



MINUTES

CCDCFS Advisory Board Meeting

2/22/21 3:30 p.m. | *Meeting called to order by* Lakecia Wild @ Virtual Zoom Cleveland, Ohio

In Attendance

David Crampton, Debra Rex, Natasha Davis, Beverly Charles, Jennifer Croessmann, Lakecia Wild, Gabriella Celeste, Verna Darby, Jacqueline McCray, Emily Miller, Andrew Garner, Anastasia Dimitrop, Marielee Santiago, Angela Newsome-White, Cynthia Weiskittel, Marla Bell, April Marche
Recorder: Donna Rojek

Opening

Presented by: Lakecia Wild

Called to order at 3:32 p.m. and Introduction of members and guests.

Approval of Minutes

Presented by: Lakecia Wild

Approval of Minutes from the CCDCFS Advisory Board from December 7, 2020.
Lakecia Wild motioned to approve the minutes and move forward.
Beverly Charles seconding the motion.
Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.
All said “Aye”.
None were opposed.

Public Comments

Presented by: Lakecia Wild

Lakecia Wild introduced April Marche from the public sector to describe her experience with CCDCFS. Ms. Celeste had reminded everyone that public comments are limited to 5 minutes.

Ms. Marche’s address is 5515 Vandalia Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44144. Ms. Marche is the legal custodian of 2 teenagers whose mom recently passed away on June 25, 2020. A family member brought the children to Ms. Marche’s home, DCFS was already involved and approved Ms. Marche as a kinship caregiver. The children missed a lot of school, so the principal had notified CPS for an investigation for alleged drug use and drug activity in the home. Ms. Marche reported that the assigned DCFS caseworker never went inside the home-just outside, per the children’s mother. She said DCFS never drug tested the mother or the daughter and closed the case per no evidence of harm to the children. Both parents passed away as a result of an overdose. Ms. Marche stated that DCFS said that they would get one of the children into counseling as soon as they could. Nothing was done, so she did that on her own. Ms. Marche stated the kids came to her with nothing. Ms. Marche reported that DCFS did not visit her home from July 17th to September-until she reached out to the supervisor to get some documentation

of legal custody status to enroll the children in school. She said that she needs help with housing. She stated the County has given her only \$400 for the past 8 months for food. She said she met the new DCFS caseworker on October 1st when she dropped off food cards. Ms. Marche stated that at court DCFS told the judge that the kids were in counseling and rehab. She never met them. The kids were not in rehab. The worker came to her in February with a voucher that was already 10 days late - so she had 20 days to pick up beds for the kids. She left multiple messages for the supervisor and has not talked to her since September. Cynthia Weiskittel will have the senior manager look into Ms. Marche's concerns and provide her with what she and the kids need. She apologized for her experience with CCDCFS. Someone from CPS told her that since the kids are safe, then her kids are not a priority. Again, Ms. Weiskittel extended apologies because all kids are a priority. Beverly Charles welcomed her back if she has not received satisfaction.

Presentation

Presented by: Emily Miller & Anastasia Dimitrop

Emily and Anastasia of the Schubert Center presented a draft of their research on Child Protection Teams (CPT) titled "Toward a coordinated response to child abuse & neglect in Cuyahoga County" and have written a draft white paper.

Background- Project began with Invest In Children presenting a need for a coordinated County-wide response to acknowledge and prevent child abuse. The Schubert Center engaged to lead the research and CPT Advisory group provided guidance and feedback. Team shared coordinated approaches to developing CPT including medical or hospital based CPT's and multi-disciplinary teams (MDT's) operating through a child advocacy center (CAC). Challenges would include data sharing, organizational conflicts, feedback loops, partner communication, lack of collaboration, and poor staffing of medical CPT and/or MDT. Several models with a coordinated approach were presented along with time commitments and CAC roles.

This is a potential model that could work within Cuyahoga County.

Andrew Garner suggested to present to the County Executive and Council who can prioritize hospital collaboration. Discussions will continue. David Crampton suggested that when a child fatality occurs and there are concerns re: DCFS action or inaction that an investigation be conducted by the MDT. This will be brought back to the board meeting after the fundamentals are worked at the next Prevention Sub-Committee Meeting.

Director's Report/Update

Presented by: Cynthia Weiskittel

DCFS is struggling with an overwhelming number of staff and families in quarantine. They are very grateful that only a few were seriously ill and are in recovery.

We are committed to 8 hiring classes in 2021 to fill all vacancies.

Kids staying overnight at JEH has been dramatically reduced. Finding an appropriate individualized placement for kids that require higher levels of care continues to be a challenge. The ADAMHS Board has been given a few more crisis beds. We are seeing a fair amount of human trafficking.

Juvenile Court is conducting hearings. We experienced delays in hearings to request permanent custody, but these have decreased.

DCFS has been working on racial equity for more than 20 years. 30% of the county are African Americans but 70% of the kids in foster care are African Americans. We modified our mission statement to acknowledge our efforts to end the overrepresentation of kids and families of color. We recently sent out a survey to staff to get a baseline view from staff about racial equity at various levels in the organization, barriers, and solutions. We are pleased with the results of the survey of over 240 respondents. Many employees have shown their appreciation for leadership bringing this issue to the forefront. Ms. Weiskittel said that she can talk about white privilege and

being a white ally. We are doing work on trust and participating in critical conversations at this point with much more work to come.

Sub-Committee Updates

Presented by: Karen Stormann

Governance- 2-year office term positions from 2/1/21 – 2/28/23

Gabriella Celeste made a motion for Lakecia Wild to be chair if there are no oppositions.

Debra Rex seconding the motion.

Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.

All said “Aye”.

None were opposed.

Debra Rex volunteered for the Secretary position.

Gabriella Celeste made a motion for Debra Rex to be Secretary.

Natasha Davis seconding the motion.

Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.

All said “Aye”.

None were opposed.

Gabriella Celeste has resubmitted herself to remain in the vice-chair position unless there were other volunteers.

Andrew Garner made a motion to nominate Gabriella Celeste to vice-chair position.

Natasha Davis seconding the motion.

Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.

All said “Aye”.

None were opposed.

Gabriella Celeste made a motion to nominate Angela Newman-White to the chair position for the sub-committee prevention group.

Andrew Garner seconding the motion.

Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.

All said “Aye”.

None were opposed.

Gabriella Celeste made a motion to nominate David Crampton to the chair position for the sub-committee intervention group.

Lakecia Wild seconding the motion.

Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking “all in favor”.

All said “Aye”.

None were opposed.

Governance Sub-Committee update – this sub-committee has been working on creating a public forum to meet before the summer 2021. Agreement is to not make assumptions and recommendations about what is needed from the DCFS Advisory Board, but instead hear from the community. An ad-hoc group will present at next board meeting. Gabriella, Angela, Lakecia, Marielee, Beverly, and Verna volunteered, with Marielee coordinating the ad-hoc meeting.

Prevention Sub-Committee update – Angela – resent the board’s equity statement to the CACE Chair Nylah Byrd. David Merriman and Cynthia responded. Board wishes to work with the CACE about further work to prevent trauma and overrepresentation of people of color. How do we use our experiences and connections for transformations to better serve the residents of

the county?

Intervention Sub-Committee update – see DCFS Advisory Board Dashboard and Bridges data update discussion below.

Social Determinants of Health/Metro

Presented by: Marielee Santiago

Introduced the United Ohio Coordinated Care Network involved in work around social determinants of health (SDOH) factors that determine a person's health status include socio-economic environment, health behaviors, physical environment, genes and biology and clinical care.

Improving the health through opportunity, partnership and empowerment.

Institute for H.O.P.E. Strategy- build healthy families, transform knowledge and education and advance innovative, equitable practices.

SDOH Screening for data driven actions-the goal is to screen all Metrohealth adult patients and employees for SDOH and individuals under the age of 18 for adverse childhood experiences.

Completed screenings had many questions and a graph was produced to show the results.

Unite Ohio-is a community-wide e-referral platform.

DCFS Advisory Board Dashboard

Presented by: David Crampton

There are 9 data points the board identified on this dashboard that will be reviewed 4 times a year and are derived from the Child Welfare Expert Panel recommendations from the Aniya Day-Garrett case. After each review and board approval, the dashboard will be posted on the CCDCFS website. This is the 2nd such review and concerns the 4th quarter of 2020.

1. Continuous quality improvement random case reviews performed based on essential practice needs and concerns from the state and local leadership.
2. Progress in hiring and retaining DCFS staff data presented and discussed.
3. Strengthen DCFS Staff Training.
4. Community Involvement/Geographic Staff Assignment.
5. Community Education.
6. DCFS & Law Enforcement.
7. Father Engagement
8. Balancing Safety and Parental Rights.
9. Disproportionality Data

Discussion held re: current data and the need for any additions to the dashboard before the next board meeting.

Gabriella motioned for no additions/changes at this time to the dashboard

Davis Crampton seconded the motion, and Lakecia Wild called for a vote by asking "all in favor".

All said "Aye".

None were opposed.

Bridges Program

Presented by: David Crampton

Concerns continue that aged out youth are becoming homeless at some point even with the Bridges program in place. David would like to get names of participants in the Bridges program and investigate why they are being discharged and how many become homeless.

DCFS does not currently have access to that information from Bridges, though there are active reports in the child welfare information system and they have requested access from the state.

DCFS is following up with the most recent contact who sent David minimal aggregate data.

Adjourned

Presented by: Lakecia Wild

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.