

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

Thursday, September 15, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., virtual meeting & Capitol Court Building

Member Attendance: Annie Lee, Ben de Haan, Justice Bobbe Bridge, Charles Loeffler, Sen. Claire Wilson, Dr. Diane Liebe, Sen. Judy Warnick, Katie Biron, Loni Greninger, Lois Martin, Ruth Kagi, Co-Chair Shrounda Selivanoff, Sydney Forrester, 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*, Shayna Richard, *Light the Way*, Tates Nunez, *Light the Way*

Only public attendees who chose to identify themselves 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. Co-Chair Representative Dent started the meeting and roll call of DCYF Oversight Board members was taken. The September 1, 2022 meeting minutes were approved.

2023 DCYF Legislative Agenda | Allison Krutsinger, DCYF Director of Government Affairs and Community Engagement

Allison provided DCYF's draft legislative agenda including agency request legislation and decision packages to the board for 2023. DCYF hosted a public webinar on this same topic on 9/23/22. The webinar information was shared with the Board.

Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (CAPTA) Citizen Review Panel (CRP) | Jacob D'Annunzio, Office of Public Defense and Panel Chair; Ron Murphy, Casey Family Programs and Panel Member; and Ryan Murrey, WA Association of Child Advocate Programs and Panel Member

Jacob provided the Oversight Board with history and context on the original organization of all CAPTA Citizen Review Panels in WA State and how the panels have changed in scope and membership over the years. Ron discussed recent advances of working with DCYF to establish the Racial Equity & Inclusive Citizen Review Panel that has been built from the work and foundation originally set by the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC). Recommendations made by the Children, Youth and Family Services CRP in the 2023 Annual Progress and Services Report were presented to the Board to illustrate the Panel's scope of work and commonalities with Board interests. Recommendations focused on racial disproportionalities, education for youth in care, and data tracking and monitoring regarding recent large scale policy reforms.

Jacob outlined the CRP's priorities for the coming year, including focuses on moving away from mandatory reporting laws and moving toward mandatory supporting laws, BIPOC contractors' experiences with DCYF, outcomes for infants with exposure to substances, and outcomes of families with an incarcerated parent. Jacob proposed the opportunity for the CRP and the Oversight Board to partner and collaborate on shared interest moving forward to strengthen and streamline efforts influencing DCYF decision-making.

Public Comment: The following are summaries of public comment participant contributions. To observe full public comment remarks, [please view the meeting recording](#).

Shayna Richard, Light the Way, Shayna made statements regarding the Oakley Carlson case and asked that the Board call for an immediate external investigation of the case. In addition to her own statement, Shayna read a letter written by Jamie Ho Hiles, foster parent to Oakley Carlson.

Tates Nunez, Light the Way, Tates gave an overview about the Oakley Carlson case and stated that there needs to be an outside agency investigation be done on DCYF.

Charles Loeffler, DCYF Supervisor and DCYF Oversight Board Member, on behalf of a group of DCYF caseworkers from King County, Charles read a letter to the Board submitted by a group of caseworkers from King County. The letter described the amount of work involved in managing large caseloads and trying to prevent removing children from families. The letter described an observable trend in critical cases with higher needs, though a lack of available resources remains a consistent issue. Acknowledging the changes introduced by HB 1194 and HB 1227, the letter states that DCYF will continue to lose staff unless they are resourced appropriately and are provided the support needed to take on these large-scale reform efforts.

Laurie Lippold, Partners for Our Children, In response to the letter read by Charles Loeffler, Laurie stated that as a support of these recent policy changes, she wants to know how to best support the workforce responsible for implementing these changes so that they are manageable and effective. Laurie acknowledged the workload study that is expected to produce results in Spring 2023 will help illuminate a path forward regarding practice changes. Laurie also commented on the agency's legislative agenda presented earlier in the meeting by Allison Krutsinger.

Written Public Comment submissions were received by September 12, 2022 and sent to Board members on September 13, 2022. Please see a summary of them below.

Shayna Richard, Light the Way, Shayna sent a written comment which contained the same remarks as her public comment.

Tates Nunez, Light the Way, Tates sent a written comment which contained the same remarks as her public comment.

Jamie Ho Hiles, foster parent, Jamie submitted a letter that was read by Shayna Richards out loud during the public comment period.

DCYF Workforce Strategy | Ross Hunter, Secretary of DCYF; Paul Smith, DCYF Critical Incident Program Manager

Secretary Hunter shared with the Board DCYF workforce strategies to address retention and recruitment across the agency's divisions. Acknowledging workforce challenges facing industries nationwide, Sec. Hunter identified root causes of retention and recruitment efforts for JR, child welfare, contracted services and IT. He also talked about how the agency is innovating and addressing these issue to ensure families and children receive consistent and quality service, as well to ensure the workforce is supported. While identifying unique challenges to workforce retention and recruitment for each of the agency's divisions, Sec. Hunter also identified areas of opportunity including wage increases and professional development pathways. In addition to pursuing these changes into the future, Sec. Hunter described the agency's current work including the Child Welfare and Indian Child Welfare Act Workload Study set to produce results in Spring 2023, DCYF's Leadership Development Project led by Dr. Joel Odimba to understand the needs of DCYF staff, the development of a retention tracking framework by the HR Data Analytics Team, and potential expansion of a successful child

welfare telework pilot. Additional agency work underway includes the re-design of the Family Practice Model, identifying and supporting staff mental health and wellness needs, as well as changes to hiring processes.

The Board requested additional information regarding how staff currently experience critical incidents and the supports available to staff when these traumatic incidents occur.

Board Q&A with DCYF and Debrief | Board

With limited time left in the meeting, DCYF Oversight Board staff requested additional follow up questions from Board members after the adjournment of the meeting and will present DCYF's responses to the Board accordingly.

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

The next meeting is scheduled for October 20, 2022, from 10 AM – 1:00 PM and will be available in-person and on Zoom.

Adjourned at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2022