

Nebraska Children's Commission – Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee

Tenth Meeting
August 13, 2013
9:00AM-4:30PM
Country Inn and Suites, Lincoln Room
5353 N. 27th Street, Lincoln, NE

Call to Order

Ellen Brokofsky and Marty Klein called the meeting to order at 9:05am and noted that the Open Meetings Act information was posted in the room as required by state law.

Roll Call

Subcommittee Members present: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Mark Mason, Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dr. Ken Zoucha.

Acting as resources to the committee: Tony Green, Doug Koebernick, Julie Rogers, Dan Scarborough, and Amy Williams.

Subcommittee Member(s) absent: Judge Larry Gendler, Tina Marroquin, and Dalene Walker.

Resource members absent: Senator Kathy Campbell, Senator Colby Coash, Jerall Moreland, Liz Neeley, and Hank Robinson.

Also attending: Leesa Sorensen, Nebraska Children's Commission.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Jana Peterson to approve the agenda as written, seconded by Ron Johns. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, and Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting no: none. Judge Larry Gendler, Tina Marroquin, Mark Mason, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker were absent. Motion carried.

Approval of June 11, 2013, Minutes

A motion was made by Kim Hawekotte to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2013, meeting, seconded by Sarah Forrest. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Mark Mason,

Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, and Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting no: none. Judge Larry Gendler, Tina Marroquin, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker were absent. Motion carried.

Co-chair's Report

Ellen Brokofsky and Marty Klein gave a co-chair's report. Marty informed the committee that the Nebraska Children's Commission had confirmed the addition of Barb Fitzgerald, Tina Marroquin, Mark Mason, and Dr. Ken Zoucha as the four new members to the committee at the July Children's Commission meeting. Ellen made opening comments about the Nebraska Juvenile Justice System Evaluation report written by Dr. Terry Lee. Ellen and Marty then led a discussion on the content of the report. The following points were highlighted for discussion:

- Marty Klein highlighted that on page 12, the report noted that only 50% of youth in juvenile court and only 26% of youth in criminal court are represented by counsel. Marty noted that this issue has been brought up as needing to be address in previous discussions.
- Kim Hawekotte highlighted the information on page 8 and 9 related to assessments. Kim indicated that she thought it would be helpful for the committee to learn more about the various assessments listed in the report and to research what other states might be using for the juvenile justice population.
- Kim Culp highlighted the information related to community based services noting that it was recommended that services should be family oriented in the least restrictive setting possible.
- Ken Zoucha called attention to the over-assessment of youth noted in the report. Ken indicated that he would like to see training and documentation created so that everyone understands the usefulness and purpose of each assessment.
- Ron Johns indicated that he would like to see recommendations related to the youth evaluations. He expressed his frustration that youth wait a long time to get evaluations only to end up with a three day assessment being administered with no family involvement and no assessment of the youth's home situation or parents. Ron indicated that he would like to see more family involvement in the assessment process and enhanced assessment of the home and parents.
- Marty Klein underscored the need to have families more engaged and accountable. He noted that parental buy in; family engagement; and adequate supervision by parents or a trusted adult are all very critical to the process of helping youth.
- Nick Juliano highlighted the information on page 15 through 17 on Evidence Based Practices and recommended that the group use the broader definition.
- Marty Klein emphasized the need to consider funding a process for evaluation of current programs that are not yet evidence based practices.
- Tony Green highlighted the information on page 13 concerning Disproportionate Minority Contact including implementing more uniform processes at each decision point of the juvenile justice system.
- Amy Williams noted the facilities information on the YRTC's and the need to identify a clear direction for family involvement.

- Page 6 and 7 were also noted as including important information about engaging stakeholders at all levels and reviewing blended funding and braided funding opportunities.
- Several committee members noted the information on page 24, related to “Potential Next Steps for Facilities”, provides a good road map for items to consider related to the YRTC facilities.
- Mark Mason and Barb Fitzgerald also provided information on the need to look at education outcomes for youth. It was noted that youth may have credits lost due to moves between school systems.

Committee Nomination

Marty Klein introduced Cindy Gans to the group. Cindy Gans from the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice was invited to provide information on her current employment and other related activities. Cindy provided information about community based aid that will be available in the future, including the need to create guidelines for the distribution of the funds. Committee members were then allowed to ask any questions of Cindy related to her position and her nomination for the open committee position.

A motion was made by Marty Klein to nominate Cindy Gans as a voting member of the Juvenile Services (OJS) committee and recommend her appointment to the Nebraska Children’s Commission for confirmation. The motion was seconded by Ron Johns. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Mark Mason, Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, and Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting no: none. Judge Larry Gendler, Kim Hawekotte, Tina Marroquin, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker were absent. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Ron Johns to recess the committee meeting for lunch. The motion was seconded by Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting yes: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, and Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting no: none. Judge Larry Gendler, Kim Hawekotte, Tina Marroquin, Mark Mason, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dalene Walker were absent. Motion carried.

The committee recessed for lunch at 12:10pm.

The committee reconvened at 1:20pm.

Subcommittee Members present: Martin Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Culp, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Mark Mason, Jana Peterson, Pastor Tony Sanders, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dr. Ken Zoucha.

Acting as resources to the committee: Tony Green, Doug Koebernick, Dan Scarborough, and Amy Williams.

Subcommittee Member(s) absent: Judge Larry Gendler, Tina Marroquin, and Dalene Walker.

Resource members absent: Senator Kathy Campbell, Senator Colby Coash, Jerall Moreland, Liz Neeley, Hank Robinson, and Julie Rogers.

Also attending: Leesa Sorensen, Nebraska Children's Commission

YRTC Update

Tony Green, Jana Peterson and Dan Scarbrough provided information on the Kearney and Geneva YRTCs. A written report was provided to the committee with information on physical plan enhancements, changes in programming, and community service projects. YRTC data was also reviewed including information on monthly counts, youth profiles, and assaults. The committee discussed evaluation scores and the recent process of changing the culture of the YRTCs and how that has impacted staffing. Tony indicated that the YRTC written report would be provided to the committee on an ongoing basis.

Georgetown/Capstone Project Report

Corey Steel provided information on the Georgetown/Capstone project. A group from Probation, DHHS, and Education has been looking at the Federal and Nebraska laws concerning data and information sharing. A matrix has been created that notes key issues to be considered. A copy of the matrix will be sent to committee members. The matrix has also been shared with the IT workgroup of the Nebraska Children's Commission.

Technical Consultant/Facilitator/Writer – Solicitation of Proposals

The Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee is seeking to engage a contractor to provide independent assistance to the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee to: 1) lead facilitated discussions; 2) assist the committee in continued development of strategic recommendations for juvenile justice reform; and 3) write the report that will be submitted by the Juvenile Services (OJS) Committee to the Nebraska Children's Commission and the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature by December 1, 2013. A Solicitation of Proposals document was provided to committee members for the review and input.

A motion was made by Monica Miles Steffens to adopt the Solicitation of Proposals as written and to appoint Marty Klein, Ellen Brokofsky, Kim Hawekotte and the Chair or Vice-chair of the Nebraska Children's Commission as the selection committee. The motion was seconded by Ron Johns. Voting yes: Ellen Brokofsky, Barb Fitzgerald, Sarah Forrest, Kim Hawekotte, Anne Hobbs, Ron Johns, Nick Juliano, Mark Mason, Jana Peterson, Corey Steel, Monica Miles Steffens, and Dr. Ken Zoucha. Voting no: none. Abstaining: Marty Klein. Kim Culp, Judge Larry Gendler, Tina Marroquin, Pastor Tony Sanders, and Dalene Walker were absent. Motion carried.

Review of LB561 Requirements

Ellen Brokofsky and Corey Steel provided information on the LB561 transition. The changes made by LB561 created 191 new jobs, 26 of which are administrative. All but one higher level position have been filed. The hiring process was conducted in shifts to allow for proper training and the setup of work space. There has been a lot of collaboration with OJS to ensure that a good transition plan is in place.

Nebraska Correctional Youth Facility (NCYF) Visit Update

Marty Klein and Ellen Brokofsky reported on the visit to the NCYF. Committee members who went of the site visit also provided input. The group was able to speak with 3 young people after they toured the facility. It was noted that the youth in this facility do not really receive family visits. The members of the youth panel were sentenced to 8-12 years, 50-90 years, and one was scheduled to be released within the next year. Marty noted that the youth all seemed to be very distrustful of the full system; however each youth noted that there was one person they had trusted and received help from along the way. None of the youth they spoke with had child welfare involvement.

Strategic Recommendations Review and Discussion

The committee concluded the day by reviewing some of the recommendations that were identified during the discussion of the Dr. Terry Lee report. The group identified the need to review the: 1) detention of youth; 2) assessments; 3) Community-based services; 4) Focus on family engagement; 5) broad definition of evidence-based practice; and 6) gender considerations and disproportionate minority contact.

New Business

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is scheduled for September 10, 2013 from 9:00am to 4:30PM.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Corey Steel to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kim Culp. The meeting adjourned at 4:35pm.