



MINUTES

CCDCFS Advisory Board Meeting

07/30/21 12:00 p.m. | *Meeting called to order by* Gabriella Celeste @ Virtual Zoom Cleveland, Ohio

In Attendance

Debra Rex, Natasha Davis, Beverly Charles, Jennifer Croessmann, Gabriella Celeste, Verna Darby, Marielee Santiago, Angela Newman-White, Andrew Garner, Cynthia Weiskittel, Karen Anderson, Chris Cabot, Jacqueline Fletcher

Recorder: Adriel Walls

Call to Order, Introductions

Presented by: Gabriella Celeste

Called to order at 12:00 p.m. and Introduction of members and guests.

Director Weiskittel Announced the following:

- Tamara Chapman-Wagner retired on 07/30/21
- Two new deputies which are:
 - Jacqueline Fletcher, Deputy Director of Resources & Placement Dept.
 - Karen Anderson, Deputy Director of Extended Services
 - Chris Cabot has relocated as the Deputy Director of Short-Term Services

Approval of Minutes

Presented by: Gabriella Celeste

Approval of Minutes from the CCDCFS Advisory Board from June 7, 2021.

Debra Rex motioned to approve the minutes and move forward.

Angela Newsome-White seconded the motion.

Gabriella Celeste called for a vote by asking “show of hands” - all approved - none were opposed.

Public Comments

Presented by: Gabriella Celeste

No response.

Director Weiskittel Updates:

- COVID Vaccines – parental consent is required for children 12 years & older
- 240 children have been vaccinated; no children have had adverse reaction
- Over 800 children in permanent custody
- Wendy's Wonderful Kids have added 10 recruiters to help find families

Question – Foster Parent & Kinship Caregivers required to take the vaccination?

Answer – Not required

- Network Providers meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 3rd. – discussion will be held regarding tracking of vaccination for caregivers.
- Letter needs to be generated to caregivers regarding children being vaccinated.

Question – What's the status on the worker vacancies @ DCFS?

Answer – Training class is scheduled for August 2nd – 15 to 20 workers. Open House held on July 28th – two sessions- one on-line & one in-person. 10 people participated. on-person & over dozen attended in-person.

- Focus Groups will be held with supervisors on how to provide more support
- Overview Child Protection Teams meeting with County employees and all area hospitals held with robust discussion.
- **The following agenda items will be discussed at the next meeting:**
 1. Letter generated to caregivers regarding children being vaccinated
 2. Update on Retention

Jennifer Croessmann shared that the Federal Health & Human Services four-year grant for LGBTQ & children & youth will end September 2021, locally named AFFIRM.ME. The grant was through University of Maryland Social Work School in Baltimore. The grant provided an evaluation & technical assistance to four sites: Cuyahoga County, Allegheny County, Tri-County of Michigan & Prince George's County (Baltimore).

Youth Acceptance Project is provided by Kinnect.

Chosen Affirming Family Finding

- Enhances 30 days effort
- Placing children in safe homes
- Youth Acceptance
- Strengthening family relationships

Safe Identification Policy

- 32% of youth have been identified through Cuyahoga Youth Count survey
- Wrapping up three phases of Training
- Jennifer & Karen Anderson facilitate a curriculum entitled “Affirm for Caregivers” for foster parents across the state to become affirming caregivers of LGBTQ young people.

Question - Foster parent being trained?

Answer – Yes, 12 hours of training credit

Question - Do we have a contract with LGBTQ Center?

Answer – No, however, they accept our referrals, so does Colors Plus.

Web Link available for caseworkers includes a resource guide, sample scripts for asking kids about their SOGIE, flow charts, policy, referral form, etc. (1 stop for all resources).

Presentation: Cuyahoga Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program

Presented by: Tricia Kuivinen

Tricia Kuivinen presented a power point presentation about the role of the Cuyahoga Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program.

Sub-Committee Updates

Presented by: Debra Rex

- A. **Intervention Committee – Debra Rex** reviewed the Data Dashboard for the second quarter 2021 with all participants.

Debra Reb asked motioned to approve the Data Dashboard.

Gabriella Celeste seconded the motion

Debra Rex called for a vote by asking “show of hands” - all approved - none were opposed.

- B. **Governance Committee – Gabriella Celeste** reviewed draft protocol to add agenda items, presenters & future board meetings.

Angela Newman-White motioned to approve this protocol

Beverly Charles seconded the motion

Gabriella Celeste called for a vote by asking “show of hands” - all approved - none were opposed.

The written process will be posted on the website before the next meeting.

The board members debrief the community listening session held on July 7, 2021, members agreed that the session was a good starting point and were happy to hear from the community. Board agreed to start planning for 2022 community listening sessions on a bi-annual basis.

C. **Prevention Committee - Marielee Santiago** discussed there was low volume of participation in community listening session. However, we were happy to see both individuals & providers.

It was difficult to address individuals concerns in a group format. Board would like to develop a central place in the community, where community meetings are already held, and the Advisory Board is able to join and listen.

The ultimate goal is to learn from these experiences what changes are needed in policy & practice. We want to relay that back to consumers, so they feel empowered that what they have to say results in positive change.

Adjourned

Presented by: Gabriella Celeste

Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m.