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Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

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Subject: NonSubstantive Change Request –Fathers and Continuous Learning in Child Welfare Project (OMB #0970-0579)

This memo requests approval of nonsubstantive changes to the approved information collection, Fathers and Continuous Learning in Child Welfare Project (OMB #0970-0579).

Background

OMB approved the information request for the descriptive study for the OPRE project Fathers and Continuous Learning in Child Welfare (OMB #0970-0579) on October 26, 2021. The study is exploring strategies and approaches to engage fathers and paternal relatives in child welfare in five agencies (Los Angeles, California; Prowers County, Colorado; Denver County, Colorado; Wake County, North Carolina; and Connecticut). Included in the information request were instruments for three primary data collection activities: (1) a survey of agency and partner staff who directly interact with cases and their supervisors; (2) semi-structured interviews with agency leaders, staff, and partners; and (3) focus groups with recent clients of the agencies.

The study has three key research questions:

1. How did implementing the Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC, conducted in an earlier phase of the project) contribute to the launch and potential sustainment of strategies and approaches for engaging fathers and paternal relatives?
2. Are the strategies and approaches implemented by each team linked to increased engagement among fathers, paternal relatives, or caseworkers (or other near-term outcomes, as data are available)?
3. To what extent did BSC implementation facilitate organization-level or system-level shifts in the culture surrounding the engagement of fathers and paternal relatives?

Since approval of the information collection request, we have secured the agencies' participation in the evaluation and learned that agencies have planned to spread strategies and approaches more broadly. For example, Connecticut is planning to spread strategies and approaches from one office (Hartford) to three others (Manchester, New Britain, and Meriden). Initial estimates for the number of respondents were developed with a preliminary understanding of how agencies were planning to spread the strategies and approaches they have developed to increase engagement of fathers and paternal relatives. As such, we only factored in the Hartford office for Connecticut. Understanding the extent of the spread and sustainment of the strategies is critical to being able to answer our research questions about how participation in the Fathers and

Continuous Learning BSC affected organizational shifts related to father and paternal relative engagement.

Overview of Requested Changes

This nonsubstantive change request is to interview and survey more staff and to conduct additional focus groups. Including these additional respondents will ensure that the study is able to address the key research questions accurately and present a full description of father and paternal relative engagement strategies and approaches and their potential influence on organizational culture, and enhances the study's ability to identify promising approaches to improving father and paternal relative engagement in child welfare. The data collection instruments have not changed, nor has the time per response. We have updated Supporting Statements A and B to reflect an increase in the number of respondents to Instrument 1 (from 230 to 305), the number of respondents to Instrument 2 (from 72 to 84), and the number of respondents to Instrument 3 (from 360 to 480). The total number of respondents is now 889, increasing the total annual burden hours under this OMB # from 347 to 452.

Time Sensitivities

Our data collection plans include surveying staff in the first quarter of 2022 and again approximately one year later. We are requesting review of this request by early 2022 to keep with the project schedule. Data collection is scheduled to end in the first quarter of 2023.