County of Los Angeles

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

33 September 29, 2026

EDWARD YEN
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

September 29, 2026

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

RECOMMENDATION TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT THE CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION GRANT IN SUPPORT OF THE LEVEL UP PROGRAM (ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) requests delegated authority to accept a grant award for $1,067,000 from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation (the Foundation), awarded to the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP) through their fiscal sponsor Southern California Grantmakers (SCG). The grant will be used for the DCFS Level Up Program.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE BOARD:

1. Delegate authority to the Director of DCFS, or designee, to accept a grant in the amount of $600,000 for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 and $467,000 for FY 2027-28, and to execute any related Memorandum of Understanding with SCG.
2. Delegate authority to the Director of DCFS, or designee, to utilize the grant funds to reimburse caregivers and youth for costs related to youth activities through DCFS' Level Up Program and transportation costs associated with those activities.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of DCFS, or designee, to accept grant awards for the program in future fiscal years.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

DCFS promotes child safety and well-being by partnering with communities to strengthen families, keeping children at home whenever possible, and connecting them with stable, loving homes in times of need. The Foundation grant award will be used for the DCFS Level Up Program to support the participation of approximately 1,000 foster youth in activities that nourish their mental, physical, social, occupational, and personal growth.

The grant funds will also provide strength-building activities for children in foster care. These support services or extracurricular and enrichment activities often take a holistic approach, considering the mind, body, and spirit-connection in promoting overall well-being and healing. They go beyond the conventional support systems by offering a diverse range of resources and other innovative approaches. By engaging youth in foster care in these non-traditional resources, we aim to empower them to discover their passions, develop their strengths, and build supportive relationships that will positively impact their lives.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

The recommended actions support the County's Strategic Plan North Star 1, Make Investments That Transform Lives; Focus Area Goal D, Support Vulnerable Populations: Address conditions which drive interactions with the County's child welfare, homeless rehousing, carceral, law enforcement and justice systems.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The total grant amount is $1,067,000, with $600,000 for FY 2026-27 and $467,000 for FY 2027-28. There is no impact to the County's net County cost.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The Level Up Program utilizes Flexible Family Supports (FFS) funds to deliver concrete resources and tailored services that strengthen family stability and child well-being pursuant to child welfare services standards. Grant funds provided by The Foundation, through its fiscal sponsor SCG, will supplement existing FFS by expanding strength-building activities for participating children and families. Approval of this request complies with County contracting policies and requires no net County cost.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

On March 6, 2026, the CSP submitted the grant application to the Foundation to fund the Level Up Program's strength-building activities. On May 26, 2026, the Foundation approved a grant, payable to the CSP through SCG.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Approval of the recommended actions will allow DCFS to continue to provide reimbursement by the Level Up Program for youth activities and related transportation that was previously funded by FFS funds provided by Assembly Bill 179, which ended on June 30, 2026. This grant provides bridge funding for DCFS until the State's Tiered Rate Structure is fully implemented, which includes strength-building funds.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, it is requested that the Executive Officer/Clerk of the Board send an adopted stamped copy of the Board letter and attachment to DCFS.

Respectfully submitted,

LISA E. MANDEL
Interim Director

LEM:RTKR:LTI:cp

Enclosures

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors