

From: [Scherer, Andrew](#)
To: [CHERYL NOLAN](#)
Cc: [CYNTHIA SCHNEIDER](#); glescault@bellsouth.net; [Fern Schair](#)
Subject: Draft Program Quality Report for Legal Services NYC
Date: Tuesday, January 20, 2009 10:39:30 AM

Jan. 20, 2009

Cheryl Nolan
Program Counsel
Legal Services Corporation

Re: Draft Program Quality Report for Legal Services NYC

Dear Cheryl,

All the best to you for 2009.

This is in response to Cyndy Schneider's letter of December 19, 2008, which asks me to let you know of any factual inaccuracies contained in the report.

First, I want to express our gratitude and appreciation for the enormously useful observations and suggestions, as well as the hard work and thought that went into the report. Guy Lescault did an excellent job of leading and coordinating the effort and worked closely with us (particularly with Jeanne Perry) on all the complicated logistics. The team that visited included some of the most highly respected legal services leaders in the country. The report and visit will have a profound impact on this organization as we continue to strive for excellence in all aspects of the program and discuss and plan changes. We are already implementing some of the report's suggestions, including the development of a citywide conflict checking system, the initiation of a planning process for delivery of services in Brooklyn and the placement of an interim director in Queens. We are also in the process of planning many other changes that are responsive to and consistent with the suggestions made in the report.

I have a couple of corrections, a suggestion and a comment. The corrections:

- The cover page of the report refers to us as Legal Services New York City. Our recently-adopted name is Legal Services NYC. While the body of the report uses the correct name, the cover page needs to be corrected.
- On page 5, the report states that Brooklyn A continues to raise private funds for its community economic development work without a critical examination of whether that is the best use of resources. Marty Needelman points out that this allocation of resources is in fact considered each year by Brooklyn A as the program sets its budget, seeks fellowships and private funds, and assigns staff.
- On page 23, in the second paragraph, the report calls our Brooklyn Family Defense Project, the Brooklyn Family Defense Fund Project. That should be corrected.

I suggest that when you issue the final version of the report, you insert a page that briefly describes each of the members of the review team. We had an excellent team, with broad experience in legal services and I think the impact of the report would be strengthened by

describing (briefly) the credentials of the team members.

I also want to register our disappointment that the report did not discuss your findings with respect to our individual units. We greatly appreciate and highly value the overview the report provides of our citywide organization, and we recognize the importance of making the overall organization the primary focus of the report. However, there was a lot of time spent at our local offices and, as we learned in the exit interviews, valuable observations made, so it would have been helpful to memorialize those observations in the report. I think this could have been done without conflicting with or undermining the overall message of the report.

All in all, however, the visit was a very positive experience and the report will be enormously useful.

Sincerely,

Andy

cc: Cyndy Schneider
Guy Lescault
Fern Schair, Legal Services NYC Board Chair

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