



**FINAL**

DHS Children, Adults and Families  
**Child Welfare Advisory Committee**  
August 13, 2008

Members

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

DHS Staff

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

Minutes: Audio transcription by Mechelle Bell. Summarization by Pam Pearson.

Guests: Kamala Shugar – Department of Justice, Amanda Marshall – Department of Justice,

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**OVERVIEW OF AGENDA, APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Stiegler: Reviewed agenda.
- Shugar: The Department of Justice consolidated the former Family Law Section and Human Services Section have been consolidated into the Child Advocacy Section within the Civil Enforcement Division. Hiring new attorneys that were part of the 2007 policy package to handle cases from the beginning of the dependency case to the permanent plan at the end. We have also started a legal review process to look at Child Welfare cases at 4-5 months and 9-10 months. The goal is to have some legal review of **every** Child Welfare case early on instead of waiting to get legal advice at the back end so that potential legal issues can be addressed, the plan discussed and maybe we can see more positive outcomes.

**INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REPORT – ERINN KELLEY-SIEL**

Overview

- Kelley-Siel: Her passion is to “amplify the voice of those who don’t have microphones,” particularly children and families. Appreciates CWAC members volunteering their time to play a critical role for Child Welfare as an external advisory group. We need state and local level support to be better champions and advocates for children.

We are part of a bigger conversation that needs to happen throughout Oregon about how to keep all children safe, not only children in foster care or in the protection of CPS and how to avoid contact with the child welfare system. While the conversation often turns to how to reform child welfare and fix foster care, we want it to be about helping families stay together. We know, for example, that parental D&A abuse is a factor for 42% of children who are abused. The second leading driver of child abuse and neglect is domestic violence. If we want to see child abuse and neglect decline, we need to make inroads in D&A and domestic violence.

Looks forward to talking with CWAC about how the child welfare system can most effectively support children. Knows CWAC has identified four priority areas of focus. We want CWAC help to focus our efforts and organize all the child welfare-related initiatives. Wants to avoid “initiative fatigue.” In the next few weeks will be prioritizing our goals and organizing our time and initiatives accordingly. Your input as an advisory group and as individuals is feeding into this planning. Some examples: 1) CFSR program improvement plan, 2) DHS Transformation Initiative, including the process improvement effort through the McKinsey workload study, 3) Casey Foundation agreement that will bring around \$3 million to Oregon, and 4) Technical assistance from the National Governors Association. We want to be driven by our priorities and goals and avoid having the initiatives become the drivers. We want to be focused on measuring our progress and outcomes, keeping our partners apprised of our progress.

### Legislative Concepts

- Kelley-Siel: The legislative process allows for big policy discussions and efforts and enables the efforts to be sustained over time, no matter who the individual players are. One of our legislative concepts addresses disproportionality and the over/under representation of children of color in our system (which is also one of CWAC four priority areas). We need more information about the role race plays on the different decision points in the child welfare continuum. The disproportionality percentages are calculated as the percent of children in a particular race or ethnicity in foster care or in-home care compared to the percent of children of that race or ethnicity in the general population. We have not been successful in engaging communities of color that are impacted by the decisions we make.

The task force will have a clearly defined purpose and set of outcomes, with a membership representative of communities of color. It could be a

subcommittee of CWAC or a stand-alone work group. Having it in statute keeps it as an issue for CAF regardless of who is assistant director and elevates the level of legislative engagement.

The second legislative concept transitions Child Welfare from caseload ratios to what it takes to do the work that we do. The McKinsey child welfare staffing study evaluated the actual time it takes to do child welfare work and calculated the gap between the number of staff we have and the number needed to do the work. The DHS Transformation Initiative will also improve and streamline child welfare processes and practices so more time can be spent serving clients.

Sometimes there is a disconnect in the legislative process between policy and budget development. A bill with an indeterminate fiscal impact does not go to W&M. This legislative concept will create a regular reporting expectation from DHS to the legislature to marry the conversations across policy and budget regarding what the child welfare workforce is required to do, how they are currently staffed, why in some cases we are not meeting our targets and performance measures, and hold DHS accountable to do better when we do get the staff we say we need to make an impact.

- Serice: Distributed copies of the legislative concept proposals. Legislative Counsel is drafting the bill language at this time. When we get the draft bill language, we have 14 days to make amendments. Would like CWAC members' thoughts on these concepts.
- Kelley-Siel: A formal CWAC recommendation to support or oppose is not needed at this point. We want individual members' expertise and feedback. If a member could not be supportive, it would be helpful for us to know now rather than after session starts. Also would like group discussion about whether you can be supportive of the concepts or not. We are not looking for full CWAC endorsement necessarily. If CWAC can't support where we are going with the concepts, we would want to know that. Would like input particularly on the disproportionality concept because it is one of CWAC's priorities. Should the concept's task force be a CWAC subcommittee? Or should it be a separate group with CWAC members appointed to it who report back to CWAC?
- Serice: The continuous program improvement concept does not have a fiscal impact. The disproportionality concept does have a fiscal impact.
- Darland: Has heard that social workers may be required to register or be certified by the Board of Clinical Social Workers.

- Kelley-Siel: When she was the Governor's policy advisor, that had been discussed and allowed to be submitted for drafting. The Governor has until December 2008 to decide which agency bills to move forward. The Governor's Office's concerns about the proposed requirements include the six-year window by which every person that practices social work in Oregon (including DHS caseworkers) would have to be register/certified. Requires a social work degree.
- Darland: He thought the licensing board had changed it to include any degree.
- Kelley-Siel: The last version she saw defined social work so broadly it would impact state agencies, hospitals, and county based programs. The Governor's Office was concerned the six-year window to comply had been determined without talking with the education community about their ability to train all who would be subject to the requirement.
- Darland: It links to the Child Welfare workload issue in that even if we have enough caseworkers, do we have the quality we need? Caseworker retention is a problem. Face-to-face visits may be happening, but turnover creates inconsistency with a family. Heard that the Governor will move the concept forward if DHS is exempt.
- Kelley-Siel: Without an exemption, there would be a gigantic fiscal impact on DHS next biennium through the six-year phase-in. Other states have included an exemption for public employees. Enhanced degree requirements are one tool to address quality of service. The challenge is fitting this in with other priorities and the budget. The question is whether the investment would be where the citizens would say we should be prioritizing our first dollar if we had new dollars on the table. We do want to have the highest quality workforce. We are taking steps to create an environment where staff feel supported such as transitioning workload to clerical staff, not having caseworkers do legal work, giving them technology and tools to use their time more effectively, adding workers so they aren't carrying as many cases and can spend more time with the families, and training to meaningfully engage families.
- Stolebarger: Supervision too?
- Kelley-Siel: Yes, including clinical supervision.
- Hazelton: Are you asking for our responses now to these legislative concepts or would you like them later?
- Kelley-Siel: First and soonest we would like to know if you can be supportive of the general concepts. Detailed individual input can be sent to Mickey later.

- Serice: Right now, we would like to know if you agree that this is the right direction DHS should be taking. More detailed recommendations can be negotiated later, such as additions to the membership of the task force.
- Hazelton: Is there an existing committee within DHS that this would replace?
- Serice: We have a DHS Diversity Council. The two would interact, but the disproportionality task force is specific to child welfare foster care. We are looking for expertise from the culturally competent perspective as well as the child welfare perspective.
- Kelley-Siel: The Diversity Council's focus is on the competency of all CAF programs and on workforce recruitment and retention and diversity of the workforce, which are also important to the disproportionality issue.
- Stolebarger: Glad to see disproportionality in foster care is being addressed. Part of her job is to attend preliminary hearings in Multnomah County to engage with parents at the time their children are being removed. In the last 11 months, she has seen only one case where they did not qualify for court-appointed counsel which points to the impact of poverty.
- Stiegler: You are advocating for a broader definition of disproportionality.
- Stolebarger: It seems that more D&A clients are living in poverty. Knows D&A abuse exists in the middle class, but does not see it in court.
- Kelley-Siel: That has to do with which incidents get reported to CPS.
- Bouska: First thought the disproportionality concept would be aimed at preventing children and families from coming into contact with Child Welfare and why minority children come into contact more frequently. However it targets what happens after the child is in foster care. Suggested focusing on the social and economic factors that bring those families towards the child welfare system. The membership of the task force should reflect a preventive focus to get a perspective on what the factors are that bring those families to the attention of Child Welfare more so than other families.
- Moore: Applauds Erinn for taking on this issue. Every year there is a Governor's summit on over-representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system. Are there overlaps that could assist DHS?
- Kelley-Siel: This is the first year that DHS is a co-host of the summit. Juvenile justice is required by statute to collect certain information about over-representation. However, some of their issues are different than ours. We are working with the National Governor's Association and the Casey Foundation to leverage some data collection.

- Stetzer: There is also disproportionality of children of color who drop out of high school and get involved with drugs and alcohol, impacting their success as adults and parents.
- Kelley-Siel: Reminder that throughout the legislative process there will be more opportunities to give input. The issue right now is to determine if our partners agree that this is the right thing to do and right way to approach disproportionality in Oregon.
- Stiegler: CWAC has previously discussed how the committee could be more effective as agency issues progress through the legislative process. We see the committee as a key advocate for legislative concepts and POPs. CWAC has some weight and the legislature and others in the system are going to consider our views and positions. Can we, as a committee, at this point come to a consensus of support or not for these legislative concepts?
- Balter: Instead of trying to come to a consensus, could we instead, as individuals, communicate our points of view. Then CAF can reflect back what they took from our individual comments. That might shape our next response, assuming these concepts are going to move forward. Individual comments giving an overwhelming sense that the concepts are a waste of time say something different from comments that are more varied. Suggested having the members respond individually outside today's meeting. If the concepts move forward, other opportunities will occur for more CWAC input.
- Kelley-Siel: Yes, agrees to that approach. There will be other concepts and policy issues you will be asked to weigh in on. Use these as a trial run for CWAC because they are not as major of issues as others that will be proposed.
- Stiegler: Are you referring to concepts proposed by outside entities?
- Kelley-Siel: Yes. For example, whether DHS can place any restrictions on foster parents to keep guns in a locked safe will be a harder conversation than whether or not we need a disproportionality work group. What Mike proposes makes sense.
- Stiegler: Can we get the concepts out to CWAC in electronic form so members who are absent can see them?
- Serice: Yes.
- Kelley-Siel: Suggested a cover memo to add some of the caveats that we discussed today.
- Stiegler: The request will be to review the concepts and give general initial feedback with a short turn-around time. Ultimately, CWAC may become an advocate for the concepts as they become closer to final.

- Kelley-Siel: We will draft a cover memo and send it to Judy to decide how to frame it to CWAC.
- Stolebarger: It is exciting to hear talk about prevention in child welfare and that you are asking why people come into the system. You have identified D&A and domestic violence as the two greatest causes of founded cases of child abuse, yet they are two of the most under-funded services. If we are going to make a real change to reduce caseloads, we should look at it from the perspective of how to prevent families from coming into child welfare.
- Kelley-Siel: Yes, but how do we do that? There are different beliefs about what role DHS should play in prevention and if it should be different from the role we currently play. What we can currently control to prevent children from entering foster care includes better service rates for in-home care, working with the courts to make a paradigm shift to acknowledge that children can be as safe in their homes as in foster care and that children growing up in foster care is unacceptable. We control in-home service delivery, in-home placements, the willingness to engage families, and working with relatives more as an alternative to out-of-home stranger care. There are other program areas to work with such as mental health and addictions service treatment and domestic violence services. Our role in prevention is to be strong advocates and informers and lend our expertise. Not sure it is DHS Child Welfare's role to do front-end prevention with every family in the state. The Child Safety Work Group will have a report completed soon regarding the continuum of child safety. It includes a section on front-end prevention and will acknowledge that we need to be driven by families' needs, not program structure or agency structure.

**ACTION: After Legislative Counsel prepares the draft language of the legislative concepts, they will be sent to CWAC for comment.**

### **DHS TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE – Fariborz Pakseresht and Misty Dvorak**

Pakseresht: Distributed materials and gave a broad overview of the transformation initiative. An example of one of the efficiencies that can narrow the gap between resources and workload is to improve trip coordination and logistics (page 14 of handout). Caseworkers spend 8.5% of their time traveling and transporting children. Reducing this can increase face-to-face time with children. Improving trip coordination can “liberate” between 7 and 24 FTE to fill the staffing gap.

- Darland: How does a caseworker transporting children reduce face-to-face contact?
- Pakseresht: It's not just transporting children, but trip coordination. It is more efficient to use GPS software to find an address. Support staff can ensure a car seat is in the car. LEAN is about taking activities away from the caseworker. In this example, you reduce the amount of time spent in transportation by almost half and nearly double the proportion of face-to-face time.

In another example, we can gain 20-30 FTE by providing caseworkers with laptops and SpeakWrite to use the time waiting in court to enter case notes into FACIS.

The Rapid Improvement Process (RPI) events focus on the process rather than policy, information technology dependencies and organization structure. Those are things Child Welfare leadership will take on.

- Dvorak: Referred to page 21 of the handout. The RPIs to streamline the central office adoption process will begin on Monday, August 18. We will then move to the RPIs in the child welfare branches regarding shifting some work from caseworkers to support staff. Thanked Benjamin Hazelton for providing someone from his staff to be a partner in the RPI. We are formalizing the process to invite CWAC members to participate in RPI events.

The basic question for the central office adoption process RPI is: Can the legal freeing process in central office be improved to 1) reduce the existing backlog of files awaiting archives and 2) reduce the legal freeing process cycle time, excluding court and other processes outside agency control? The second central office adoption RPI will look at the process from legally free to finalization. The final matrix of this second RPI is not complete. She will provide it to CWAC when it is ready.

- Shugar: DOJ will look at how they can assign attorneys and do their work more efficiently.
- Pakseresht: To clarify, few RPI events are focused on creating capacity. We are taking on these "easier" processes first to train our LEAN leaders. This RPI has an impact of "1" as compared to some that have an impact of "9," so it is a small piece of the adoption process. It is focused on creating capacity and to show there is a clear line of sight between the staffing study and these activities.
- Hazelton: As someone who has provided information for this first round, asked if he is committed to providing the same level for the rest?
- Pakseresht: After the first step you can decide if it's worth your time and your staff's time. Partners who participate in RPI events tend to come back because it helps them understand the challenges central office faces and vice versa.

- Hazelton: Asked for a road map of the time commitment for an RPI.
- Pakseresht: We do plan to provide a schedule of these events. Encouraged Benjamin to attend the report-out time with the RPI group on their last day.
- Kelley-Siel: We are committed to inviting at least one external partner to participate in each event. That commitment may be to attend the 30-minute report out or to participate in the entire process. We are identifying how to involve partners while managing the number of participants. The schedule for the first 14 weeks is to leverage the time we have with McKinsey, at which time we can evaluate the schedule and which partners might be able to participate. We will continue to report to CWAC. We are trying to give partners as much courtesy notice as possible and to get some of these RPIs completed before session.
- Pakseresht: The commitment of staff resources to the LEAN process speaks to the seriousness of DHS to make things better.
- Balter: How do you plan to deal with workers who refuse to change their process? Is the union prepared to deal with those issues?
- Pakseresht: We have not gotten to that specific detail yet. The SEIU will have at least one person participate. SEIU was supportive and worked with us through the pilot LEAN in DHS Finance. In some instances, resistance may need to be addressed on an individual basis.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The May 14, 2008, minutes were approved with no changes.

## **CONTINUATION OF INTERIM ASSISTANT DIRECTOR REPORT – ERINN KELLEY-SIEL**

### Budget

- Kelley-Siel: We are focusing on our 09/11 budget. For the first time it will be a needs-based budget to clearly define for the Governor and legislature what it would take to have the highest quality services that the statutes say we could have in Oregon, where we are and what the gap is between the two. The agency request budget will give the legislature more options than they have had in the past and will allow for a more public conversation about where we are, where we need to be and why we aren't there.

At the same time CAF has some challenges to balance our 07-09 budget, driven primarily by a change in interpretation of federal policy. We have used TANF emergency assistance to support children in foster care. We became aware that eligibility must be re-determined every 12 months. About \$38

million federal funds in Child Welfare must be back-filled with general funds. We are working to realign resources and avoid any program impacts. In addition, just like the families we work with and the organizations you work with, we are struggling with increased operational costs. We are working to strengthen our management of administrative and personnel costs. Addressing a \$38 million issue in the last six months of the biennium is very challenging. All the DHS divisions are working with us to avoid cuts in Child Welfare.

Family Supports and Connections is a TANF program that is a child abuse prevention program whereby a family who comes through the Child Welfare door but whose case is unfounded or unable to determine can be referred to other services. We have fewer dollars for that program than originally anticipated and a higher caseload.

When we go to the legislature, we need to be able to say that we are doing all we can to manage our administrative and personnel costs. That said, we know we are already understaffed in Child Welfare so some of the personnel activities will not apply to Child Welfare workers.

The next biennium agency request budget (ARB) will go to the Governor on September 1. Doing the work on that budget at the same time as looking for savings in the current budget may be confusing. The needs-based budget focuses on what can be achieved in the next two years, not where we should be in 10 years. The POPs may not include things you had hoped would be. We are working with other divisions and agencies (such as the Commission on Children and Families) to think about where some of those things, such as child abuse prevention programs, should be.

In addition, we have to submit a 10% and 20% reduction list with the ARB. She expects we will have to self-fund any POPs through a reduction. However we don't have the capacity to reduce. In fact, some of the first POPs are to help us keep what we are currently doing (provider rate increases, re-aligning foster care payment structure). If all we get is our essential budget level, there may be reductions in programs and service delivery because it doesn't reflect the true cost of doing business.

### POPs

- Serice: The handout is an older document than what is posted online so some of the language may differ.
- Kelley-Siel: Few CAF POPs were ranked as medium or low. The ranking reflects feedback from partners, including CWAC. More detail is available if you are interested. The POPs will be submitted to the Governor's Office on

9/1/08 as part of the ARB. The public conversation on the budget begins in January 2009 and proceeds through July when the legislature creates their budget and priorities. This is a strong list of options for the legislature to consider. If certain items don't end up in the Governor's budget that you feel strongly about, it is appropriate to use this information as you talk with legislators.

- Darland: Are these all new policies or programs or are some additions to existing ones?
- Kelley-Siel: It is a mix. A majority in Child Welfare are to fill the gap between what we currently are doing and what we should be doing.
- Hazelton: Concerns about sustainability. For example there are things that we used to have in adoption services, no longer do and now there is a call for having them again.
- Kelley-Siel: Are you asking if the legislature will keep investing in it over time?
- Hazelton: Yes, but also how institutional it becomes.
- Kelley-Siel: In adoptions, the prioritization was driven by our goal to improve time to permanency. Some people are unable to adopt without DHS support for the challenging child. The decision in 2001-02 to reduce adoption assistance was not because DHS does not support adoption assistance.
- Serice: The agency budget will be completed September 1 and will include the POPs.
- Stiegler: But the POPs will not necessarily be in the Governor's budget.
- Kelley-Siel: When the Governor's budget is released we will update you again.
- Balter: Asked if CWAC could be kept abreast of the give and take with the Governor's Office unless that is confidential. That would help them explain to their constituencies what drives the budget.
- Serice: Historically, the division has not been involved in those department-level conversations.
- Rep. Gelser: The important thing is to continue talking to your legislators about what is and is not in the budget. Gave the example of the budgets for higher education and community colleges last session. The Co-Chair budget substantially reduced some of the Governor's proposals. Advocates were caught by surprise because they had been comfortable by what had been in the Governor's budget. You want to follow the budget through the entire process.
- Serice: Volunteers who engage a legislator don't want to appear ignorant of the latest forecast.

- Kelley-Siel: We can show CWAC the Governor's budget for human services, corrections and education, the three biggest pieces. We won't be able to explain why the Governor chose one POP over another. Rather than say we wish a certain POP was in the Governor's budget, we need to explain why a program/service is important and how the POP defines the program/service.
- Stiegler: This is good because it helps us see the next layer.
- Kelley-Siel: CWAC can challenge the legislature to be driven by goals as opposed to being driven by program investments. One challenge is that our key performance measures are created and investments are made to hold us accountable by a budget process. DHS is changing the format of our agency requested budget to realign the discussion and we would appreciate working with CWAC on that.

**ACTION: Discussion on the budget and POPs will continue at the CWAC meeting following the release of the Governor's Recommended Budget.**

#### **HOW DHS CAN BEST ENGAGE CWAC**

- Stiegler: In the last 6-9 months CWAC received short term and crisis requests specific to the POPs and the Child and Family Services Review Program Improvement Plan. CWAC gave the Future Issues Work Group (FIWG) the charge to develop a recommendation for handling such requests. The proposed changes to the bylaws permit telephonic and email voting. There are no other changes proposed to the bylaws.
- Shugar: Did you consult the Oregon Public Meeting Laws? Your bylaws state that you are subject to these laws. Believes there is something in the public meeting laws about email voting and all members participating as opposed to just a quorum. Believes that if you have an email vote, every member must respond by email.
- Stiegler: Are you suggesting an amendment?
- Darland: Does not think the bylaws need to be changed because we are subject to those rules.
- Stiegler: The bylaws only state that email voting is permitted.

**MOTION: Mike Balter motioned, seconded by Don Darland, to accept the proposed amendments to the bylaws. Opened for discussion.**

- Stiegler: Because we already refer to the public meetings law, that is the controlling statute/law.

**VOTE: Unanimous vote in favor of accepting the proposed amendments to the CWAC bylaws.**

- Stiegler: There are more changes to the operating procedures. They originally included a 30-day time period in which to submit requests for CWAC agenda items. The proposal changes that to seven days. Requests need to be in writing and email is acceptable. The changes on page 2 clarify the interaction between CWAC and DHS/CAF.

**MOTION: Don Darland moved, seconded by Mike Balter, to accept the proposed changes to the CWAC operating procedures. Open for discussion.**

**VOTE: No discussion. Unanimous vote in favor of accepting the proposed amendments to the CWAC operating procedures.**

## **FACE-TO-FACE DATA REPORTS**

- Balter: Regarding the monthly face-to-face reports in our meeting packets, it would be helpful when we get these reports if DHS would draw attention to what is most important.
- Hazelton: CWAC's tendency is to ask for ongoing data. We need to decide if we need to continue to get these updates. We had set a benchmark for face-to-face visits and getting these reports is a follow up to that.
- Stolebarger: It was in response to Bruce Goldberg's request to CWAC.
- Kelley-Siel: The target was set at 80%. In general we are making progress toward that goal. We have a bar graph that may illustrate the data in a more reader friendly way that shows progress over time. The most meaningful data is that most branches are between 75-80%. Some branches have come farther than others to get there. We are working hard to meet the 80% target and are starting to set some new goals.
- Serice: To put this into context with the DHS transformation discussion, this progress was made within current resources. We expect more improvement with some of the transformation initiatives.

- Darland: His conversations with foster parents, child welfare managers and district managers tell him that the quality of the visits has also increased. Some caseworkers need training on how to conduct quality visits.
- Balter: Asked the question above because besides giving advice, we want to be able to communicate to others. A high level summary helps us be better advocates. In this instance, we could explain how the agency was at 65% and with investments, these improvements have been made. It's a good story we can tell to reinforce the notion of reinvesting in Child Welfare workers.
- Hazelton: Another story to tell is that the 80% came out of a CWAC recommendation.
- Balter: There is a healthy dynamic here that we should talk about once in a while rather than only talking about what doesn't work.
- Kelley-Siel: We will put together a higher level summary for you.
- Stiegler: We will review what our original request was for receiving face-to-face reports. This may be a lesson about being careful in what we ask for.
- Kelley-Siel: Referred to a recent *The Oregonian* story featuring a Clackamas caseworker who visits 100% of her children every 30 days. She is part of a pilot previewing some DHS transformation work that transfers some of her clerical work to support staff. She directly attributed the increased capacity to DHS transformation. These process improvements have a real impact on our ability to keep children safe.

**ACTION: CWAC will review their request for face-to-face data to determine what was specifically requested. DHS will prepare a higher level summary of the face-to-face data.**

### **CFSR-PIP UPDATE – Maurita Johnson**

- Johnson: Distributed “The PIP Cliff Notes August 2008.” The original seven domains have been narrowed to five. The first is workforce and it includes transformation initiatives, strengthening clinical supervision and cultural competency issues to address overrepresentation.
- Kelley-Siel: First please talk about the direction and feedback we got on the new budget vs. the current budget on the PIP.
- Johnson: We met with Region X regarding our budget situation and the need for our PIP to focus on what we could actually do instead of new strategies that we would hope get funded. That paired down the number of strategies to improve what we already do within current resources.

- Kelley-Siel: The feds' direction was that we should not build strategies on money we don't currently have. The PIP is a part of the bigger conversation about investment and quality of service in Child Welfare. It is the federal compliance piece; important and critical but not the driver.
- Johnson: The second domain is safety: continuing to implement the Oregon Safety Model, looking at safety in foster homes and services to support children in their own homes. The third domain is family involvement, which includes four sub-areas (parents, absent and nonresident parents, children, and relatives). The fourth domain is concurrent planning. We will work with the Juvenile Court Improvement Project and Citizen Review Board around those children who have been in care for 24 months. For children without a permanent plan or with a plan something other than adoption or guardianship, we will utilize our legal assistance from DOJ to strengthen and fully implement our initial and permanency reviews. We will be working with DOJ on the National Resource Center recommendations. We will also be seeking additional technical assistance on concurrent planning. We hope to reduce the number of children whose plan is APPLA (another planned permanent living arrangement), the number of children raised in foster care and help them exit foster care before they turn 18. The final domain is resources, including cultural competency for our service providers and caseworkers, specific foster care and adoption recruitment for our minority population, D&A treatment, mental health services, strengthening the Wrap-Around Initiative, and developing educational advocacy for children in case. Strategies will be developed to achieve each bullet under each domain.
- Stiegler: What is the timeline you are working with?
- Johnson: We anticipate our plan will be approved in September or early October 2008. We will give the feds quarterly progress reports over the next two years.
- Stiegler: How does this interplay with DHS' budget planning process?
- Kelley-Siel: Our ability to achieve the PIP goals will be enhanced if our budget grows and significantly limited if our budget shrinks. The PIP reflects what we can do if our budget remains as is. Concerns that the PIP is process-focused come from it being output driven rather than outcome driven. It is important to keep the PIP within the broader framework of the whole child welfare system. Sometimes what the feds measure does not reflect our top priority as a program or system. We have worked hard to show how Oregon's bigger goals align with the federal quality assurance measures.

- Johnson: For example, one of our goals is to achieve permanency for children in long term foster care. However, meeting that goal would compromise the numbers for median months to adoption and length of time until a child exits foster care. We do not want to practice casework solely to the numbers.
- Balter: How are you doing on the most important things that have the highest impact? What are the challenges? Those are the ones we can give you advice or support on.
- Johnson: Once we get the PIP mapped out we will be able to give you what you are asking for. We will put it on a grid to map out what we are going to do, when, how and the progress toward achieving it.
- Balter: Knowing what is most important will help us when talking with legislators about where to make the highest impact investment.
- Kelley-Siel: We can bring to CWAC what we have at the next meeting and highlight some areas.
- Balter: Something that says these are the most important things to help us help you. Does not what to see the things that are most important to CAF be cut.
- Johnson: We are not waiting for approval of the PIP to do what we think is right.
- Kelley-Siel: The feds acknowledged in their exit interview that we are far along the way in moving some of these things forward.
- Hazelton: If Maurita plans to use her handout for public distribution, recommends not using the word “continue.” When talking about a program improvement plan, you should not include the word “continue.”

**ACTION: PIP updates will be scheduled for the September and November 2008 CWAC meetings. Maurita Johnson will consider today’s discussion when framing her next updates.**

Meeting adjourned.