

Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) Oversight Board Board Meeting Record

Thursday, January 16, 2020 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Capitol Court Building – Olympia, WA

Member Attendance: Annie Blackledge, Bobbe Bridge (via phone), Jeannie Darneille (via phone), Tom Dent, Sydney Forrester, Ben de Haan, Ruth Kagi, Diane Liebe (via phone), Charles Loeffler, Lois Martin (via phone), Shrounda Selivanoff, Tana Senn, Wendy Thomas (via phone), Judith Warnick

Staff in Attendance: Crista Johnson (*Executive Director*), Nickolaus Colgan (*Administrative Coordinator*)

Public in Attendance: Patrick Dowd - *Office of Family and Children Ombuds*, Stacey Gillette - *Department of Children, Youth and Families*, Erica Hallock - *Fight Crimes Invest in Kids*, Stacia Hollar - *Washington Attorney General's Office*, Jessica Horst - *Department of Children, Youth and Families*, Ross Hunter - *Department of Children, Youth and Families*, Allison Krutsinger - *Department of Children, Youth and Families*, Laurie Lippold - *Partners for Our Children*

Welcome and Opening Remarks & Approval of October 17 Meeting Minutes | *Action: meeting minutes were approved led by Crista Johnson and co-chairs*

The meeting was called into order at 5:40 p.m. Bobbe Bridge made a motion to approve the October 17, 2019 meeting minutes and Ben de Haan seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

DCYF Draft Strategic Plan Presentation & Review | Ross Hunter, Secretary, DCYF & Stacey Gillette, Administrator, Performance Based Contracting, DCYF

Secretary Ross Hunter spoke to the Oversight Board about DCYF's draft strategic framework. A written draft of the strategic plan will be available for distribution and feedback by the end of January/beginning of February. The strategic framework aims to address the general outcome goals featured on DCYF's agency performance dashboard, but with a focus on the children, youth and families that DCYF has responsibility to serve.

Secretary Hunter stated three main ways the Department can achieve these goals for the target population: (1) safely reduce children in care by 50 %, (2) focus on behavioral health measures, and (3) seek to provide high quality affordable preschool and childcare across the state.

Other areas of focus that will be featured in the draft strategic plan include: re-evaluating and redesigning a practice model for standardized practice across the state, addressing costs that are creating barriers to service delivery such as for visitation services, work to find solutions for the hotel stays crisis, and seek vocational partnerships to serve older youth with career-connected learning opportunities, among others.

Stacey Gillette provided the Oversight Board with an update to the Department's performance-based contracting strategy due to DCYF's decision package not being funded in the Governor's Proposed Budget.

Public Comment

Erica Hallock – *Fight Crime, Invest in Kids*: Erica talked about a continued need for a focus on visitation services and stated that the Family Impact Network (FIN) is working to build and sustain visitation services throughout Region 1. Eric emphasized the importance of this program and the simple reality that mileage reimbursement and rates for providing the service well are barriers. Erica encouraged the Oversight Board to look at rates. The Oversight Board plans to travel to visit FIN in Spokane in May and the organization would be happy to unpack the details around mileage reimbursement and rates at that time.

Laurie Lippold – *Partners for Our Children*: Laurie supported Erica's statement that a focus on visitation services is important. Laurie stated she looks forward to seeing what DCYF will do in regards to a practice model and to address a number of issues that Secretary Hunter presented on. Laurie stated her support for the Family Assessment Response (FAR) and stated that taking a fresh look at that process is always good. Laurie also shared with the Board that the FAR legislation language was intended to provide liability protection for DCYF workers, stating that if the Court orders something then DCYF is off the hook for liability. As a final comment, Laurie talked about the exciting work going on with drug-affected infants.

Working Dinner: Briefing on Office of Family and Children Ombuds (OFCO) 2019 Annual Report

Director Patrick Dowd presented the 2019 Office of Family and Children Ombuds Annual Report. Placement exceptions have increased continually over the years. An increase in hotel stays highlights a gap in mental health services needed to better serve youth. The Oversight Board discussed concerns over emergency placement stays – when a youth is placed with a family only for the night time – and the traumatic impact this practice has on youth in comparison to hotel stays. The data in the OFCO report on hotel stays does not include emergency placements. Moving forward, OFCO and the Oversight Board will be looking for opportunities to partner together in addressing identified areas of concern.

Oversight for 2020 – Approach & Issues of Interest

Board members reviewed their future topics of interest from their 2019 Legislative Report and selected focus areas for the rest of 2020. They are as follows:

- **Early Learning:** Looking at the landscape of regulations and how they are enforcement efforts by the department and the impact on providers. We may also look at how the Department communicates changes to providers and that overall dynamic.
- **Child Welfare:** Implementation of FFPSA, service array and referrals across the state, and cultural responsiveness.
- **Adolescents:** Implementation of JR to 25 (we will be traveling to Echo Glen for a meeting), as well as looking into the development of the Adolescent Programs Unit, integrated services and programs serving crossover youth.
- **Caregiver Supports:** Foster, bio and kinship caregiver supports
- **Administrative:** Continuing to oversee the Department's progress on culture change.

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, 2020