

Bridge to Independence (B2i) Advisory Committee

February , 2022

10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Webex

and

Lincoln Community Foundation

215 Centennial Mall South (5th Floor Large Conference Room)

Lincoln, NE 68508

I. Call to Order and Welcome

Co-Chair Brandy Gustoff called the meeting of the Bridge to Independence (B2i) Advisory Committee to order at 10:33 a.m., and asked attendees to introduce themselves. Roll call was taken through introductions.

II. Roll Call and Introductions

Committee Members present (9):

Sarah Helvey

Michaela Hirschman

Proxy for Jill Holt, Kitty Washburn

Jovan Johnson

Felipe Longoria

Keenan Page

Bailey Perry

Susan Thomas

Haylee Wing

Committee Members absent (3):

Douglas Beck

Whitney Beck

Christina Lloyd

Ex-Officio Members present (4):

Brandy Gustoff

Maghan Madsen

Lindsay Meyer

Deb VanDyke-Ries

Ex-Officio Members absent (1):

Jennifer Skala

A quorum was present.

Guests In Attendance (9):

Amanda Adams

Adam Anderson

Linda Cox

Mary Fraser Meints

Richard Hasty

Angela Miles

Shayne Schiermeister

Lana Verbrigghe

Terrence Williams

a. Notice of Publication

Recorder for the meeting, Adam Anderson, indicated that the notice of publication for this meeting was posted on the Nebraska Public Meeting and Nebraska Children's Commission website in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. The publication would 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 at the sign in table and on the Nebraska Children's Commission website.

*Minutes do not follow the order of the agenda.

III. Approval of Agenda

It was moved by Michaela Hirschman and seconded by Susan Thomas to approve the agenda as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Sarah Helvey
Michaela Hirschman
Proxy for Jill Holt, Kitty Washburn
Jovan Johnson
Felipe Longoria

Keenan Page
Bailey Perry
Susan Thomas
Haylee Wing

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (3):

Douglas Beck
Whitney Beck

Christina Lloyd

MOTION CARRIED

IV. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Susan Thomas to approve the December 16, 2022 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Jovan Johnson. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Sarah Helvey
Michaela Hirschman
Proxy for Jill Holt, Kitty Washburn
Jovan Johnson
Felipe Longoria

Keenan Page
Bailey Perry
Susan Thomas
Haylee Wing

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAINED (0):

ABSENT (3):

Douglas Beck
Whitney Beck

Christina Lloyd

MOTION CARRIED

V. Co-Chair Report

Brandy Gustoff shared that she will be testifying in support of LB14 on behalf of the Children's Commission and CAFCON. Sarah Helvey noted that expansion of b2i to the juvenile justice population has been a recommendation of this committee since its inception. Helvey added further historical context to the legislation.

VI. Membership Update

Adam Anderson shared an update regarding membership. He noted that Keenan Page has replaced Sara Riffel and that Haylee Wing has also been appointed as a new member. He also shared that Richard Hasty has been appointed as an interim Co-Chair of the Committee. Lastly, Anderson shared that the Committee is looking for a member from an Indian Tribe that is residing in Nebraska.

VII. Youth Thrive Survey and Discussion

Amanda Adams noted that Youth Thrive survey will be training in April 3-5, 2023. Shayne Schiermeister noted that Independence Coordinators as well as supervisors and the independent living team will be trained in April statewide. Terrence Williams noted that many staff have gone through the training prior and really enjoyed it.

VIII. Legislative Update

Amanda Adams clarified that LB14 doesn't have a current fiscal note posted. She discussed LB386, which is the Youth in Care Bill of Rights. She noted that Payne Ackerman testified in support of 386. Adams discussed LB159 which adopts the Fostering Independence on Higher Education Act which provides grants for higher education for graduated foster youth. LB87 allows age 18 and up to consent to healthcare. She shared that LB326 provides eligibility for certain children under the Medicaid Medical Assistance Act which ensures Medicaid eligibility until a youth's nineteenth birthday, if they're already eligible. She discussed LB549 which changes restrictions based on age for certain healthcare, power of attorney, and financial documents. She also shared that LB201 requires youth in high school youth complete the FAFSA for federal student aid.

IX. Workgroup Updates

a. Sustainability Workgroup

Keenan Page noted that he will be connecting with Sara Riffel regarding taking over as Chair of this workgroup.

b. Data & Evaluation Workgroup

Mary Fraser Meints shared an update on regarding the workgroup. Noting that the workgroup asked if a data report is needed any more often than every six months. Chair Gustoff agreed that every six months for a data report seems reasonable.

X. DHHS Update

Shayne Schiermeister shared an update regarding Youth and Families Thrive. He shared there is a roundtable discussion on March 24 with past and current B2i participants. He noted that there are around 300 participants invited to participate. He is hopeful that this discussion can be an ongoing part of b2i. He shared that they hope to let the youth guide what future discussions would look like.

Schiermeister noted that DHHS is currently serving around 200 youth in b2i. He shared that a new employee has been hired for b2i. Jordan Housch has started as a B2i IC. She is a former CFS Specialist in Lincoln but will also be helping in other areas as needed. Schiermeister shared that average caseloads are sitting around 16.9. The addition of Jordan, once fully trained, will even out the caseload sizes.

Deanna Brakhage answered a question regarding entries and exits by noting that Pandemic Foster Care was a separate program and youth were not counted towards entries and exits during their time back in b2i.

XI. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

XII. New Business

Amanda Adams asked about getting a Youth Thrive Presentation for the Group. She will reach out about inviting a presenter to discuss Youth Thrive. Additionally, Adams will be presenting in May regarding the Strategic Plan of the Children's Commission.

Lana Verbrigghe shared an update regarding the work DHHS is doing with the Stephens Group. The first report of the Stephens Group will be released to CEO Danette Smith in early March. Michaela Hirschman shared an update and the website in the chat: reimaginewellbeing.ne.gov

XIII. Upcoming Meetings:

- a. May 4, 2023

XIV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.