

Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council

APPROVED MINUTES

September 17, 2010, 4-7 p.m.

Embassy Suites, East Peoria, IL

PRESENT - SWFCAC		GUESTS	SYAB Members (joined the meeting at 7pm)
Argueta, Carlos	Moorehead, Bill	Coffman, Kent	Heywood, Jamar
Ball, Mercedes	Robinson, Rolinda	Coffman, Lee	Howell, Nadis
Barber, Angela	Schumacher, Heather	Jones, Antoinette	Jones, Antoinette
Boyd, Gladys	Steinhardt, Steve	Kopacz, Virginia	Lepse, Ashley
Cruz, Edith		Lawlor, Tony	Market, Dominique
DeLao, Andrew	DCFS STAFF	Mobley, Gail	McNeal, Swami
Dixon, Irma	Bullock, Mary	Rogers, Leshonda	Olkonen, Danny
Freke, Debbie	Gates, Ray		Stubbs, Aisha
Garcia, Amy	Hibbler, Sharrell		Thompson, Asia
Harvey, Robyn	James, Vanessa		Thompson, Courtney
Jenkins, Birdia	Lane, Shaun		Tillery, Naeem
Jones, Sheila	Lawrence, Cheryl		Williams, Jerome
Lutz, Kathleen	Marlott, Midge		
McCoy, Cathy	Missel, Craig		
Montgomery, Leanne	Richmond, Elizabeth		

Welcome & Introductions – Leanne Montgomery

Leanne Montgomery welcomed council members and guests to the meeting and stated that the meeting would be taped to ensure accurate minutes. She asked that cell phones be put on silent and stated that if someone needs to take a call or have a side conversation that he or she should step into the hall so that the meeting could continue without interruption. She noted that this is not an “open discussion forum” but rather an agenda-driven meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes from 7/16/10

Rolinda said that the Cook Central report should say that they met June 22nd and had training on car seats. *Amy made a motion to accept the minutes with this amendment. Bill seconded. The minutes were approved as amended.*

Final Reports to Director - Angela Barber

There were no final reports to the Director. The monthly report to the Director was sent to Council members the first week of the month.

Prepare for annual meeting with SYAB - Angela Barber

Angela described planning for the meeting with the Statewide Youth Advisory Board. Chairs were set up in a circle in the back of the room to enhance mingling at the joint meeting. The meeting will start with two ice breakers. They will then review a proposed letter from the Director to recruit youth to come to the regional youth advisory board meetings and then break into groups by region to discuss possible changes to the letter and strategies to increase attendance. Ray described how the youth would begin arriving for dinner with SWFCAC at 7pm, and the meeting would follow at 7:40 pm.

Committee Reports:Archives

No Report. *Robyn will ask Patti for the records.

Legislation - Sheila Jones

Sheila highlighted a bill and encouraged members to vote in November's election. Ray noted that there is a legislative report approved by DCFS Legislative Liaison Dana Yowell included in members' packets.

Foster Parent Café Design Team - Angela Barber

Angela said they have one last committee meeting to discuss how the cafes went at the recent caregiver's conference. Ray asked how Strengthening Families will take off with it, and Angela said they will offer foster parent cafes statewide. Gladys asked if we will design more foster parent questions. Angela said we can discuss that at the next committee meeting. If there is no need, she will dissolve that committee. Angela explained that only three questions were used at the IFAPA conference, and there are six others. Robyn suggested that Angela let the committee stand, as we may use up the questions – especially in Northern Region. Angela will consider it. *Angela will email committee members regarding the next committee meeting.

Training - Mercedes Ball

Mercedes said all is going well. Debbie said Educational Advocacy Training is suspended and we need it to be reinstated. Cheryl Lawrence said the law has changed, so the curriculum had to be updated, resulting in some classes being delayed. *The materials will be printed soon, and classes will resume in October.

Craig Missell introduced Cheryl Lawrence, explaining her education and experience, which includes prior experience at DCFS as we began developing PRIDE. Cheryl further explained her past experience with DCFS, including the red book for foster parent training, which preceded PRIDE, and also her professional experience in between her times at DCFS. She said the regional training managers will increase their interactions with stakeholders, including this council, to get advice on training needs.

Public Relations - Leanne Montgomery

Leanne said they had a display at the conference. She sends cards to council members and family as needed.

Respite - Gladys Boyd

The committee turned in their recommendations to the Director, and she has since spoken with Shaun and Kara.

Adolescent Issues/YAB - Angela Barber

Angela said they met and brainstormed regarding what they can do to partner with the youth. One issue that came up was the policy on runaways. Lorne Garret is scheduled to speak regarding the runaway policy at the October SWFCAC meeting. *This committee will meet again after that. She asked members to send her questions to share with Lorne.

Policy Committee - Heather Schumacher

No report

Parent Committee – Irma Dixon

Irma said they met to brainstorm what work to do. Edith spoke with Jackie Bright regarding having a parent attend a Cook North meeting and a parent was to come, but didn't. Marsha Harris re-invited that parent.

FPSS Committee

Ray explained that Joan Nelson referred it to the committee she has and asked for more details from us, so maybe * the chair needs to call a committee meeting to develop details to share with Joan.

NEW BUSINESS**Message from the Assistant Regional Administrator – Mary Bullock**

Mary said she was representing Bob Blackwell who could not be at the meeting.

Transformation Teams –Mary said work began in 2007 and continues. Each region has forums and should be inviting foster parents during October – December. She explained looking at disproportionality of kids in care. This is a hard topic.

Youth Advisory Board – Mary said activities give youth a sense of belonging and importance and lets older youth who are doing well give back. She encourages workers and foster parents to transport youth to activities, and she encouraged all present to support the youth.

Regional ReportsCook North - Edith Cruz, Irma Dixon

They will start training at the monthly meeting on 9/21 and continue through January. She listed the topics, including implementation plans on 9/30.

Cook South - Angela Barber

Angela did not attend because she had jury duty. Mercedes said they had two meetings, a support group on Tuesday and a regular meeting Wednesday. Tuesday they talked regarding increasing membership. They formed a committee with foster parents and staff to work on the implementation plan. Foster parents reported on the conference. Cheryl Lawrence came and introduced herself.

Cook Central - Birdia Jenkins, Rolinda Robinson

They have not met since Adrienne's death.

Northern - Cathy McCoy, Debbie Freke

Robyn said they are not meeting as a council. Instead they are having three months of cafes, and have started work on their implementation plan.

Southern - Andrew DeLao

They have not met. They are waiting for a replacement for Michael Bollman. The Regional Youth Advisory Board is split into two areas. Johnny Williams spoke about supports for youth in college. The problem is DCFS cuts off stipends and medical cards to college youth in the summer. They will meet September 23rd to review their implementation plan. They talked about ending the subsidy at 18 and once a box is checked it can't be changed.

Central - Leanne Montgomery, Bill Moorehead

No report. The meetings have been changed, per Joyce Loy, who called and gave Leanne five dates for future meetings, on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Reports from other Councils/ Committees:IFAPA - Gladys Boyd

Gladys said the conference really stood out. Foster parents called for days after. Agencies want IFAPA to come and talk to them. She said the conference networking was great. The planning committee worked well together. She said she would like to have a conference here at the Embassy Suites for 600 caregivers next year, in November, and work with IAAC on an Adoption Celebration as part of the conference. She said she won't know until January if it can be funded, and she wants to be prepared to move forward then.

UIC Steering Committee - Rolinda Robinson

They have not met. The next meeting is scheduled for 10/21 @ 11:30.

CWAC Training Committee - Robyn Harvey

They will meet on 9/24.

Differential Response - Robyn Harvey

Advice went to the Director. No need to meet.

Report from Division of Service Support - Shaun Lane

Celebrating 50th birthday today.

Runaways – Shaun said he is pleased that we invited Lorne Garrett to the next meeting. He explained that children run and also go missing. At one time we didn't know the whereabouts of 7,800 children. That number is now down to about 200. Most run and come back quickly. Some run and get involved in sexual exploitation. We are working with the National Center for Exploited Children to develop new training, and Craig said he would include the council in that work.

Respite – There are specific requirements for specialized contracts, and Kara and Holley have tightened accountability on this. Traditional and kinship are more difficult, as there are no specifics and it is buried in the rate.

Work done to date in response to the Council's recommendations includes:

1. Looking at payment data in DCFS homes
2. Asking POS agencies to explain the respite programs.

3. The CWAC Infrastructure Committee will discuss respite issues Monday.

Budget – Shaun said he didn't have much to add to his previous report. We are holding our own, but money is very tight. There is significant curtailment in access to services from providers who serve many of the people DCFS serves. A few providers can no longer accept DCFS referrals. There could be additional reductions.

Juvenile Justice – We are working furiously under a “shared services agreement”. We are giving DJJ support services like new staff training, including training for new after care workers. This switch from parole agents to aftercare workers reflects a culture change, as they used to drive cars with cages and carry weapons. Aftercare workers will meet with clients and their families at admission and stay in contact with the clients and their families, staying with youth the entire time they are being served by DJJ.

Differential Response – Staff training is complete. There will be a control group so we can evaluate the effectiveness of the program. Contracts with community agencies have been let. Staff is now transferring into the DJJ unit. We expect DJJ to be operational by 11/1/10.

Field Support – We recognize that there is room for improvement in service delivery by workers, including enhanced clinical capability. “Strength based, trauma informed, family focus child welfare practice” is where we are attempting to go with the services and interventions we deliver. This new program will focus on supporting supervisors. Contracts were issued last week with five university partners. All placement and intact supervisors will be assigned a field support staff person provided and supervised by one of the university partners. It is one approach that in combination with others work should enhance practice.

Ray asked Shaun if he heard that the Governor has said that all FY'10 bills are to be paid by 12/30. Shaun said the legislature passed a bill extending the lapse period until 12/30/2010. Amy asked whether field support would also be provided to POS agency supervisors, and Shaun said field support will be provided to both DCFS and POS, and will be invisible to foster parents. Part of the field support function is consultation and training, to augment supervisors and to provide field support. The ratio is 1 to 12 downstate and 1 to 15 in Cook. We consulted with architects of this model from Kentucky and Missouri. The structure will vary by agency. Field support staff will be intimately involved in the learning collaboratives. Amy said this adds an extra layer, and she asked if the new field support staff is part of the team. Shaun said they will not attend ACRs or staffings. Robyn said supporting supervisors will indirectly benefit foster parents. Shaun said it's not a magic bullet, and field support is not another layer of monitoring and scrutiny. They are still determining how they should interact with APT.

Report from Office of Training - Craig Missel & Cheryl Lawrence

See earlier notes.

Report from Office of Caregiver & Parent Support - Ray Gates

IFAPA Conference – Each member who attended gave their thoughts. They were glad prayer was added back in. Aura was positive. Networking was great. People were happy. It was

enjoyed greatly. Information was useful. Ray explained the status of the workshop and overall evaluations.

Ray explained the ground rules for the joint meeting with the SWYAB, referring members to the ground rules document in their meeting packets.

Angela called for motion to adjourn, after no one responded to her call for more discussion.

MOTION – Bill moved; Steve gave the second; there was no discussion; it passed unanimously.

The council adjourned at 6:55 pm and moved to dinner with the youth board and the joint meeting to follow.

Next Meeting: October 15, 2010, 9am-3pm – Ramada, 200 N. Green Bay Road, Waukegan, IL