most vulnerable by strengthening human service organizations and advocating for just public policies. FPWA's Policy, Advocacy & Research work combines analyses by our experienced advocacy professionals along with input from member agency executives and staff, our Board of Directors, and coalition members to create an advocacy agenda that reflects the needs of our member agencies and the New Yorkers they serve.

This document updates FPWA's progress on specific state legislative and budget agenda items across our primary portfolio areas: Child Welfare, Early Childhood Education, Elderly Welfare, Government Operations, HIV and AIDS, Income Security, Youth Services, and Workforce Development.

We look forward to moving priority legislation throughout the balance of the state legislative session. For additional information or questions, please contact us:

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Child Welfare

Create a state-funded higher education scholarship program for foster care youth attending college in the SUNY or CUNY system or participating in a vocational training program

The expense of attending college is out of reach for most foster care youth. In New York's public university system, tuition, fees, and living expenses at SUNY's four-year baccalaureate program adds up to over \$17,000 per school year. Foster care youth with any hope of affording a post-secondary education are forced to piece together numerous grants or take on loans, a process that can be extremely daunting without family help, guidance counselors, or the many other supports upon which non-foster youth rely. A state-funded scholarship program that provides tuition and non-tuition assistance would encourage older and former foster care youth to obtain a post-secondary education, ultimately giving them the power to participate in the workforce, earn higher wages, and pursue opportunities for advancement. Our initial draft estimate is that the total State investment needed to support the Foster Care Higher Education Scholarship Program would be roughly \$8.3 million.

No action was taken on this item in the State's Enacted Budget for FY 2008-2009. FPWA has been working with Assemblymember Scarborough's office on legislation to create a higher education scholarship program for foster care youth and we expect this legislation to be introduced this year. The bill may also be expanded to apply to youth attending in-state private institutions, in addition to SUNY, CUNY, and in-state vocational training programs.

Support the Governor's proposal to automatically extend Medicaid coverage to youth aging out of foster care until age 21

FPWA applauds the Governor for including in his proposed budget the automatic extension of Medicaid eligibility to youth aging out of foster care until age 21. Under this proposal, crucial health and mental health services would be available for some of New York State's most vulnerable children: youth who are struggling to leave the foster care system behind and establish themselves as self-sufficient young adults. As a population that is characterized by unique and intense health care needs, including a high rate of mental illness, foster care youth need automatic Medicaid eligibility until age 21 in order to access vital medical services without compromising their economic security.

FPWA is extremely pleased to report that this item was included in the Enacted State Budget. Medicaid eligibility has been extended until age 21 for children who were in the foster care system on their 18th birthdays.

Implement child welfare caseload guidelines recommended by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services

The 2006 New York State Child Welfare Workload Study published by OCFS examined the effects of high caseloads on child protective, foster care, and preventive services caseworkers and found that excessive caseloads undermine the ability of caseworkers to provide families in the child welfare system with high-quality services. The study suggests caseloads of 11-12 children per foster care case planner and 12-16 families per preventive case planner, which would allow caseworkers to spend more time with the children and families that they serve. FPWA urges the State to implement caseload guidelines and to provide counties with the necessary resources to support caseload reductions.

The Enacted State Budget requires the NYS Office of Children and Family Services to issue a report on the "Implementation of Recommended Caseworker Ratios" by January 7, 2009. In addition, \$1.79 million was included to improve child protective services (CPS) staff ratios and to hire caseworkers and supervisors and \$1 million was also included for the continuation of the Portable Technology Demonstration for CPS workers. OCFS is also to report to the Governor, Senate, and Assembly on the impact of the demonstration project by January 15, 2009.



Invest \$9 million in a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for preventive services workers for FY 2008-2009

FPWA commends the Governor for including in his proposed budget a three-year extension of the current COLA for a range of human services programs, including a COLA for foster care providers and parents. Unfortunately, preventive service programs were not only excluded from this extension, but also did not receive funding for FY 2008-2009 to cover the third year of a 2.5% COLA given the past two years. Preventive services are an essential part of the State's efforts to support families, and workers in these programs do a tremendous job of helping parents and protecting children. FPWA urges the State to recognize the valuable role of preventive services workers by investing \$9 million to fund a COLA for these workers in FY 2008-2009 and by granting a three-year extension.

\$24 million was included to fund the third year of the COLA for foster care providers and parents and this COLA was extended for three more years. The Budget included \$9.4 million to continue the COLA for preventive services contracts, which will provide 100% reimbursement of COLAs provided in the last 2 fiscal years. However, preventive services did not receive funding for a COLA in FY 2009 or the three-year extension.

Support the Governor's continuation of the 65/35 State match for open-ended child welfare services

FPWA was extremely pleased to see \$619.3 million included in the Governor's proposed budget for open-ended child welfare services funding, as well as a continuation of New York State's policy of reimbursing local districts for 65% of the total cost of services provided (after applying federal funds). This funding, and the 65% State share, allows counties to strengthen families by providing protective, preventive, aftercare, post-adoption, and independent living services and encourages them to invest in high-quality services that decrease the use of costly foster care and save the State money in the long run.

Although funding for open-ended child welfare services was increased in the Enacted State Budget by \$142.2 million, this funding will be affected by the "across-the-board" cut of 2% to Local Assistance programs. In addition, \$436 million was allocated to the Foster Care Block Grant.

Allow subsidized guardianship as an alternate permanency option for children in foster care

New York State should create a subsidized guardianship program as a permanency option for children in foster care. Adoption does not work for every family, and subsidized guardianship would allow children in long-term care who are unable to return to their parents to exit the system into safe, stable living arrangements, often with kinship caregivers. Research shows that kinship care is associated with improved permanency and social outcomes for foster children and that kinship guardianship is an important option for both older youth, who are at risk of aging out of the system, and communities of color, whose cultural norms already support caregiving for children by extended family members.

No funding was provided for a subsidized guardianship program, but \$2.1 million was allocated towards Caretaker Relative and Kinship Care Programs.

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Early Childhood Education

FPWA, working in coalition with Winning Beginning New York, believes that New York State should strengthen its commitment to providing quality child care and early education programs to low-income families.

Increase New York State's investment in quality early care and education programs

Quality early care and education programs prepare children for a lifetime of learning and increase the chance of success in school and adult life. Increased availability of child care and improved access are crucial to ensuring that working parents in low-income and public assistance families can obtain quality care for their children. FPWA urges New York State to:

- Increase funding for subsidies by \$140 million, to restore funding for 14,000 slots lost since the 2004-05 budget and to support the creation of new slots.
- Remove funding for child care once again from the Flexible Fund for Family Services and transfer a minimum of \$367 million to the child care block grant.
- Eliminate the child support requirement for families seeking subsidized child care.
- Cap child care co-payments at 10% of gross family income and eliminate co-pays for families living under the federal poverty level.
- Address county-by-county disparities in child care co-pays and create a statewide co-payment system that is both equitable and affordable.

\$906.4 million was included in the Enacted State Budget for child care subsidies and quality activities. FPWA is pleased to report that child care was removed from the Flexible Fund for Family Services in the amount of \$356.3 million. No action was taken in the budget on child care co-payments. Legislation is pending that would eliminate the child support requirement (A.10258).

Increase flexibility for districts utilizing Universal Pre-kindergarten (UPK) funding

FPWA commends the Governor for including an increase of \$79 million for UPK in his proposed budget, amounting to a total of \$452 million for FY 2008-2009. To ensure that this increase in funding results in the successful expansion of UPK, FPWA urges the State to also increase *the flexibility* that districts have in utilizing UPK money. With greater freedom to spend this money on UPK-related needs, such as start-up expenses, full day pre-kindergarten options that better fit the schedules of working parents, and professional development opportunities for staff, districts will have the ability to implement and expand UPK in ways that best meet the unique needs of the children and families they serve.

An increase of \$96 million was allocated to the State's UPK program for FY 2009, but additional flexibility in utilizing these funds was not granted.

Promote the early care workforce through recruitment and retention initiatives

Attracting a highly-qualified workforce is an integral component of creating a positive, nurturing environment for children in early childhood programs. In order to recruit and retain qualified professionals, it is essential that staff receive competitive salaries and access to professional development opportunities. FPWA urges the State to:

- Invest \$15 million in workforce development opportunities, including release time, reimbursements for tuition and other expenses, reward bonuses based on educational attainment, mentoring services, and loan forgiveness up to a certain amount.



- Use part of this funding to address differences in compensation between teachers with comparable credentials, regardless of the early education setting in which they work.

No action was taken on this item in the Enacted State Budget for FY 2009. However, Winning Beginning New York is working on legislation to address this issue.

Develop a Quality Rating System (QRS) for early care programs that promotes quality and supports providers

FPWA is pleased to see the State's commitment this year to developing and piloting a Quality Rating System, which can be used to assess and rate the quality of early care and education programs. Such a system would not only assist early care providers in evaluating their current programs and improving the quality of the teaching and services they provide, but it would also help parents identify high-quality programs for their children. However, FPWA urges the State to ensure that the Quality Rating System it develops is adequately resourced, including financial supports and incentives for providers who implement quality improvements. Programmatic and structural improvements require a significant commitment of time and resources on the part of child care programs, and financial support is crucial to helping programs sustain advancements in quality.

The NYS Office of Children and Family Services will be developing and piloting a Quality Rating System. FPWA will work to monitor progress.

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Elderly Welfare

Add \$1 million for a demonstration program allowing for an enriched model of social adult day services.

The Executive Budget provides \$1 million to implement an adult day demonstration project to maintain elderly persons in the community by deterring or delaying nursing home placement. This program would enable social adult day program providers the opportunity to expand the range of services currently offered through their programs. We support the concept of an enriched social model which recognizes that a continuum of services is needed to meet changes in a senior's health status. Facilities need the flexibility to adjust the range of services according to the needs of the clients they serve. Examples of services provided through this program include assistance with toileting, mobility, transferring, eating, and medication dispensing by a Registered Nurse, R.N.

The Budget provides \$500,000 for the implementation of an Enriched Social Adult Day Services demonstration project beginning January 1, 2009.

Restore \$1 million and add \$8 million for operating expenses for senior transportation.

The Governor has allocated \$1 million in the Executive Budget for vehicle transportation operating expenses for elderly service providers. A total of \$2 million had been allocated in vehicle operating expenses in the 2007-08 budget. In addition to meal delivery to homebound seniors, these vehicles transport the elderly to important services and activities including senior centers, adult day services, medical appointments and food shopping. Operating expenses include costs for insurance, maintenance, and fuel. We request a \$1 million restoration of funds and an additional \$8 million for these essential expenses as costs for insurance and fuel continue to increase.

The Budget includes \$1.98 million for transportation.

Add \$4.5 million in funding for Geriatric Mental Health Services

A total of \$2 million has been allocated in the Executive Budget for demonstration programs under the Geriatric Mental Health Act. Due to the dramatic increase in the older adult population, additional funding is needed to continue to address their mental health needs. Funding would go towards the creation of state of the art service demonstration programs that would provide innovative geriatric mental health services as well as education and training programs for primary care physicians in the identification and treatment of depression among older adults.

The budget does not include any additional funding for Geriatric Mental Health Programs. The current funding level for these programs is \$2 million.

Support increases to the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a critical program that provides a monthly income to poor elderly, disabled and visually impaired individuals of any age. New York State's portion of the SSI benefit is not indexed to inflation and has been increased only once since 1989. Currently, SSI recipients must survive on a benefit which is about \$140 per month below the poverty level. New York State needs to institute an increase in the SSI benefit level for the elderly, disabled and visually impaired target populations and continue to ensure the federal COLA gets passed through each year to recipients.

The budget does not include an increase in the SSI benefit level. The budget does include the annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in the State Supplement by passing through the annual federal COLA.



Other Budget adds Include:

\$475,000 to establish regional centers to provide education and training to caregivers.

\$492,000 to empower communities, the elderly and families to develop supportive services that would allow elders to “age in place.”

\$50,000 for services and expenses for a web-based reporting system.

\$4.5 million increase in a COLA appropriation for workers in SNAP, CSE and the EISEP programs.

Appropriations for several existing SOFA programs include:

\$2.15 million for Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCS)

\$2.15 million for Neighborhood NORCs

\$.245 million for Sustainable Transportation

\$1.188 million for Social Model Adult Day Services

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HIV and AIDS

Restore additional funds to CSPs and MSAs

Community Service Providers (CSPs) and Multi Service Agency (MSAs) have expertise in community health issues and provide a comprehensive array of care coordination, advocacy, prevention education and support services throughout New York State. Last year, the Governor appropriated additional funds in the amount of \$563,000 for community-based organizations to provide permanency planning and support services for families affected by HIV in neighborhoods with high concentrations of at-risk populations as well as an additional grant of \$575,000 for community service programs (CSPs) and \$575,000 for multi service agencies (MSAs) operating in high-risk areas.

FPWA is pleased to learn that the enacted budget includes restoration of additional funds to CSPs (\$550,000) and MSAs (\$575,000).

Support an amendment to the New York Social Service Law limiting shelter costs (A.5473/S.2890)

This amendment intends to limit the percentage of income payable towards shelter costs by persons living with HIV and AIDS. The purpose of this amendment is to provide that certain persons living with HIV or AIDS shall not be required to pay more than 30% of the household income towards the cost of shelter.

Legislation pending. This bill was voted out of the Assembly Social Services Committee in March 2008 and is now at the Ways and Means Committee. There is no movement yet in the Senate. FPWA is working closely with coalition members to garner support from legislators.

Support an amendment to the New York Public Health Law in relation to HIV related testing (A.9195 / S.6326)

No Additional Cost: This bill would expand HIV testing without compromising informed consent or confidentiality protections in existing law. It would require all primary care providers and emergency room physicians to offer testing to all patients without regard to perceived risk, subject to certain exceptions. At the same time, it would simplify, de-stigmatize and universalize the offer of HIV testing.

Legislation pending.

Demand mandatory comprehensive sex education

- **FPWA supports the passage of an amendment to the New York Education Law in relation to mandating sex education in elementary and high schools (S.6205)** – This bill proposes to add a new section to the existing education law to “create and establish a comprehensive, medically accurate and age appropriate sex education curriculum which shall be taught in grades one through twelve in all public and charter schools.”

Legislation pending.

- **FPWA supports the passage of an amendment to the Public Health Law in relation to establishing the age-appropriate sex education grant program, to be referred to as the healthy teens act (A.2856/S.1342)** – This bill would establish an age-appropriate sex education grant program within the Department of Health. The Department, from amounts annually appropriated, will make grants to school districts, boards of cooperative educational services, school-based health centers, and community-based organizations with a proven history of success in reaching the adolescents of this state, to assist them in conducting a thorough and comprehensive education program aimed at preventing unwanted pregnancies and occurrences of sexually transmitted diseases among youth.

Legislation pending.



Delivery of care to Medicaid beneficiaries who are living with HIV and AIDS

No Additional Cost: FPWA, a member of Medicaid Matters New York and the New York AIDS Coalition, is concerned about the use of managed care as a universal approach to the delivery of care for those who have complex health care needs like HIV and AIDS and that patients' choice to join a managed care plan, HIV SNP or to stay in traditional Medicaid fee-for-service will be eliminated. While Medicaid managed care has provided many beneficiaries with a health care home and better coordination of care, it should not be seen as a blanket solution to rising health care costs. Studies show that managed care is more problematic for people with complex health care needs, and when access to specialty care is needed.

We are particularly alarmed about the move to managed care for people with serious and persistent mental illness and SSI recipients, as this may pose new navigational challenges. Before any attempt is made to implement mandatory managed care enrollment, FPWA recommends establishing a taskforce that is composed of various stakeholders to gauge evidence of improved health outcomes and to assure that quality, standard and coordination of care is being routinely provided to people living with HIV and AIDS who are currently enrolled in managed care.

FPWA continues to actively conduct advocacy and monitoring of this issue in coalition with other community and advocacy groups.

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Income Security

Increase the Public Assistance Grant from \$291 to \$475 per month for a family of three

The basic cash grant portion of a family's overall public assistance grant has not been increased since 1990 and is currently equal to only 50% of the federal poverty level (FPL). The cost of living has increased nearly 60% since 1990, particularly for housing, energy, and many basic consumer goods. The reduced value of the cash grant over time has placed families receiving public assistance at greater risk of losing employment, being unable to meet their families' needs, and becoming homeless. The State should increase the public assistance basic cash grant to reflect the rise in the cost of living since 1990. We support S.5895 introduced by Senator Montgomery, which provides for a 25% increase in the basic grant. However, we strongly urge the Legislature to increase the basic grant by 60% to reflect the full rise in the cost of living since 1990.

While no change to the welfare grant was reflected in the final SFY 2008-09 Budget, the Assembly again proposed an increase that would have increased the basic cash grant by 10 percent each year over three years to reach \$387.32 for a family of three by 2011 including heat supplements. This proposal would have increased the basic grant slightly more than the Assembly's Budget resolution for SFY 2007-08. Although this was rejected during budget negotiations, progress was made in elevating this as a key issue through media coverage and educating the public about the urgent need to increase the basic grant.

Eliminate the 185% of Standard of Need (SON) income eligibility requirement for Public Assistance (A.7551)

Current State Social Services Law makes families ineligible for public assistance once their income reaches 185% of the SON for their household size and county of residence. Therefore, since this measure now falls below FPL in all counties, families cannot earn their way up to the poverty level before they become ineligible for public assistance. Furthermore, since FPL is adjusted upward every year to reflect the rise in inflation, the gap between the income eligibility level (fixed at 185% of SON) and the poverty level increases each year. This means that each year there are more families who fall below the poverty level, yet are ineligible for public assistance. The State should eliminate the 185% SON eligibility rule, which would also improve the work incentive created by the EID. The State estimates that this would cost approximately \$18 million in SFY 2008-09.

No changes to the 185% SON eligibility rule were incorporated in the SFY 2008-09 Budget. See next paragraph regarding legislation introduced.

Increase the Earned Income Disregard (EID) to 100% of wages below FPL; Extend EID to ALL families, including households WITHOUT dependent children

The EID encourages work by ensuring that earnings will actually increase the income of families receiving public assistance. Recipients with children who have earned income currently receive a 48% EID for the purposes of determining their grant amount. This percentage is adjusted annually to reflect the changes in the most recently issued federal poverty guidelines. There is also a small \$90 work expense disregard applied to gross income before the percentage disregard is considered. For households without dependent children, this \$90 disregard is the only one applied. The State should increase the EID to 100% of wages below FPL to stabilize economic security for families as they increase their earnings to rise out of poverty. The State should also extend the EID percentage to all households.

No changes to the EID were incorporated in the SFY 2008-09 Budget. However, new legislation has been introduced by Assemblyman Wright (A.10467), which would increase the EID to 67% for households currently eligible (those with children and earnings) and eliminate the 185% SON eligibility rule for public assistance.



Increase the Child Support Pass-Through for Custodial Parents receiving Public Assistance

Currently, State Social Services Law provides that only \$50 per month in child support payments collected from the non-custodial parent is passed through to the custodial parent receiving public assistance. The rest of the support collected is used to reimburse government expenditures for public assistance provided to the family. The child support pass-through is an essential means of lifting custodial parents and their children out of poverty. In addition, increasing the pass-through provides an incentive for non-custodial parents to make timely payments and gives families a better opportunity to achieve financial stability before losing eligibility for public benefits.

Most importantly, under the federal Deficit Reduction Act, effective October 1, 2008, the federal share of collections will be waived for states that increase the pass-through up to \$100 for families with one child and up to \$200 for families with two or more children. We support the Governor's proposal to capitalize on these federal financial incentives, by increasing the child support pass-through to \$100. We also urge the state to increase the pass-through to \$200 for families with two or more children.

The SFY 2008-09 Budget increases the amount of child support payments that can be passed through to custodial parents on public assistance, up from \$50 to a \$100 per month maximum for families with one child and up to \$200 per month for families with two or more children. The increase from \$50 to \$100 will be effective October 1, 2008 and the increase from \$100 to \$200 will be effective January 1, 2010.

Reduce the Maximum Required Work Hours for Welfare Recipients engaged in "Vocational Education" to the Federal Standard

No Additional Cost: Under New York State's Work Verification Plan, welfare recipients engaged in "Vocational Education" are participating in an organized educational program directly related to an occupation that does not require a four-year or advanced college degree. For these participants, the documentation and verification deemed acceptable is not as burdensome as that required for some of the other work activities – the initial documentation of enrollment hours and monthly confirmation of attendance are considered adequate (in addition to daily supervision). Some localities, including New York City, have taken advantage of the local flexibility that the State provides to allow counties to require up to 40 hours/week of engagement in a work activity. This policy is particularly harmful to individuals enrolled in Vocational Education, who must balance classroom and study time with childcare, parenting and running a households. To maximize timely program completion, individuals participating in Vocational Education should NOT be required to participate in more hours of activity than what the federal law requires, or a maximum of 30 hours/week for single parents and 20 hours/week for single parents with a child under age six.

This item does not require state budgetary action. FPWA continues to advocate with the Governor, OTDA and the Legislature, to ensure that New York State's public assistance system maximizes client participation in education and training and does not require additional hours of work that are not required by federal law for students engaged in Vocational Education.



Enact the Paid Family Leave Benefit for New York State (A.9245)

This crucial legislation would provide Paid Family Leave benefits to support employees who must take time off from work to care for a newborn or adopted child or for a family member facing a serious health condition. Paid leave time off is essential to protect families from additional financial hardship while a primary wage-earner must be temporarily absent from work to provide family care. The bill would create a new employee benefit allowing up to 12 weeks of paid leave time off (up to \$170 per week) to care for a child, spouse, parent, domestic partner, grandparent, sibling or in-law. Family leave would be provided through the NYS Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) fund and would require employees to make an additional weekly contribution of 45 cents during the first year to the TDI fund. The State should enact the Paid Family Leave bill (A.9245) passed by the Assembly in 2007 and supported by the Governor in his 2008 State of the State Address.

Legislation Pending.

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Workforce Development

Create a Young Worker Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

The State EITC is a valuable support for working poor families. For childless workers age 25 and over, the combined maximum federal and state EITC provides up to approximately \$560 for Tax Year 2007. Yet, there are many young low-income workers between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not eligible for the EITC, simply because of their age and the fact that they are not parents. While New York recently established a State-funded EITC for non-custodial parents who are current in their child support payments, the young adult working population without children remains excluded from eligibility for any federal or state EITC. Furthermore, in New York City alone, there are 200,000 disconnected youth who would receive a strong incentive to enter the workforce by becoming eligible for the EITC. The State should create an EITC for working young adults between ages 17-24 who are established as an independent household and do not have children equal to 1.3 times the amount of the federal EITC for childless workers (equal to State + Federal EITC that childless workers over age 25 currently receive). Our initial draft estimate is that the total State investment needed to support the Working Young Adult EITC Program would be roughly \$3.1 million in Year 1; \$4.6 million in Year 2; and \$6.2 million for Year 3 and thereafter.

FPWA continues to take the lead in proposing this new young worker tax credit by developing and distributing fact sheets, examples of youth who would be eligible, and cost estimate to key legislators in the Assembly and Senate. Although the SFY 2008-09 Budget did not include this, FPWA expects legislation to be introduced in the Assembly before the end of the session.

Create a GED to College Transition Pilot Program

Many New Yorkers with low literacy skills and education levels have great potential to succeed in higher education or occupational certificate programs. However, efforts must be made to re-align our education systems to promote transitions from Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and GED preparation classes to community colleges and other institutions of higher education. Effective models that have been implemented in other states often include the following: ABE/ESL programs act as "feeders" to directly link students to community college or occupational training; accelerated learning and dual enrollment opportunities; transferable credits and flexible class schedules; multiple points of entry, exit and re-entry; modularized programs that allow students to achieve short-term benchmarks; contextualized and employer-developed course curricula; collaborative teaching methods; learning cohorts; academic counseling and career advisement; and the use of technology to expand opportunities for distance learning and hands-on multi-media training. The State should create a GED to College Transition Pilot Program based on nationally recognized effective models.

FPWA has taken a leading role in advocating for this program by developing and distributing a fact sheet containing essential elements of effective models to key legislators in the Assembly and Senate. Although the SFY 2008-09 Budget did not include this, FPWA plans to expand its advocacy campaign for this program in the coming year.

Create a Transitional Jobs Program for public assistance recipients facing significant barriers to work

Transitional jobs are time-limited, wage-paying jobs for welfare recipients that combine meaningful work, skill development, and supportive services. Workers earn a real wage, subsidized with public funds, in paid work experience programs for up to 12 months, with a possible 6 month extension period. In addition to work experience, programs offer job readiness, basic education, vocational skills and other barrier-removal services. Participants spend four days per week in paid employment and one day per week in education and training. Transitional Jobs are more successful than unpaid work experience programs in linking clients to the labor market and progressing on a career path. In addition, Transitional



Jobs are an excellent means of increasing the State’s federally required work participation rate. Time spent in “subsidized employment” counts as a primary work activity, and time spent in “job skills or education directly related to employment” counts as a non-core work activity. The State should create a Transitional Jobs program to be operated by local social services districts, and clients should be shifted from unpaid work experience programs into these new Transitional Job opportunities.

As part of a larger coalition, FPWA supports a NYS Transitional Jobs Program targeted to long-term public assistance recipients, disconnected youth, and formerly incarcerated individuals. Although this was not included in the SFY 2008-09 Budget, the final Budget did include \$2.5 million in TANF funding for a new Career Pathways program targeted to 18-24 year olds who are unemployed or underemployed. FPWA had also endorsed this proposal.

Increase funding for the following programs funded by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Surplus dollars:

- Adult and Family Literacy
- Adult Basic Education
- Language Immersion/ESL
- BRIDGE
- Transportation
- Wage Subsidy
- VESID/LIVES

Add separately lined-out funding for the following programs funded by TANF Surplus dollars in previous years:

- EDGE
- Technology Training/ATTAIN
- Build NY

The SFY 2008-09 Budget included funding for the following programs:

<u>Adult and Family Literacy</u>	\$500,000
	(CUT: \$500,000)*

This program was funded at \$1 million in the Executive Budget

<u>Adult Basic Education</u>	\$500,000
	(CUT: \$500,000)*

<u>Language Immersion/ESL</u>	\$1 million
	(CUT: \$1 million)*

<u>BRIDGE</u>	\$8.503 million
	(ADD: \$2 million)

This program provides academic and job preparation skills to public assistance recipients through the SUNY Educational Opportunity Centers.

<u>Transportation (including Wheels to Work)</u>	\$8.325 million
	(ADD: \$2.125 million)

This program was funded at \$6.2 million in the Executive Budget



Wage Subsidy

\$4 million

This initiative provides funding to local organizations to place eligible individuals into private or public sector jobs and to reimburse employers for wages and fringe benefits paid during the subsidy period.

VESID/LIVES

\$1.5 million

This program helps disabled public assistance recipient gain skills and supports needed for employment.

In addition, the following programs previously funded in TANF were added by the Legislature:

Technology Training/ATTAIN

\$7 million

This funding supports technology assisted learning programs at SUNY Educational Opportunity Centers to provide basic educational skills, job readiness training, and occupational training.

Build NY

\$750,000

This program helps disadvantaged workers access construction jobs.

NYS AFL-CIO Workforce Development Institute

\$400,000

This program provides education and training programs in collaboration with NYS community colleges.

ACCESS Welfare to Careers

\$250,000

These programs help public assistance recipients access post-secondary education and gain the knowledge and credentials needed to secure family-sustaining work.

Displaced Homemaker Program

\$2.129 million

This program helps long-term homemakers develop and implement vocational plans leading to employment, which will allow them to become economically independent.

* Though funding was cut for Adult and Family Literacy, Adult Basic Education and Language Immersion/ESL, there is unspent prior year funding which will be used to fund these programs for FY 2008-2009.

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Youth Services

Increase funding by \$6.1 million for the Advantage After-School Program

Since the program's inception, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) has received more applications for Advantage After School Programs than it can fund. For 2008, OCFS does not plan to release a new RFP for services due to a lack of funding. This increase will bring the total statewide funding for Advantage After School programs to \$38 million and help narrow the gap between demand and supply.

A total of \$27.2 million is allocated for this program. The 2007-08 budget supported Advantage After School from federal TANF funding. In 2008-09, funding is being shifted to the Local Assistance General Fund and will be subject to a 2% reduction.

Ensure youth services are not disrupted by the proposed consolidation of the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Program (YDDP) and Special Delinquency Prevention Program (SDPP)

The Executive Budget proposes to consolidate youth development and special delinquency programs at current funding levels. A total of \$37.85 million is allocated to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote youth development, of which \$28.47 million is allocated for YDDP and \$9.38 million is available for SDPP. Currently, the State's youth bureaus administer YDDP funding while the Office of Children and Family Services administers SDPP funding directly through contracts with providers across the state. While we are still learning how this consolidation will be implemented, we urge that it does not disrupt or reduce the current availability of youth services through these programs. In addition, the Governor's proposal does not include the \$1 million added to YDDP by the State legislature in the 2007-08 budget; we urge that this \$1 million is restored in the adopted budget.

The Budget consolidates youth development and special delinquency programs. Approximately \$37 million is allocated to prevent juvenile delinquency and promote youth development of which \$27.903 million is allocated for locally operated YDDP and \$9.191 million is available for SDPP or other youth development services.

Support the Governor's proposal to add \$10 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) and maintain the Legislature's investment of \$13.9 million for 21st CCLC programs

Last year, the New York State Education Department (SED) did not issue a long-expected \$30 million RFP to offer its first cohort of 207 programs the chance to continue funding. However, one-year funding was included in the final 2007-08 budget to allow providers to extend their programs. We support the Governor's proposal to add \$10 million to support 21st CCLC. Inclusion of the Governor's \$10 million proposal, and the restoration of the Legislature's \$13.9 million in the final 2008-09 State budget will complement the funding available in the current 21st CCLC RFP.

The Budget provides \$10 million in the 2008-09 school year for the 21st Century Learning Centers program.

Increase funding by \$1.5 million for Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) Programs

A significant unmet need exists for this program including a new demand for youth shelter services that has developed due to recent statutory changes to the JD/PINS prevention requirements and restrictions on the use of non-secure detention for runaways. We request that an additional \$1.5 million be added this year.

Additional funding for this program is not included in the budget. The total allocation in the 2008-09 budget for these programs is \$6.18 million.



Add a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Youth Service Providers

Youth services has been consistently overlooked and employees in this sector are in particular need of a COLA. We estimate a 3% COLA for Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention (YDDP) Programs, and Special Delinquency Prevention Programs (SDPP) would cost approximately \$1.4 million this fiscal year.

This was not allocated in the budget.

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