

Purpose: Annual Report Production

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

Thursday, November 14, 2024, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., virtual meeting & Helen Sommers Building

Member Attendance: Katie Biron, Bobbe Bridge, Tom Dent, Ben de Haan, Marian Harris, Pamela Javier, Danielle Johnson, Ruth Kagi, Diane Liebe, Lois Martin, Barbara Serrano, Judy Warnick, Claire Wilson

Staff in Attendance: Lyscha Marcynyszyn, PhD, *Executive Director* & Nickolaus Colgan, *Administrative Coordinator*

Public in Attendance: Shayna Richard, *Light the Way*, Phoenix Lambert, *community member*

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 2:00 p.m. Co-Chair Claire Wilson started the meeting welcoming new board members Dr. Marian Harris as a subject matter expert in reducing disparities in child outcomes by income, race, and ethnicity and Pamela Javier as a current or former foster youth. Lyscha Marcynyszyn did roll call of DCYF Oversight Board members, quorum was met. Lyscha proposed approval of the October 18, 2024, meeting minutes and asked for any edits to the draft minutes. With no edits provided, Lyscha requested a motion be made for approval, Diane Liebe made a motion to approve the minutes and Ruth Kagi seconded. Lyscha requested all in favor to approve, all members in attendance voted yea.

Annual Report Review | Lyscha Marcynyszyn

The DCYF Oversight Board gathered to review the first draft of their annual report.

Executive Summary: 14:59

- Ruth: there has been a significant increase in licensing providers, highlight that in bullet points
- Ruth: add Charles Loeffler and Loni Greninger to board member call out
- Claire: children don't achieve Level 3 on the Early Achievers quality standards, that is providers
- Bobbe: on "decreasing number of youths who commit subsequent crimes" subsequent to what? Clarify released from JR or not
- Diane: define what mixed finding, improvement and needs improvement is, what definition are you using?
- Ben: purposes today to refine report. Will we have an opportunity to talk about the limitation of the metrics that are referenced in statute. Some are incompatible and some don't give us a basis for when, they are positive

Summary Table: 28:23

- Claire: move acronym definition of SFY and FY to a footnote
- Ruth: starting with system involvement it was not clear we were talking about JR, needs to be some clarity and start with early learning indicators – JJ – then JR, follow a story
- Diane: make sure the table is clear and intuitive

Measure 1: 34:45

- Lyscha: mixed, improved, needs improvement = two most recent years of data
- Claire: is this juvenile solitary? Made a bill eliminating juvenile solitary. Is it room confinement, or solitary, show that something was done to make an adjustment to the law, more definitions

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- Lois: take out descriptive language in the report like “slight” and “sharp”
- Ruth: It is a judgement, but people reading the report want to hear some of our opinions on the improvement
- Lois: people reading the document could be able to tell if it is slight or not. It can minimize any growth to numbers by calling them “slight”
- Barb: definition of room confinement, how many hours is it?
- Barb: data of the days are difficult to interpret when the data is going into the hundredths
- Diane: It does take some interpretation, but can we add a scale i.e. how significant of a change is 3%? Hard for readers to determine that.
- Ben: qualifying some of these measures when cell sizes are small. Readers need context to understand how these measures are calculated. Data should be interpreted with caution as it can be a very small sample size. Need the population size if possible, when comparing ratios with different groups
- Ben: definition of the measure, when something is positive i.e. screened in numbers rising, but we don’t know that it has a positive effect, it is just higher numbers. 50% reduction of children in care can only be positive if the reduced number of kids are being cared for and not homeless
- Danielle: clarify what 1 means. If it is higher or lower than 1, what it means in terms of someone being placed in a community facility
- Diane: definition of community facility, is that a positive thing?
- Barb: be explicit about the definitions, they are not clear
- Barb: in the summary, some of the way it is written makes it sound like a negative when it is a positive i.e Hispanic/Latino disparity. Ensure throughout the report it is clear with context if something is positive or negative
- Claire: are we talking state facilities or county facilities in the data?
- Diane: definition of discretionary parole
- Barb: who is eligible for discretionary parole?
- Ruth: first half of the recommendation is just a statement, whole thing should be a recommendation

Measure 2: 58:10

- Diane: this data is going up, but the disparities are persisting, need to call that out
- Reference small sample sized in the race/ethnicity data
- Diane: would be helpful to have some idea of the sample size
- Claire: is this WaKids or OSPI data? Is there anywhere we report out on early learning WaKids data within DCYF?
- Ruth: are we able to make any observations about if disparities have increased or decreased? Upward trajectory in general. The improvements are relatively flat
- Lois: what should be clear to an outside reviewer, WaKids reflect just those in ECEAP, does not include private schools or family homes
- Ruth: WaKids requires kindergarten teachers to connect with childcare. The measure is all kids coming into kindergarten are assessed on the same six domains and this is the cumulative score
- Tom: answer was not clear if school districts can opt out of WaKids, or where the numbers come from.
- Ruth: unless the legislator changed the law, all public-school districts are required to be part of it. Unsure about private schools or tribal compact schools. Includes charter as well.

Measure 3: 1:13:04

- Claire: clarify it is the providers that have reached Level 3, not the children
- Diane: the numbers are for children, not providers
- Diane: want children served by all types of providers data broke down by race/ethnicity
- Ruth: would be helpful to have by type of provider as well

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Measure 4: 1:21:42

- Diane: there is a way to report whether you are in the range of error
- Ruth: table showing the number of children served by providers... and homes
- Claire: we wouldn't know the actual number since it would be based on licensed caregivers who provide subsidies. Show figure for this.
- Lois: WACompass pulls data from Merrit and not all accept subsidies. If we include data and only focus on subsidized children, would that be a beneficial graph

Measure 5: 1:28:45 (note: this section made close to zero sense to me the whole way through, so really struggled to write their questions for it)

- Ben: how many FAR cases have gone through family assessment response and are also showing up in CPS referral rates.
- Danielle: Intakes that were screened in, are they cases that are being opened for investigations, or included cases that are already open and being screened in?
- Pamela: clarification about why there is not years before 2023 in CPS Risk Only
- Diane: why is this indicator improved; do we really know this data means it is an improvement?
- Ruth: the law was changed dramatically to require a much higher threshold for the state to intervene. How do we measure if this is allowing more families to stay together, or causing more harm?

Measure 6: 1:39:43

- Danielle: is there any data that could be pulled that discusses how many fatalities or near fatalities are happening during in home dependencies when not removing them from parent's care?
- OFCO, Patrick Dowd provided a statement via email
- Diane: there was an increase in fatalities related to fentanyl. We need to add the word "safely" since we want it don't safely, but we don't know that it is
- Ben: the drop in foster care state wise is almost the same as the drop in foster care nationally. Law to track fatalities and near fatalities, very small number in comparison to intakes. Many child fatalities show up in emergency room data that never been referred to an agency. Estimated 1/3 total reported.
- Claire: bill 6109, is there any time we recommend funding the various supports we know would provide what families need?
- Ruth: the state has implemented stronger intervention/prevention strategies, but they need to be funded, or they won't be available
- Danielle: when we have an in-home dependency instead of out-of-home dependency we request in-home services which could be more robust, and more work could be done to build up those supports. More in-home services make it more accessible than families needing to go to a location.
- Ben: if half the children in foster care and disproportionally rates didn't change, wouldn't you have expected that to be an opportunity to do something about disparities when half the population leaves? We would have expected to see larger reductions in underserved communities if we were paying attention to it.

Measure 7: 1:54:41

- Danielle: any data that might show relationship between length of stay decreasing and then reentry into care? Correlation between length of stay decreasing, but then the kids coming back

Measure 8: 1:56:48

- Danielle: where does the 1,000 days of care come from?

Measure 9: 1:59:25

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- Claire: 11–15-year-olds are the greatest number of unaccompanied minors and is a housing issue, what are other spaces and places that can be created

Measure 10: 2:01:13

- Ruth: is the impact of the change in policy noticeable and has it made a difference?
- Diane: the phrasing makes it sound like the data has not increased much by placing the numbers showing it was a 1% change

Measure 11: 2:04:18

No comments

Measure 12: 2:08:07

- Claire: the data is not necessarily worse, the context could make it an improvement
- Katie: do we want to use foster parent or foster caregiver? State has moved away from saying foster parent
 - Tom: I am good with being referred to as foster parent
 - Pamela: depends on who the foster parent or foster care giver is, ask the youth, but depends on the person
- Ben: is there incentives to answering the caregiver survey to get such large turnout?

Measure 13: 2:29:41

No comments

Measure 14: 2:31:06

- Claire: institutional ed taskforce. Check if there is any info we need has been stored with the taskforce.

Measure 15: 2:40:05

No comments

Public Comment | Co-Chair Diane Liebe

Shayna Richard, Light the Way, Shayna made statements regarding the Oakley Carlson case and asked for an immediate external investigation of the case be given.

Phoenix Lambert, community member, Phoenix made a statement regarding the Oakley Carlson case and outlined her upbringing and the incidents that followed her removal from her foster home.

Written Public Comment:

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

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Co-Chair Claire Wilson thanked all attendees for their important comments and outlined the next steps for the report and when to expect it to be submitted once it has received approval from the Office of the Governor.

Adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 14, 2024.