

Boston City Council Committee on Ways and Means

Dockets #0524-0536 FY22 Budget

Youth Engagement and Employment

Working Session: Tuesday, May 4, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

Hearing: Thursday, May 13, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

The following is a collection of questions that were asked by the Committee regarding the FY22 budget for Youth Engagement and Employment at the Working Session on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 at 2:00 p.m.

Recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jxBne5Bovg>

The Administration is requested to respond to all questions in one of three ways:

1. Verbally at the hearing on Thursday, May 13th, at 4PM.
2. For factual questions, through written responses supplied prior to May 13th, including budget book page numbers or other references where appropriate.
3. By deferring to a specific scheduled departmental budget hearing.

Please annotate and return this information request before May 13th, indicating how each question will be answered.

Youth Engagement and Employment Budget Questions

Councilor Kenzie Bok asked:

- I'm very pleased to see the two additional staff positions for YEE; can you provide more details regarding their exact responsibilities?
 - o Will the deputy director be able to help YEE improve frequency of communication and relationships with partners and other stakeholders?
 - o What kind of background in evaluation are we looking to hire for in that role?
- How can we enhance program development and support to ensure that YEE is providing high quality experiences for youth?
 - o Could YEE potentially pilot a support role more focused on content and program design by adding some resources to support and connect the constellation of green youth programs this summer, as part of launching the Environment Department's green jobs initiative?
- I'm interested in the possibility to have some kind of very basic shared orientation across all YEE programs -- just to help orient youth, many of whom may be in their first job, and make them feel connected to the City; have we thought about this?
- I very much appreciate the doubling of supervisor roles for older youth from 200 to 400. Is it possible to increase the amount of pay for program supervisors? Have we thought about elevated stipends for second-year supervisors, or for roles with more responsibility?



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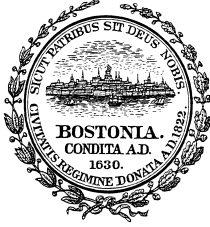
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- Every year we hear advocates ask us to expand eligibility to include more 19-22 year olds. What kind of analysis has YEE done of this group and what kinds of city-supported jobs could best set them up to enter the more permanent workforce? Has YEE partnered with OWD to think about this transition?
- Have we thought about providing small grants for nonprofit partners to help support youth program costs that accrue beyond the hiring of the youths themselves? We know some partners fundraise to hire additional leaders and adult supervision, or tools and equipment, etc.
- What mechanisms do we have in place to gather feedback about the grants program? We have already heard that its fringe rate may not be high enough (re what required non-profit fringe is for our partners), and partners were not involved in any planning efforts before it was announced, so it would be great to have an intentional plan to gather feedback after the first year of this approach.
- Going forward, could YEE make it part of their practice to meet with stakeholders -- including youth organizing groups -- about planned program revisions at SuccessLink, in advance of final announcements? Like the program partners, youth organizers are excited about some recent SuccessLink changes but also frustrated to find out about them as a surprise and to not be included in a prior conversation about implementation and details.

Looking ahead to this summer

- How many partners have opted for the grant option?
 - How many youth will be going through that partner-managed hiring process, and how many will go through the City of Boston hiring process this year?
- Can you provide us with a table of all partners and City departments for this Summer 2021 SuccessLink programs, the number of jobs initially approved, the title of each job/program, and whether they are through the grant or regular SuccessLink option?
- I understand that there has been some shift in the age eligibility; can you explain? Am I correct in understanding that most 14-year-olds are still included, and what is our hesitancy about expanding to include all 14-year-olds? Is it still related to the BCYF program, or something else?
- The grants program alternative will hopefully take some pressure off the city on-boarding process; have any further improvement to that process been made to deal with the bottleneck?
- Is the City planning on keeping the college courses program due to its popularity?



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- Are summer camps generally hiring youth again this summer, or no? Is the city planning to run a Blue Shirts program, or the expanded Parks work program it ran last summer?
- My office applied to host youth again for a civics and art program, as we did last summer, but we haven't heard back; can you provide an update for us?

Looking back at last summer

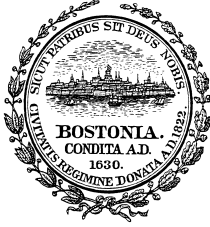
- Can you provide us with a table for last year of all partners and City departments for the Summer 2020 SuccessLink program, the number of jobs initially approved, the title of each job/program, and how many youth ultimately enrolled at each job site, with the number of regular jobs vs supervisor jobs also noted?
- Of the SuccessLink youth who participated in regular jobs last summer, can you please provide a breakdown by age, and a breakdown of how many hours they worked (this could be a distribution graph from 0 to 200+ hours), and what weeks of the summer they worked (so how many youth were working each week of July 5, 12, 19, etc.)? Please provide this same breakdown for supervisor positions.
- How much in City funds have been spent on youth wages in FY21? How much in CARES Act funding? How much CARES Act funding was spent on related tuition, supplies, tools, & technology in FY21?

Year-Round Jobs

- How many actual year-round jobs (out of the 1000 budgeted) were there in FY21, and when did they begin and end?
- Where are we on launching our year-round jobs closer to a September start time, so that they are more genuinely year-round?
- What is the age eligibility for year-round jobs? What was the age breakdown last year?
- How can we get more partners involved in the year-round jobs program?
- We heard about some bumps this year re: keeping partners informed about application and hiring timing window for the year-round jobs, but we also heard about process improvements re: keeping youth from the summer in the system. Can you speak to what happened this year with that process and what we plan to improve next year?

Councilor Liz Breadon asked:

- Does HR have the capabilities and resources it needs to handle the increase in youth jobs participants and the annual surge into the onboarding process? What can we do to increase this capacity?



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- Can you provide a breakdown of what types of jobs are available to youth, and where in the City (geographically) the jobs are located?
- Which City departments will be providing youth jobs, and how many each?

Councilor Ed Flynn asked:

- Which organizations does YEE partner with?
- How can other organizations get involved to partner with YEE?
- How does YEE engage with at risk youth and other hard to reach youth? What does YEE do specifically to engage youth who live in BHA housing in these opportunities?

Councilor Julia Mejia asked:

- In addition to the 5000 youth jobs, how can we use this funding to create opportunities for year-round jobs for young people?
- How are we thinking creatively about all of our city contracts and finding ways to create employment opportunities for young people throughout them?

Councilor Ricardo Arroyo asked:

- What does the Youth Lead the Change program look like in terms of process? Who participates in the program and how is outreach conducted?
- In the request for information from the Council, YEE announced that DYEE will be moving forward with grant funds for summer 2021 and that YEE will serve a grant stewardship role: How will YEE ensure that funding is stable and consistent? How will YEE ensure that this aspect of SuccessLink is not overly dependent on external fund availability?
- How does YEE conduct outreach to youth and other participants in the summer employment and school-year employment programs?
- Does YEE track demographic information on participants in the Youth Lead the Change program and employment programs? If so, can YEE provide these figures?

Councilor Lydia Edwards asked:

- What are the demographics of youth that are being placed into these jobs?
 - Where do they live?
 - How old are they?
- How is YEE partnering with local organizations like MIRA and MOIA and SOAR to create a job pipeline for hard-to-reach individuals and immigrant youth?