



FINAL

DHS Children, Adults and Families
Child Welfare Advisory Committee
Future Issues Work Group
June 11, 2008

Attending: Janet Arenz, Mike Balter by phone, Iris Bell, Benjamin Hazelton, Mickey Serice, Judy Stiegler

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The 4/9/08 Future Issues Work Group minutes were approved.

REVIEW LIST OF ISSUES

- Serice: Jan Slick has convened a work group to look at the possibility of redesigning the three Family Based Services (FBS) contracts, both with and without additional funding. She requested time on a future CWAC agenda for input on what the redesign should look like.
- Stiegler: FIWG's task is to determine DHS' expectations as to the desired outcome for bringing this issue to CWAC.
- Hazelton: Was a member of the FBS work group, but was unable to attend their most recent meeting. The items listed on the last page of Jan's summary paper are probably the three key areas of focus. They are: transportation, coordination of service providers, and expert consultation for difficult cases; with transportation as the top priority. Those issues consistently rose to the top by focus groups across the state.
- Bell: Transportation as a barrier is especially true for rural areas.
- Stiegler: Jan Slick's material does not state what is being sought from CWAC and what the presentation will look like. More information is needed from Jan on the objective and purpose of bringing it to CWAC.
- Balter: This is probably something that CWAC will not take group action on, but we will give Jan input during a group discussion. His personal bias is that these existing services are process rather than outcome oriented. The question that has not been asked is: Do the services accomplish the desired impact? If the services are going to be reorganized, then the effort should be aimed at how they prevent children from coming into care and keeping children safe while in care. We should ask Jan how historically the services affect those two key goals and how the changes will make a difference.
- Stiegler: Agrees. It focuses the discussion on the key goals that are on CWAC's radar.

- Balter: We need to build a body of knowledge on what affects the prevention of children from coming into care, assuring they are safe and thriving while in care, and providing permanency in a timely manner, while identifying strategies to reduce overrepresentation of children of color. These are the four key goals CWAC identified, as listed in the footnote on the List of Issues. If we focus on these four goals every time an issue comes to us, we can build that body of knowledge.
- Stiegler: When staff have a better picture of our context and framework, it helps to narrow their presentations.
- Serice: In addition to focusing the presentation on how the issue impacts the four key goals, staff need to explain what they want from CWAC.
- Stiegler: They need to explain if they want CWAC to review and vet proposed recommendations of the FBS work group or something else. Focusing our discussions and work within the four key goals makes our work more focused and usable by the agency.
- Serice: These four key goals fit in with many of the things DHS is trying to do internally.
- Stiegler: If we keep referring back to the key goals and priorities, our dialogue will improve. We can let Jan know that we are open to her making a presentation on how the redesign responds to the four key goals. This is timely if it has some ramifications on policy option packages that are being developed.
- Hazelton: Offered to talk to Jan Slick at the next FBS work group meeting.
- Balter: As we get better at this, then if an issue comes to us that is outside the framework, we can ask why the agency is pursuing it. If these are the priorities of the agency, why do something that falls outside of them?
- Stiegler: Speaking of the next CWAC meeting, she will be talking to Mickey after today's FIWG meeting about possibly canceling the July meeting. She needs to know where the department is headed in filling the CAF director position before going ahead with the meeting. A decision will be made in a week or two. Asked if anyone sees a problem with canceling the July meeting.
- Serice: CWAC has sometimes skipped a summer meeting.

- Balter: We don't need a meeting necessarily, but we do need to continue to be involved in the POP process. At certain points along the way, groups such as CWAC can become advocates where DHS cannot.
- Stiegler: We weighed in as a group at the first blush. Mickey recently sent out a status update. If we are kept apprised, we can weigh in as a group and as individuals as they progress. We can talk about this more during our agenda item on developing tools for handling short term and crisis requests. We rely so heavily on in-person meetings. We need to look at ways to have group input in ways other than in-person meetings for short term / crisis requests, but also for ongoing, progressive ones (such as POP development) when the timing for response falls outside our meeting schedule. There is nothing in our bylaws to prohibit us from using email voting so we may want to take advantage of using it.
- Serice: All DHS POPs are being discussed in Cabinet in multiple meetings. The divisions receive instructions after each on pricing, etc. Bruce Goldberg hopes to have them posted on the web in 2-3 weeks. The deadline is when the Agency Requested Budget (ARB) is due. We have three budgets. The ARB goes to the Governor in the fall. The Governor's Requested Budget (GRB) is always different from the ARB. The Legislative Approved Budget (LEB) is always different from the GRB. As a program, CAF gets out of the picture earlier than the budget staff. The DHS community meetings ended in May and all community comments have been posted online. The community meetings were well-attended by diverse groups.
- Balter: His expectation is that CWAC should get a response back when it makes a recommendation to the department. CWAC sent a set of recommendations to Bruce on the POPs. We did not get a response back yet.
- Serice: CWAC's recommendations were folded into the recommendations from other entities. The next steps and response will be Cabinet's on the department's priority list. He is not sure if the POP list that will be posted online soon will be draft or final. At some point, the process rests with Cabinet and they make their decisions based on the input they receive.
- Stiegler: We knew the POPs would go through an extensive parceling process. Bruce said our recommendations would go to Cabinet and would be part of what they used to narrow the POPs. The first cut came

as a result of input from CWAC and other groups. Then the community forums were held and the next reiteration will follow.

- Serice: In one of the community meetings he attended, the bulk of discussion was about the Oregon Health Plan and nothing was said about child welfare. We do not know how CAF's POPs will fare with Cabinet. All POPs have been moved forward at this point with the exception of three that CAF had proposed internally (after-hours coverage, legal representation and OVRS services/supplies). CWAC will be able to find their POPs on the list. The legal representation POP was a placeholder waiting for a second work group which DOJ has not yet formed.
- Balter: We all agreed our POP prioritization process was not elegant and could be improved. However, Judy's letter to Bruce on 2/8/08 says it is a hope that the recommendations in the letter are the beginning of CWAC's opportunities to assist and advise DHS on the prioritization of policies advancing the welfare of Oregon's children. Suggested that Judy reference her 2/8/08 letter and ask the department how it is doing. Where CWAC feels disrespected is that we don't get the ongoing feedback.
- Stiegler: Agreed to Mike's suggestion. Accepts some responsibility to keep the pressure on to get a response back. It should be an expectation for DHS to respond to our recommendations and as chair, she will take some of the responsibility to remind DHS of that expectation.
- Balter: Also, CWAC needs to be mature enough to accept when Bruce says what he cannot share with CWAC. We are not decision-makers, but are decision-advisors. However, we want to know if what we did helped and if we are in sync with that the agency is saying is important.
- Stiegler: She will also ask where additional opportunities are to have input in the process.
- Balter: If the Governor goes in a much different direction than what CWAC recommends and with what goes into the ARB, then we will see that we are not in sync with what is coming from the community as priorities.
- Stiegler: Did we send our principles document to the Legislature?
- Balter: Yes, to the Legislature and Governor.
- Hazelton: In a quick comparison of CWAC's recommendations on the POPs and the most recent POP list Mickey sent out, he sees CWAC's recommendations are there for the most part. They may not be specifically listed as they were in our recommendations and may have

been rewritten or reframed. JRP's proposed POPs were worded differently, but similar to ones already proposed by CAF, so the concepts are still there.

- Serice: We did fold POPs together. We use short titles and they may not be descriptive of all the elements they contain, so you may not see a specific POP in the condensed titles. We are trying to collapse the number of POPS into a package that makes sense, but then we have to spread them out again for pricing purposes.
- Stiegler: Is it correct to say that concept-wise, the CWAC priority POPs were not removed?
- Serice: Yes, all POPs were forwarded to Cabinet and they have not removed any (other than the ones he mentioned above).
- Balter: At each stage (sorting through the concepts, how much they cost and how much DHS can buy), we need some ability to provide insight.
- Stiegler: Will draft a letter to Bruce and route it to FIWG for a 24-hour review and comment. It will be in the context of saying we realize there will be a variety of reasons POPs are not forwarded to the Governor; however, we would appreciate knowing the rationale for why concepts are removed. We make this request because we want to be an advocacy group for the agency and find it difficult to advocate without this information. CWAC support (and support from other outside groups) for child welfare related concepts and POPs can make an impact.

ACTION: Judy Stiegler will draft a letter to Bruce Goldberg that will be routed to FIWG for a 24-hour review. The letter will ask for an update on how the department is doing in its development of POPs and if there will be future opportunities for CWAC to have input.

FIWG reviewed the existing list of issues and made the following decisions:

Family Based Services – review and possible reorganization

Keep on list. Benjamin will discuss with Jan Slick about narrowing her presentation to address how a redesign will affect CWAC's four key goals and to be specific in what her request from CWAC is.

How DHS can best engage CWAC

Keep on list. See below for additional discussion and action items.

Property Crimes Initiatives

Keep on list until election results are known.

Medication Management

Remove from list. CWAC work completed.

Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan

Keep on list until PIP is final. Maurita Johnson scheduled to give updates at CWAC meetings through September 2008.

How long should states keep kids in foster care?

Keep on list. Reword to read: “How well prepared are teens when they exit the child welfare system to enter adulthood?” The Teen Issues in Child Welfare Subcommittee will be giving a report on their work to answer this question at the next CWAC meeting.

Review of the CIRT process

Keep on list. When the final CIRT Review Committee report is available, FIWG will look at what it says about CWAC’s role in the CIRT process. If CWAC does play a role, take steps to ensure it happens.

CWAC and the Sensitive Review Committee Interface

Keep on list to clarify CWAC’s role, if any. The Sensitive Review Committee is in statute. The statute does not include an interface with CWAC.

Reconnecting Foster Children with their Families Initiative

Remove from list. CWAC work completed.

Is there a connection between the reasons children come into care and their success when they leave?

Remove from list. Initially thought to combine with “How well prepared are teens when they exit the child welfare system to enter adulthood?” However, this is outside the scope of the Teen Issues in Child Welfare Subcommittee.

Transportation of foster children to school (HB 3075 – 2005 session)

Keep on list. For future conversation. This touches on a larger concern expressed by Janet Arenz about where children are being placed.

Overrepresentation of children of color in foster care

Keep on list. See below for discussion and action items.

Adoption Resource Center

Keep on list until National Resource Center report is provided to CWAC. Nancy Keeling will be asked when the report will be available.

Relative care, preference for relatives and current caretaker rules

Remove from list. CWAC work completed.

Face-to-face visits

Remove from list. CWAC received monthly reports and can bring the issue back up for discussion if data reveals a need.

Drug and alcohol treatment services for parents with children in foster care

Keep on list. Invite Karen Wheeler to the next FIWG meeting to give an update, focusing on whether the additional funding is focusing on treatment to parents of children in foster care.

Oregon Child Welfare Safety Model Quality Assurance Measurements

Keep on list until Teen Issues in Child Welfare Subcommittee's report at the next CWAC meeting.

DEVELOP TOOLS FOR HANDLING SHORT TERM/CRISIS REQUESTS FOR CWAC INPUT

- Stiegler: We need to develop tools for handling not only short term and crisis requests, but for issues needing ongoing input; tools that will allow us to give substantive and meaningful input. We will need to expand our operating procedures. Asked if FIWG agrees to expanding the current operating procedures rather than creating new ones for these requests.
- Arenz: We need to be identifying the action items rather than defining if issues are short or long term.
- Stiegler: This is a process to cover circumstances when urgent issues fall outside our normal every-other-month meeting schedule or for ongoing issues to allow us to continue to give input. Judy is willing to make a

first-cut on editing the operating procedures and have FIWG review and comment.

- Hazelton: We may need to only add a bullet to the operating procedures under the section, “Expectation of Members,” saying they are to be available to participate outside the in-person meeting.
- Stiegler: We also need to make some changes in the “Processes” section that describes moving issues from Information → Discussion → Action → Response.
- Arenz: The process is what it is: Mickey lets us know when something hits and what the deadlines are, we call a meeting and get as many people together as we can. We need an expectation of DHS that information is provided to CWAC as soon as possible and an expectation that members make every effort to attend and participate. With situations requiring a quick turnaround, do we need to amend what we require for how many members are in attendance to be able to move things forward? Do we need an agreement that if members do not participate, they accept the decisions of those that do as being the decision of the CWAC, recognizing that members can also give input as individuals.
- Balter: Offered to work with Judy on the first edit of the operating procedures.
- Arenz: Regarding the possibility of not meeting in July, asked if we have enough to hold a meeting even there is no one identified as an interim director.
- Stiegler: The problem is that we are advisory to CAF on child welfare issues. If we cannot have the principle parties (DHS director or CAF director) present, we are not advising anyone.
- Arenz: Giving advice is not the only reason we meet. We could work on improving our processes.
- Stiegler: Will evaluate to see if holding a meeting will be valuable.

ACTION: Judy Stiegler and Mike Balter will revise the operating procedures. Their draft will be sent to FIWG for review. The next CWAC meeting will include discussion and possible action on the proposed revised operating procedures.

OVERREPRESENTATION OF CHILDREN OF COLOR IN FOSTER CARE

- Serice: This is woven into the CFSR program improvement plan.
- Stiegler: Several initiatives are working on the issue.
- Bell: We need to track and know what the initiatives are.
- Serice: Offered to be the point person from DHS because it spans across programs and practice. The initiatives need to be tracked to avoid having 5-6 major initiatives running parallel. The National Governor's Association for Best Practices (NGA Center) has selected six states (including Oregon) to participate in a policy academy to safely reduce the number of children in foster care. The academy is being conducted in partnership with Casey Family Programs. It will include work to address overrepresentation.
- Bell: CWAC does not need to track them, we just need to know what they are.
- Stiegler: We can add periodic status checks for information and discussion on CWAC agendas.
- Arenz: Is there a POP on a comparable issue to fold this into?
- Serice: Yes, it is part of the program integrity POP.
- Bell: Suggested Judge Nan Waller share with CWAC the recommendations from a recent NGA conference.
- Serice: Judge Waller is involved with the NGA Center policy academy and the Juvenile Court Improvement Project so is able to provide a link between the two. The NGA Center recommendations will fold into the other initiatives because they have common denominators of Judge Waller and Erinn Kelley-Siel.
- Arenz: Suggested Judge Waller share with CWAC what happened at the NGA conference.
- Stiegler: September may be a good time for Judge Waller to give her CWAC presentation. Our role is not to be a competing entity to what is already being done.
- Serice: These initiatives are new. There may be a role for CWAC later.
- Hazelton: His advice is that we support all efforts to reduce disproportionality, but someone needs to figure out what they all are and make sure they complement and not compete with each other.
- Serice: Will be the point person for CWAC.

- Stiegler: These initiatives are at the jumping-off stage. We need identification of what they are, where they are at, where they intersect and what the intersection points for CWAC are, if any.
- Serice: The work of these initiatives is separate from CWAC. Is not comfortable bringing that work to CWAC for CWAC to take action on.
- Stiegler: CWAC would not do that. It is just so CWAC knows what they are, their objectives and to see if there is any place for CWAC. CWAC interaction would not be an expectation.
- Bell: We ought to know of those things that are going on, nothing more than that awareness.
- Stiegler: More may happen when the initiatives' recommendations come out. CWAC may want to respond to them. For now, it is only a status check to keep on our radar screen in case later we see more focused input from CWAC is appropriate.

- ACTION:**
- **Judge Nan Waller will be asked to give CWAC a presentation during the September 9 meeting of the NGA Center policy academy.**
 - **Mickey Serice will compile a list of initiatives on overrepresentation.**
 - **Periodic updates from Mickey Serice on the status of the initiatives will be added to future CWAC agendas.**

AGENDA FOR NEXT CWAC MEETING

- Stiegler: We will have a draft revision of the operating procedures and possibly the bylaws for CWAC review. If we do not have a July meeting, FIWG will meet again before the September meeting.
- Arenz: Thinks we have enough to do to hold a July meeting. Judge Waller could present then or wait until September if it will mean better attendance.

- ACTION:**
- **FIWG members will be contacted about availability for the current August 13 FIWG meeting date. The date will be changed if necessary to get as full attendance as possible.**

- **Judy Stiegler will meet with Mickey Serice to decide if a July CWAC meeting will be held. CWAC will be notified as soon as a decision is made.**

Meeting adjourned.