

Nebraska Children’s Commission
Thirty-Seventh Meeting
March 15, 2016
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM
Country Inn & Suites, Lincoln Room
5353 N. 27th Street
Lincoln, NE 68521

I. Call to Order

The Nebraska Children’s Commission Chair, Beth Baxter, called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Commission Members present (12):

Teresa Anderson	Jennifer Chrystal-Clark	Deb O’Brien
Karen Authier	Kim Hawekotte	Mary Jo Pankoke
Beth Baxter	Gene Klein	Susan Staab
Holly Brandt	David Newell	Diana Tedrow (9:15)

Commission Members absent (3):

Andrea Miller	Dale Shotkoski	Paula Wells
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Ex Officio Members present (5):

Ellen Brokofsky (9:18)	Judge Linda Porter	Doug Weinberg
Katie McLeese Stephenson	Julie Rogers (9:12)	

Ex Officio Members absent (6):

Dr. Matthew Blomstedt	Senator Kathy Campbell	Senator Patty Pansing-Brooks
Senator Kate Bolz	Steve Milliken	Courtney Phillips

A quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (10):

Dr. Katie Bass	Nebraska Court Improvement Project
Doug Beran	DHHS, Division of Children and Family Services
Jeanne Brandner	Administrative Office of Probation
Bethany Connor Allen	Nebraska Children’s Commission
Amanda Felton	Nebraska Children’s Commission
Sarah Helvey	Nebraska Appleseed
Dan Jenkins	Nebraska Legislative Council
Joselyn Luedtke	Nebraska Legislative Council
Jane Sutherland	Administrative Office of Probation
Lana Temple-Plotz	Nebraska Children’s Home Society

a. Notice of Publication

Recorder for the meeting, Amanda Felton, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meetings Calendar website on February 25, 2016 in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The publication will be kept as a permanent attachment with the meeting minutes.

b. *Announcement of the placement of Open Meetings Act information*

A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for public inspection and was located on the sign-in table near the entrance of the meeting room.

III. Approval of Agenda

Chair Baxter presented the agenda to the Commission. Dave Newell noted that he would need to leave the meeting prior to his DTAR Workgroup Update and asked that the agenda item instead be presented by Karen Authier, a member of the Workgroup.

It was moved by Mary Jo Pankoke and seconded by Jennifer Chrystal-Clark to approve the agenda with Karen Authier as the presenter for the DTAR Workgroup Update. There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (11):

Teresa Anderson	Jennifer Chrystal-Clark	Deb O'Brien
Karen Authier	Kim Hawekotte	Mary Jo Pankoke
Beth Baxter	Gene Klein	Susan Staab
Holly Brandt	David Newell	

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (4):

Andrea Miller	Diana Tedrow
Dale Shotkoski	Paula Wells

ABSTAINED (0)

MOTION CARRIED

IV. Consent Agenda

a. *Minutes of the January 20, 2016 Nebraska Children's Commission Meeting*

Chair Baxter brought the minutes from the previous January 20, 2016 meeting to the Commission's attention. She inquired as to if there were any corrections. No corrections were provided.

Susan Staab moved to approve the items of the Consent Agenda as presented. Deb O'Brien seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Karen Authier	Jennifer Chrystal-Clark	Deb O'Brien
Beth Baxter	Kim Hawekotte	Mary Jo Pankoke
Holly Brandt	Gene Klein	Susan Staab

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (4):

Andrea Miller	Diana Tedrow
Dale Shotkoski	Paula Wells

ABSTAINED (2)

Teresa Anderson	David Newell
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MOTION CARRIED

V. Chairperson's Report

Chair, Beth Baxter, took the opportunity to thank all of the subgroups for their hard work. She informed the Commission members that she had provided testimony at the hearing for LB1034, the bill to reauthorize the Nebraska Children's Commission. The bill had been recently amended to LB746, covering the Strengthening Families Act, which would be discussed in a later agenda item.

VI. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Update

Doug Weinberg, Director of the Division of Children and Family Services with DHHS, presented the Department update in Courtney Phillip's absence. Mr. Weinberg discussed the increase in the out of home youth population and efforts being made to address the issue. Also discussed was the expansion of Alternative Response to 6 additional counties and how the additional data from the expansion will allow for a better vision of how the program is working.

Mr. Weinberg briefly touched upon the update of the Heritage Health contract recommendations to reflect WellCare of Nebraska, Nebraska Total Care (Centene), and United Healthcare. Other topics of discussion included the upcoming Healthcare Conference on June 2nd, monthly stakeholder meetings regarding Developmental Disabilities, and Legislative Bills from the current session.

VII. Presentation on Round 3 Children and Family Services Review (CFSR)

The Chair welcomed Doug Beran, Research, Planning and Evaluation Administrator with the Division of Children and Family Services, to present on the Round 3 Children and Family Services Review (CFSR). Mr. Beran explained that while the 7 Data Indicators of focus were important, there were an additional 36 System Factors (18 Outcome Measures and 18 Systemic Factors) in the overall CFSR.

A point of discussion was the difficulty in identifying successful models to exemplify. Mr. Beran noted that the practices, systems, and circumstances for each state differ greatly from one another. He gave the example of how a state could have failed a majority of the Outcome Measures, but still have passed many of the 7 Data Indicators. Lengthy discussion occurred over various elements of the Round 3 CFSR.

Mr. Beran thanked the Commission for allowing him to present and indicated that he would be interested in presenting at a future meeting to provide additional information as data was gathered.

VIII. Legislation Overview and Legislative Resolution Discussion

Joselyn Luedtke, with the office of Senator Kathy Campbell, presented on legislation relevant to the Commission. Ms. Luedtke touched on LB1034 and the amendment to have it added to LB746. She expanded on the funding complications. These complications occurred due to the Commission's sunset date falling in the middle of a biennium budget cycle. A solution of appropriating unexpended funds from the previous budget and Healthcare Cash funds from the HHS Legislative Committee was implemented.

Other bills of interest included LB1032 regarding the expansion of Medicaid, LB1033 looking at the Developmental Disabilities population, and LB1081 regarding public assistance and a proposed study. Dan Jenkins, with the office of Senator Kate Bolz, expanded on LB866 covering a program to extend services to juvenile justice aging out of the system. Due to a lack of priority on the bill and confusion regarding the fiscal impact, the likelihood of the bill passing in the current session was low. The Taskforce originally investigating the possibility of the program would continue to work in refining the supporting data for the next legislative session.

IX. Discussion of LB746: Change of provisions relating to the Nebraska Children's Commission

Chair Baxter brought attention to LB746 into which LB1034 had been amended. The bill included several additional provisions to the Nebraska Children's Commission. Additional responsibilities in the bill were the focus on juvenile justice youth, emphasis on addressing workforce issues, and developing a system-of-care plan.

Questions were raised regarding the membership and application process, should the Commission be extended. Chair Baxter explained that all governor appointed members would need to reapply should they be interested in continuing on the Commission. Information would be distributed to the members regarding the application process.

X. Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee Report

Gene Klein, Vice Chair of the Children's Commission and Co-Chair of the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee (FCRRC), presented the report from the FCRRC. Mr. Klein explained that, in their review, the Base Rate Subcommittee reviewed rates and gathered feedback from various entities and found no indication that the rates needed to be adjusted.

Other work included two surveys. The first survey included asking agency providers if additional compensation was needed for instances of providing support to foster parents who cannot meet the needs of their foster youth. The second survey was distributed to foster parents in regards to the Nebraska Caregiver Responsibility (NCR) tool. Both surveys yielded results showing that no significant adjustments were necessary.

Recommendations from the report touched on the various pay rates, updates to the NCR, and monitoring actions by the FCRRC. The group outlined a priority to complete the task of recommendations regarding a rate structure with treatment components adequate to serve youth in out-of-home care for whom placement is problematic.

Gene Klein moved to accept the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate report. Karen Authier seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (11):

Teresa Anderson
Karen Authier
Beth Baxter
Holly Brandt

Jennifer Chrystal-Clark
Kim Hawekotte
Gene Klein
David Newell

Deb O'Brien
Mary Jo Pankoke
Susan Staab

AGAINST (0):

ABSENT (4):

Andrea Miller
Dale Shotkoski

Diana Tedrow
Paula Wells

ABSTAINED (0)

MOTION CARRIED

XI. Court Improvement Project Update

Katie McLeese Stephenson, Director of the Court Improvement Project (CIP), began the update with an overview of the recent work of the CIP. She detailed the transition from a subcontract with the Center for Children, Families, and the Law (CCFL) at UNL to a direct project under the Administrative Office of the Courts. Within the CIP were the Through the Eyes of the Child Teams that examined how the court system was performing for its involved youth. Other areas of focus for the CIP were Native connections, training

opportunities, the Community & Evidence Based Services Grant, the Strengthening Families Act, and the Nebraska Human Trafficking Task Force.

Ms. McLeese Stephenson introduced Dr. Katie Bass, Data Analyst with the CIP, who presented on the JUSTICE 2013-2015 Statewide Child Welfare & Juvenile Justice Trend Analysis. Dr. Bass discussed how the analysis was a compilation of the information from the various Through the Eyes of the Child Teams as gathered from the JUSTICE case management system. She highlighted the improved timeliness across the state, the decrease in missing data being inputted into the system, and the efforts moving forward to provide additional data entry training to filing clerks. Overall, Dr. Bass noted that the information included in the report showed and overall improvement in processes.

XII. Lunch

The Committee recessed for lunch at 12:08 p.m.

The meeting resumed business at 12:47 p.m.

XIII. Probation Report

Ellen Brokofsky, Administrator with the Administrative Office of Probation (AOP), and Jeanne Brandner Deputy Probation Administrator of the Juvenile Services Division with the AOP, provided an update. Ms. Brandner reviewed the monthly report on Probation Juvenile Justice Reform Efforts. She discussed the five outcomes covered in each report: Risk Reduction, Non-Delinquent Status Youth, Placement, Detention, and Education and Employment. One item of attention was the pilot project happening in Lancaster County specific to the Status Offender population. With research that showed the increase in recidivism for low risk youth entering the system, efforts were being made to focus on the needs of the Status Offender population.

Another issue that raised discussion was placement of out-of-home youth. The group discussed the lack of placement options that address the multiple levels of youth needs. Ms. Brandner noted the difficulty in finding family settings for youth involved in the juvenile justice system. With the proposed LB746 including a clause for “no eject, no reject” policies, it will become important to ensure that our levels of care appropriately match the needs of these youth. Ms. Brokofsky mentioned that while there is a way for the Commission to help on these issues, what exactly that help looks like was yet to be determined.

Final topics of review were the efforts being made to reduce the number of low risk youth in detention and providing education and employment opportunities to system involved youth. Ms. Brandner explained that for youth with education and job skills, transition back into their communities had increased success. All youth on intensive supervision are required to participate in the Rural Improvement for Schooling and Employment (RISE) program, which offered support to build up those necessary skills.

a. Review of Annual Juvenile Justice System Statistical Report

Ms. Brokofsky introduced Jane Sutherland, Data Analyst with the AOP, and Corey Steel, Deputy Administrator of the Juvenile Services Division with AOP. Ms. Sutherland opened with stating that the report would serve as a benchmark for future reviews. She explained how information was gathered, noting that a recidivism table was not provided. Mr. Steel explained that the JUSTICE system follows cases rather than individuals. To determine recidivism, information would need to be cross-walked between multiple databases. The fiscal impact of such a task would prove impossible to tackle with the current tracking abilities.

Ms. Sutherland and Mr. Steel thanked the Commission members for the opportunity to present on the Report.

XIV. Strengthening Families Act (SFA) Taskforce Update

The Strengthening Families Act Taskforce Update was provided by the group's Co-Chairs, Sarah Helvey, Child Welfare Program Director with Nebraska Appleseed, and Katie McLeese Stephenson, Director of the CIP. Ms. Helvey reviewed the various meetings to date and the identified issues that arose from those meetings.

A recently established Steering Committee worked to recruit Co-Chairs for the five subcommittees. Ms. McLeese Stephenson listed the five subcommittees which were Community & Family Voice, Grievance, Normalcy, Trafficking, and Training. Meetings of the various subcommittees were in the process of scheduling. The next meeting of the full Taskforce would be on July 13, 2016 at which point the subcommittees would present initial recommendations.

Interested individuals were directed to the Nebraska Children's Commission website page for the Taskforce or to contact Ms. Helvey or Ms. McLeese Stephenson.

XV. Workforce Workgroup Update

The floor was given to Susan Staab, Chair of the Workforce Workgroup, to provide an update. Ms. Staab reviewed the increased responsibilities of the Commission regarding the case management workforce issues. Lengthy dialogue occurred surrounding the future efforts to strengthen the workforce. It was agreed that communication should take place with DHHS and their current work towards workforce issues. Other suggestions included looking into reflective supervision training, use of IV-E and private funding for workforce education, and the potential of re-classifying positions.

XVI. Data, Technology, Accountability, and Reporting (DTAR) Workgroup Update

Karen Authier, Past Chair of the Children's Commission and member of the DTAR Workgroup, provided an update in the absence of David Newell. Ms. Authier highlighted the work being done by various groups in which the DTAR Workgroup planned to monitor. Discussed were the Data Mapping and Analysis (DMA) Taskforce and the Out-of-Home Data Pilot. The DTAR Workgroup planned to take a hiatus from regular meetings with the hopes of reconvening once the two groups had sufficient information to report out. The Workgroup also intended to work with DHHS to receive CFSR information for review and discussion before being presented to the Children's Commission on a quarterly basis.

XVII. Legal Parties Taskforce Update

Bethany Connor Allen, Policy Analyst with the Children's Commission, reported on the work of the Legal Parties Taskforce in the absence of Kim Hawekotte. Ms. Connor Allen informed the Commission members that the Taskforce was continuing to meet and focus on the practices and issues of the various legal parties in juvenile court. Specifically, the Taskforce was forming potential recommendations regarding Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-247. A survey had been distributed and results would be compiled and shared at the May Children's Commission meeting.

XIII. Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee Update

Bethany Connor Allen continued by giving an update on the Juvenile Services Committee. Ms. Connor Allen stated that the group was receiving regular updates from stakeholders within the juvenile justice community to promote awareness and collaboration. Other tasks the Committee was working on were the monitoring of the pending juvenile justice legislation and the work of the DMA Taskforce.

XIX. Public Comment

Chair Baxter invited any members of the public forward. No public comment was offered.

XX. New Business

There was no New Business to present.

XXI. Upcoming Meeting Planning

Chair Baxter opened the floor to suggestions for future meeting topics. Ms. Brokofsky indicated that she would like to have Julie Scott present on the regional pilot projects at the next Children's Commission meeting. The Chair noted that a panel on Education and how it relates to the child welfare and juvenile justice system would be on the next meeting agenda. Other potential agenda items for the future included a presentation on the System of Care work from the Division of Behavioral Health, discussion of membership application/re-application, distribution of the conflict of interest forms for members, and an update on the Community and Evidence Based Services grant.

XXII. Adjournment

It was moved by Susan Staab and seconded by Jennifer Crystal-Clark to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 2:27p.m.

03/25/2016

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