

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

Thursday, August 20, 2020 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., virtual meeting

Member Attendance: Katie Biron, Annie Blackledge, Bobbe Bridge, Jeannie Darneille, Tom Dent, Ben de Haan, Sydney Forrester, Loni Greninger, Ruth Kagi, Diane Liebe, Charles Loeffler, Lois Martin, Shrounda Selivanoff, Tana Senn

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

Public in Attendance: Laurie Lippold, *Partners for Our Children*; Dr. Vickie Ybarra, *Department of Children, Youth, and Families*; Frank Ordway, *Department of Children, Youth, and Families*; Stacia Hollar, *Attorney General's Office*; Rebecca Kelly, *DCYF Acting Assistant Secretary of Juvenile Rehabilitation*; Kathleen Harvey, *Director of Community, Reentry and Parole Programs*; Harvey Perez, *Director of Institution Programs*; Jennifer Redman, *Superintendent of Green Hill School*; Yolanda Lee, *Administrator of Oakridge Community Facility*; Gordon McHenry Jr., *Council Chair of WA PC-JJ*; Sean Goode, *Council Vice Chair of WA PC-JJ*; Allison Krutsinger, *Department of Children, Youth, and Families*; Maria Hudson, *community member*; Jill Malat, *Office of Civil Legal Aid*

Only public attendees who chose to identify themselves in the chat box during the meeting, or who made public comment, are recorded in the official meeting minutes.

Welcome, Roll Call & Opening Remarks

The meeting was called into order at 10:00 a.m. Crista Johnson introduced ground rules for engaging on the Zoom. Roll call of DCYF Oversight Board members was taken.

Diane Liebe made a motion to approve the July 16, 2020 & July 27, 2020 meeting minutes. Lois Martin seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

Youth Experiences in Juvenile Rehabilitation | Young people currently living at Echo Glen, Green Hill School, Oakridge Community Facility, and Community Facility in Eastern WA

Young people currently residing at juvenile rehabilitation facilities shared personal statements on topics including living in a JR facility during the COVID-19 pandemic, JR to 25 changes, job readiness and educational opportunities, as well as step down experiences from locked down facilities to community facilities.

These young people expressed a need for more diverse job readiness and educational opportunities at facilities such as Echo Glen, with programs including skincare, mechanics, fitness, and also basic life skills for reentry. They expressed concern over the lack of substance use disorder treatment during the pandemic and the need for treatment at several facilities. Family visitation has also been negatively impacted by the pandemic with the only option being

offered via limited online resources. The presenters suggested visitations should be provided in an outdoor setting to support social connections with family. Additionally, the young people requested the opportunity to build credit while living in a JR facility to assist with reentry efforts.

JR During a Time of Change | Frank Ordway, DCYF Chief of Staff; Rebecca Kelly, DCYF Acting Assistant Secretary of Juvenile Rehabilitation; Kathleen Harvey, Director of Community, Reentry and Parole Programs; Harvey Perez, Director of Institution Programs; Jennifer Redman, Superintendent of Green Hill School; Yolanda Lee, Administrator of Oakridge Community Facility

DCYF staff acknowledged the impact of COVID-19 on operations at JR facilities. This includes staffing shortages due to exposure and symptoms. DCYF also acknowledged the challenges in providing SUD treatment at some facilities, and the challenges in support remote visitation for youth and their families due to risks presented by online resources. Both issues are being worked on and addressed to provide these to young people living in a facility as soon as possible.

DCYF staff provided updates on JR to 25 transfers that will continue through September and discussed some of the challenges of providing secondary education with COVID-19, particularly regarding concerns over staff health and safety.

WA Partnership Council on Juvenile Justice (WA PC-JJ) Presentation | Gordon McHenry Jr., Council Chair of WA PC-JJ

Chair Gordon McHenry introduced the WA PC-JJ to the DCYF Oversight Board, including its membership structure and history of the Council. He also invited a regular, quarterly check-in with the Oversight Board in partnership to work together on juvenile justice issues in the years to come.

Public Comment

Jill Malat, Office of Civil Legal Aid: Jill expressed concerns over a recent observation at Morning Star Boy's Ranch where an attorney infected with COVID-19 was at the venue. Jill also expressed concern that no staff members at the Ranch were wearing face coverings and in-person family visits started up this week.

Maria Hudson, community member: Maria expressed great frustration over claimed school negligence with her daughter. She also expressed concerns for foster care youth who do not have the protections that non-foster care children often have. She stated a need for CPS to use their authority to look into school administrations and treatment of children.

Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children: In response to the presentations heard during the meeting so far, Laurie encouraged further work on address criminal history, background checks and recording sealing for young people. Laurie also made the observation that opportunities for

in-person family visitations were being implemented differently across child welfare programs and juvenile rehabilitation facilities. She encouraged the Board to consider that in the nature of DCYF, these visitations should be equally implemented across the Department. She also encouraged the DCYF Oversight Board to connect with the Mental Health Children's Workgroup, and for the Board to consider what they will do with the information received from the young people at the beginning of the meeting. She posed, what actions with the Oversight Board take?

Data Follow Up Briefing from July Meeting | Dr. Vickie Ybarra, DCYF Director of Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability

The Oversight Board had several follow up questions from Dr. Ybarra's data presentation on racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality in July. Dr. Ybarra provided answers to all the follow up questions, including that a question posed by the Board - asking what the impact of kinship caregivers versus non-kin foster homes has on the social-emotional WaKIDS score for kindergarten readiness - has been added to DCYF's 2021 research agenda to get a valid answer.

DCYF Agency Request Legislation & Decision Packages for 2021 | Allison Krutsinger, DCYF Deputy Director of Government Affairs and Community Engagement

Allison presented the DCYF Oversight Board with the agency's request legislation and decision packages for the 2021 session. DCYF will be pursuing legislative changes to extended foster care for tribal youth, expanding responsible living skills program, and changes to Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QTRP) licensing. DCYF is also submitting decision packages for the authority to use Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) funding, to increase stakeholder engagement for reviewing WACs, making JR more a therapeutic environment and to meet the 15% general fund state reductions brought on by COVID-19 impacts to the state budget.

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2020 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Zoom.

Adjourned at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 20, 2020