



Members

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Dana Ainam             | <input type="checkbox"/> Robyn Cole               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Benjamin Hazelton | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jerry Moore | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Stetzer     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Janet Arenz | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Leslie Currin | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cathy Kaufmann    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Patton  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christine Stolebarger |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Balter | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Don Darland   | <input type="checkbox"/> Jean Lasater                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Angela Sherbo          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruth Taylor                      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Iris Bell   | <input type="checkbox"/> Rep. Sara Gelser         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Christina McMahon | <input type="checkbox"/> Becky Smith            | <input type="checkbox"/> Nan Waller                       |

DHS Staff

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|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erinn Kelley-Siel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Nancy Keeling | <input type="checkbox"/> Debbi Kraus-Dorn                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mickey Serice     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toni Peterson | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bill Bouska for Madeline Olson |

Minutes: Pam Pearson

Guests: Terry Finnell – Oregon Foster Parents Association, Catherine Stelzer – CAF, Jason Walling – CAF, Rick Acevedo – DHS Tribal Relations Liaison, Angela Long, Marge Reinhart

**OVERVIEW OF AGENDA, APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

ACTION: The 11/12/08 CWAC minutes were approved.

**INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REPORT – Erinn Kelley-Siel**

- Kelley-Siel: When meeting with staff, she is asking what is going well and what is keeping them up at night. She will be asking that of CWAC as well, from a system-wide perspective. During legislative discussions, she will share the good work of the division during 2008 and appreciation for what the legislature did in 2007 to help avoid some reductions and gain some ground for future investments. CAF will be the first DHS division to present to W&M. She is having discussions with Rep. Kotek on changing the presentation from previous sessions so that the detailed descriptions of programs we administer and who we serve will be in writing and the verbal presentation will be a policy conversation about how we align programs and resources to match the policy. For example: why it is important to keep children safe in their homes, our programs and policies that make that possible and the challenges we face. We will partner with our advisory committees to build a pool of names from which to draw for possible public testimony.

Some of the House policy committee chairs are also on Ways & Means, which will help marry the policy and budget conversations. Rather than using the Governor's Recommended Budget as our frame of reference, we may start with where we were in 2007 and what that could cost in 2009.

### Discussion

- Arenz: The Alliance is willing to help coordinate speakers.
- Kelley-Siel: Mickey Serice will contact CWAC about collecting names for speakers and will let you know the dates of our W&M presentation.
- Patton: The most effective message is through those speakers. Parents and foster children have a powerful voice. On February 9, a group of foster children will be at the Capitol. Perhaps DHS could take advantage of that.
- Balter: Excellent idea. Asked that DHS send CWAC the themes of their presentation as soon as possible so we can weave them into our conversations with legislators. CWAC's four themes already help and we can work off them or other simple phrases.
- Patton: A problem in our advocacy is silo funding. For example: We can't talk about A&D without it impacting other programs and services.
- Kelley-Siel: Traditionally CAF has been the division to go first. We considered making our presentations not by divisions but by issues. For example, covering the issue of child safety or family stability and having each division explain what they do. However that would be a very complex presentation format and it was decided that instead, we will reiterate the cross division connections whenever possible.
- Arenz: An increase in children in foster care as a result of cuts in A&D treatment services is a demonstration of the lack of a holistic system.

**ACTION: Mickey Serice will notify CWAC of the dates of DHS' Ways and Means presentation and gather names of possible speakers from CWAC. [Dates sent to CWAC on 2/2/09.]**

### Foster Care Rate Redesign – Kevin George, Jason Walling

- George: Gave a brief overview. The foster parent reimbursement system has been in place for 18 years and has been a problem from the beginning. A federal audit found that a significant portion were not Medicaid eligible, which requires us to do something different. It is a system issue, not a budget issue. It impacts placements and permanency in family foster care, group homes and

residential treatment. The redesign will bring statewide consistency to the assessment, services and supports to foster parents.

- Walling: There will be three rates: base, personal care and special. The USDA expenditures, a consumer expenditure survey and an internal tool (Hitting the Mark) calculating the cost of raising a child will be used to determine the cost of raising a foster child in Oregon. The proposal goes to the executive committee next week. It is divided into age ranges: 0-5 and 6-21. The special rate program is being redesigned and is for the cost of additional supervision. The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) instrument is being modified to meet Oregon's needs. Between the first 3-6 weeks in foster care, a CANS screening will be administered. It will give information points in placement matching in 54 areas. It will help with case planning also.

There will be three reimbursement levels. Group homes' reimbursement has not been adequate and we hope to give them the highest rate. We do not want the reimbursement system to disrupt placements and are looking at a hybrid model that will allow a child who has stabilized to remain in a group home with a lower level of reimbursement and exempt from the usual group home requirements.

- Patton: If the redesign is based on a philosophy of what is best for children, that statement should be included in policy.
- Balter: What is the maximum number of children in a foster home? Is aware of some group homes that are family oriented, but with shift staff that act as "parents."
- Walling: Currently seven children can be in a two-parent home and four children in a one-parent home. They do not have to be a married couple. We are creating a system of reimbursement based on the child's need for supervision.
- Patton: Are children assigned to group homes by age?
- Walling: There is usually an age range. We are looking at what age a group home placement could begin, such as 11 and older. We do not place young children in group homes.
- Keeling: We are also concerned about defaulting to APPLA (another planned permanent living arrangement).
- George: This is a work in progress. We are looking at the group home piece to address needs of the few children who do best in that setting.
- Walling: The medical personal care program is for the support a child needs for activities of daily living due to medical conditions. The proposal includes a 0-4 rating of five factors. The special rate will not be diagnosis driven as it

currently is. Compensation is not given for the administration of medication; but for the supervision to make sure the child takes the medication. A child will not have to be labeled and a foster parent will not have to identify everything bad about a child to get a higher rate.

- George: We are on a fast timeframe. In September 2009 we will no longer be able to bill Medicaid for these reimbursements.
- Walling: This will standardize reimbursements to foster parents across the state. It will include the shelter rate.
- Kelley-Siel: It is important to note what the policy drivers are. First is stability and safety of a foster care placement from both a child's and foster parent's perspective. The rate redesign will enhance and improve the ability to identify where that is happening and not. Another policy objective is to better meet the physical and mental health needs of the child so that care can continue when the child returns home. The redesign will provide supports to the foster parents to meet those goals. It will support parents, adoptive parents, and the child if he leaves to enter adulthood. The change is significant and is happening quickly. We need to keep focused on the purpose and be transparent in that these rates are still not where we want to be. We want it to be a streamlined process so workers are not spending more time making these decisions. We will make adjustments if it does not meet our policy objectives. Feedback on these policy objectives is desired.

Moving on to mental health care for children; every child will receive a CANS assessment. In addition, it will be required that the child get a mental health assessment within 60 days. The CANS will be a tool for the mental health provider. Currently 25% of our cases are meeting this 60 day requirement and our goal is to be at 70% by June 2009. As we did with face-to-face visits, we are making this a priority and an expectation. The request for an appointment with a mental health provider is to be made within 21 days. We are not requiring it sooner because some children go home within that timeframe and it also takes time for a child to settle in to the foster care placement.

CAF is working with AMH and SPD. We have an agreement with Dr. Nancy Moore, AMH, to act as medical consultant for CAF. We are working on an agreement with Tina Kitchen, SPD, for consultation as well.

For children under the Oregon Health Plan, we are looking at expectations regarding psychotropic medications. We will be providing a full report to the legislature.

Finally, we continue to work on wraparound services statewide. Bill Bouska, Toni Peterson and Erinn are discussing what work can be done within CAF and AMH before moving forward with a statewide roll-out with community partners.

- Bouska: There is no defined statewide roll-out date.
- Arenz: Will children in BRS receive the mental health assessment?
- Kelley-Siel: All children will receive the assessment when they first come into care. Children do not go directly into a BRS placement. They may need a reassessment later depending on the level of care
- Patton: Asked for clarification on the timeline dates for the assessments.
- Kelley-Siel: The request for an appointment must be made within 21 days of the child coming into care. The mental health assessment must be done within 60 days of when the request for the appointment was made.
- Patton: Her experience is that it takes much longer to get the report of the mental health assessment back.
- Kelley-Siel: The child will have undergone the assessment within 81 days maximum. The wraparound piece will make sure it happens. The assessment is needed to know what the child's needs are. The goal is to get the right service to the child at the right time and the right supports to the foster parent at the right time.
- Bouska: It is not a full psychological evaluation. And there are ways to access care in an emergency before the assessment is completed.
- Peterson: We are seeking to raise the floor so every child has the screening and assessment without hindering access to emergency/emergent care.
- Finnell: The timelines and accountability are awesome. The timelines are currently too long.
- Bouska: The timelines are statewide, but local communities will develop their protocols according to how they are organized.
- Kelley-Siel: We met with local mental health directors and child welfare program managers. Enhanced relationships in communities are a bonus.

## **CASEY FOUNDATION AGREEMENT**

- Kelley-Siel: Referred to the Governor's Executive Order and a 1/5/09 news release. This initiative works on what success looks like for the children and families we serve. Our first priority is to keep children safe and second is to safely reduce the number of children in foster care. This is not about saving money. National research shows the negative impacts when a child comes into care who shouldn't or stays too long. Oregon has higher numbers than other

states and we are looking for the reasons why. One way is to look at how many are coming in, how long they are staying, and where they go while in care. The issue of safety is overarching. We are successful only when children are safer as a result of the work we do. Targets have been set in six statewide goals:

- Safely reduce the number of children in foster care by 20%
- Increase placements of children with relatives by 50%
- Reduce the number of children entering care by 10%
- Increase foster care exits by 20%
- Reduce the unequal treatment for Native American and African American children in Oregon's foster system
- Maintain or reduce current child abuse/neglect recurrence rate of 7.9%.

Progress will be measured to identify if the strategies we are using are working or if they need to be changed. There are two parallel tracks: Internally in DHS Child Welfare we are looking at policy and practice changes. Externally, there are public conversations about foster care and efforts to engage the community to embrace these children and families. The Casey money is intended to be catalytic to move things forward faster and do some things we could not otherwise do. Local team meetings are more expansive, including people impacted by the decisions.

This is a statewide effort. It began with the eight counties that have the highest number of foster children (75% of the statewide total).

The Executive Order establishes the Task Force on Disproportionality in Child Welfare. The Casey Agreement allows us to higher staff including Kory Murphy as the Child Welfare Equity Coordinator and Catherine Stelzer as \_\_\_\_\_. We pre-session filed a bill to codify the task force. The Casey Agreement also buys us an external analysis of where the bias is in our system. Kory is working on ways to begin the conversation about who DHS Child Welfare is serving equitably and who not.

Some counties do not see disproportionality in their numbers. But this is an equity issue more than a disproportionality issue. We currently measure by numbers in care, but other ways to measure will come out of our work. The analysis will be hard and challenging. We look forward to having CWAC's support as this addresses one of CWAC's four goals.

### Discussion

- Bell: This is very timely. Both a perceived and real bias exist.
- Darland: Has talked with the district and child welfare program managers and supervisors and they have an attitude that it is better to err on the side of

caution. He understands how that attitude forms. Change has to begin with the managers to fix that attitude as it will trickle down to the workers.

- Moore: The Salem Police Department has a unit that investigates drug houses and is active in removing children from those homes. When the research says Oregon is higher than other states, does it explain why? Could it be that Oregon is doing it right and other states are not?
- Keeling: Another statistic says Oregon has one of the highest placing rates and over 65% of children placed in foster care return home within 60 days. We want to see if there is something that could be done in those cases to avoid the placement.
- Kelley-Siel: There may be a sequencing in that we take a different approach depending on the color of the family. Believes there is some data that shows when law enforcement gets involved at the front end, it is more likely the children will be put in foster care. Is not sure there is research showing whether Oregon is right or wrong in the placement decision as compared to other states. We are looking at how to reduce the number coming in and the reabuse rates. The DHS system needs to be seen as the place of last resort. And it is unacceptable to keep a child in care any longer than absolutely necessary. Those things can cause harm to a child.
- Keeling: Appreciates Jerry raising the issue. The first step is assessing and talking with communities about our values. Some don't think reducing foster care is good for children.
- Kelley-Siel: Casey will help with the community engagement piece.
- Keeling: As for erring on the side of caution, we want to avoid the pendulum swinging the other way. Safety must always be the priority.
- Balter: Regarding class and race, law enforcement has a lot to offer in the conversation. Personal attitudes must be examined by the institutions against a standard of expectation.
- Kelley-Siel: Offered to talk to CWAC members individually if they want more information. The problem won't be solved overnight. Director Goldberg will be appointing subgroups to the task force that CWAC members could be part of if not on the task force itself. The Executive Order does state the task force membership will include one person representing CWAC. Asked that CWAC let us know who that person will be. Appointments will be made by the end of January, with a first meeting in February. The CWAC person would serve as a liaison between CWAC and the task force.
- Patton: Requested the issue of gender be considered as another disproportionality/equity issue.

## **CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES – PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT PLAN – Angela Long**

- Long: Referred to the documents: 1) Update on what CWAC received at the last meeting and 2) Quarter 1 report. While waiting for the final signature on the PIP, we are already working on and are close to completion some activities in the PIP. We are aligning activities in the PIP and Casey Agreement.
- Kelley-Siel: All the initiatives align: Casey, DHS Transformation, PIP, etc. All compliment the others or are repetitive amongst themselves. We are working to capture all the activities in one place and hope to share it with CWAC at the March meeting. We are calling it our strategic plan. We will walk through it at the next meeting.
- Hazelton: What is CWAC's role?
- Long: We report to the Administration on Children and Families quarterly on our progress. If we find we are not being successful, we may come to CWAC to ask for advice on what other strategies we could use or what the barriers are.

## **LEGISLATIVE SUBCOMMITTEE**

- Hazelton: The Future Issues Work Group discussed briefly if the CWAC Legislative Subcommittee should be reactivated. Asked Mike Balter and Janet Arenz to provide background information.
- Balter: It was a different era when the subcommittee was first formed. It is a challenge for us to be responders. If its purpose is to keep us advised on legislative highlights, we can accomplish that by a standing agenda item during CWAC meetings or by email. If it is decided there is a place for the subcommittee that advises, the FIWG should define the method to get a consensus over a particular issue.
- Arenz: Timelines are crunched to respond to issues and we want to be as inclusive as possible. The subcommittee used to meet to share information, but it was not a good mechanism for an advisory body. The Addictions and Mental Health Division offers a weekly call-in time for partners. Email is another option.
- Patton: The subcommittee was not used to advise, but included representatives of the constituencies that had bills. It was a way to support each other and share information. We may be past the need for that.
- Kaufman: Would be in favor of a legislative subcommittee to forge stronger partnerships. Offered to be a subcommittee member.

- Arenz: Agrees with the need to be informed, but perhaps there is another way to do that than a meeting.
- Balter: A clearinghouse function is valuable, but the question is whether or not DHS can provide the resources to keep us informed.
- Hazelton: In summary, he hears that there is value to have opportunities to discuss, but not as a decision making group. Perhaps a conference call would work better than a meeting. Does it need to be just CWAC or could it be extended to other partners? It should be a two-way conversation so it is not only about what DHS is trying to advance.
- Kelley-Siel: If CWAC could host the call, DHS would support it.
- Arenz: Offered to be the coordinator of the conference calls.
- Kaufman: Offered to provide the toll free conference call number.

**MOTION: A motion was made, seconded and approved that CWAC host a weekly call-in for legislative updates, with CWAC volunteering to host and chair the call and DHS providing the logistics.**

### **SELECTION OF CWAC CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

- Kelley-Siel: Distributed a letter in which she asks for input from CWAC members individually. The chair and vice chair are appointed by the DHS director, but he has asked for CWAC input. DHS staff are not permitted to serve in these capacities. Nominations can be outside the current membership. The appointments will be made in time for them to be on board for the March meeting.

**ACTION: Nominations are due to Pam Pearson by January 30, 2009. They will be forwarded to Bruce Goldberg for consideration. He will make the appointments in February so they are in place for the March CWAC meeting.**

### **HIGHLIGHTS AND HOT TOPICS**

#### **Nominations for CWAC Representation on Task Force on Disproportionality in Child Welfare**

- Kaufman: Nominated Judge Nan Waller.
- Hazelton: The Judicial Department will also have a representative and it is possible they will nominate Judge Waller. We need an alternate.

- Patton: Could Iris Bell represent CWAC while also serving as co-staff to the task force?
- Arenz: The Alliance of Children's Programs wants representation on the task force. She is working through the advocacy group avenue. She would be interested in serving as CWAC's representative if she is not selected as the alliance's representative.
- Hazelton: This issue is important to the Juvenile Rights Project and so Angela Sherbo may be interested.
- Kelley-Siel: Anyone on CWAC is qualified, but you need to acknowledge the time commitment necessary.

**ACTION: Nominations are: Judge Nan Waller, Angela Sherbo and Janet Arenz**

### **DHS TRANSFORMATION – Marge Reinhart**

- Reinhart: As you know, Lois Day has been selected as a transformation leader in CAF. We are working on initiatives in both self sufficiency and child welfare. In child welfare, the adoption RPI efforts reduced the purging backlog from 6,000 to 800 files. Two new policy concepts will be rolled out using a lean process from the start: 1) Relative searches and involvement of relatives in cases and 2) Rate redesign.

In the field offices, there are RPIs on trip coordination and planning for getting children where they need to be for visits and appointments. The goal is to increase the number of trips. Another RPI to simplify the discovery process begins in March.

- Kelley-Siel: We are aware of workload challenges. We may want to have a discussion during the March CWAC meeting about how to reinvest time saved. You will hear more from us about workload during our legislative discussions. Increasing efficiencies is not meant to save money or reduce staff. We are already understaffed, as reported in the MacKenzie report.

Meeting adjourned.