

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

Board Meeting Record

Thursday, July 7, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 1:45 p.m., virtual meeting & Capitol Court Building

Member Attendance: Anne Lee, Ben de Haan, Bobbe Bridge, Charles Loeffler, Sen. Claire Wilson, Diane Liebe, Sen. Judy Warnick, Lois Martin, Ruth Kagi, Co-Chair Shrounda Selivanoff, Rep. Tana Senn, Co-Chair Rep. Tom Dent

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

Public in Attendance: Kristin Lamson, *Office of the Attorney General*, Laurie Lippold, *Partners for Our Children*, Shayna Richard, *Light the Way*, Tates, *Light the Way*

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 10:05 a.m. Co-Chair Representative Dent started the meeting and roll call of DCYF Oversight Board members was taken.

DCYF Prevention Across the Continuum of Care | Steven Grilli, Assistant Secretary of Prevention and Client Services; Dr. Vickie Ybarra, Director, Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability

DCYF provided a presentation on the agency's prevention strategy across the continuum of care. The presentation included a review of how the agency manages prevention as a top priority, its vision and leadership, current progress, next steps, and how prevention progress is being measured and the agency being held accountable to its commitments and legislative mandates.

In the review of current progress and work moving forward, DCYF's Assistant Secretary of Prevention and Client Services briefed the Board on a range of existing, developing, and expanding pilots and programs, including: Strengthening Families Locally, Home Visiting, Child Welfare & Early Learning Navigators (CWELN), Pregnant Substance Use Disorder Pilot, Plan of Safe Care, Family Reconciliation Services Redesign, and Motivational Interviewing. DCYF also previewed how prevention is featured as one of the agency's top priorities for the 2023 Legislative Session. Challenges for expanding prevention services remain and include funding, dependency on cross-agency work to fulfill the agency's charge, and overall access to services, in particular services in rural communities and ensuring provided services are culturally responsive.

Dr. Vickie Ybarra reviewed intake and placement data utilized by DCYF to target prevention strategies in communities indicating highest need. Additionally, Dr. Ybarra briefed the Board on the outcome, balancing, and leading indicators used by the agency to measure prevention efforts, including a discussion on the agency's goal to reduce the number of children and youth in out-of-home care by half.

Follow up items requested of DCYF by Board members include: (1) detailed plans on how prevention programs/pilots will be implemented and expanded; (2) how the agency was monitoring potentially negative outcomes for children and families as the number of youth in out-of-home care continues to decrease each year; (3) referral services available for other primary providers working with children and families who wish to be mandatory supporters in addition to being mandatory reporters; (4) data trends on the number/rate of

children who re-enter care during their 30 and/or 60 day trial return home period; (5) the length of time a family is eligible for child care after the closure of a child welfare case; and (6) any preliminary data that may be available that supports the success of the CWELN program.

Public Comment

Shayna Richard, Light the Way, Shayna provided both written and oral public comment. Shayna made statements regarding the Oakley Carlson case and asked that the Board call for an immediate external investigation of the case. She stated DCYF needs to be more attentive to the child's needs when solely focusing on family reunification and associated metrics.

Tates, Light the Way, Tates provided both written and oral public comment. Tates made statements regarding the Oakley Carlson case and asked that the Board call for an immediate review and investigation of the case. Tates stated this unfortunately is not the only case of this happening and if DCYF has nothing to hide they should be open to an independent review of their handling of the case.

Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children, Laurie encouraged the Board to review the implementation progress of bills that passed during previous legislative sessions. Specifically, Laurie suggested reviewing the implementation progress of HB 1747 which covers supporting relative placements in child welfare proceedings and HB 1227 which covers protecting the rights of families responding to allegations of abuse or neglect of a child. She also recommended that the Board follow DCYF's current work on developing a plan to expand the Network Administrator model statewide.

Written Public Comment Submissions: As indicated above, two written public comments were submitted to the Board by 7/5/2022 and were distributed to Board members on 7/6/2022. These comments, as indicated above, were submitted by Shayna Richards and Tates. Both written public comments reflected their comments made during the public comment period on the agenda.

Additionally, for the 5/26 DCYF Oversight Board meeting (that was canceled due to an online meeting disruption), the Board received one written public comment by Chelsea Jo, which included statements regarding the Oakley Carlson case and asked that the Board call for an external review of the case.

DCYF Oversight Board Prevention Discussion | Board

Board members engaged in a robust conversation reflecting on DCYF's prevention strategies presentation. Identified areas of significance, interest, and concern for potential future follow up include:

- continued monitoring of prevention work and progress,
- funding options for prevention strategies - particularly culturally responsive services,
- assessing the utilization and effectiveness of the Family Assessment Response (FAR) as a prevention strategy,
- DCYF's efforts, strategy, and detailed actions plans for addressing and transforming the historically distrustful relationship communities and families have had with the child welfare system,
- prevention strategies in the juvenile justice and juvenile rehabilitation space – particularly regarding diversion,
- determining the Board's authority to request an investigation as mentioned by public comment participants,
- invite the Director of Early Learning to speak to the Board on how early learning plays a part in the agency's prevention strategies across the continuum of care,
- updates on the development and procurement of the child welfare workload study funded in the 2022 legislative session, and

- engaging courts who add increasing work demands and tasks to caseworkers workload.

Open Public Meetings Act Updates – HB 1329 | Crista Johnson, Executive Director

In order to stay in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Crista provided a short overview of some key changes that went into effect recently and how/if it will have any impacts on the currently board meeting layout.

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2022, from 10 AM – 1:30 PM and will be available in-person and on Zoom.

Adjourned at 1:37 p.m. on Thursday, July 7, 2022