

**Bridge to Independence (B2i) Advisory Committee**

January 16, 2024  
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Virtual and  
Foster Care Review Office  
1225 L St, Suite 401  
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 9:35 a.m. and asked Adam Anderson to call roll.

**II. Roll Call and Introductions**

***Committee Members present (7):***

Brandy Gustoff  
Sarah Helvey  
Felipe Longoria-Shinn  
Angela Miles

Keenan Page  
Susan Thomas  
Kitty Washburn

***Committee Members absent (5):***

Douglas Beck  
Whitney Beck  
Richard Hasty

Christina Lloyd  
Mia Pokorny  
Haylee Wing

***Ex-Officio Members present (0):***

***Ex-Officio Members absent (4):***

Maghan Madsen  
Jennifer Skala

Theresa Cusic  
Lindsay Meyer

**A quorum was present.**

***Guests In Attendance (9):***

Amanda Adams  
Crystal Aldmeyer  
Adam Anderson  
Kathy Anstine  
Deanna Brakhage

David Bruno  
Sara Drueke  
Chris Mendoza  
Shayne Schiermeister  
Lana Verbrigghe

***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 Sara Helvey and seconded by Susan Thomas to approve the agenda as presented.

There was no further discussion. Roll Call vote as follows:

#### FOR (7):

Brandy Gustoff  
Sarah Helvey  
Felipe Longoria-Shinn  
Angela Miles

Keenan Page  
Susan Thomas  
Kitty Washburn

#### AGAINST (0):

#### ABSTAINED (0):

#### ABSENT (6):

Douglas Beck  
Whitney Beck  
Richard Hasty

Christina Lloyd  
Mia Pokorny  
Haylee Wing

#### MOTION CARRIED

### IV. Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Angela Miles to approve the October 31, 2024 minutes with changes to the Data and Evaluation Workgroup details. The motion was seconded by Keenan Page. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

#### FOR (7):

Brandy Gustoff  
Sarah Helvey  
Felipe Longoria-Shinn  
Angela Miles

Keenan Page  
Susan Thomas  
Kitty Washburn

#### AGAINST (0):

#### ABSTAINED (0):

#### ABSENT (6):

Douglas Beck  
Whitney Beck  
Richard Hasty

Christina Lloyd  
Mia Pokorny  
Haylee Wing

#### MOTION CARRIED

## **V. Co-Chair Report**

Amanda Adams noted specific details regarding the report submitted to the Legislature. She note that the report is not a requirement but the Commission wished to submit an official response.

Adams noted that at the previous meeting it was discussed inviting JA and Jobs for American Youth to attend future meetings.

Sarah Helvey spoke about having Probation come speak to the upcoming inclusion of probation youth in the B2i program.

Felipe Longoria-Shinn suggested inviting post-secondary education guests. He noted it might spark discussion. Adams will reach out to the Dept. of Education.

## **VI. Membership Update**

Adam Anderson provided an update regarding membership. Felipe Longoria-Shinn discussed young adults being appointed to the Committee. Members discussed a rotating position. Anderson will investigate this possibility. Members discussed ways to meet at times convenient to young adults.

Keenan Page will communicate with NCF's Youth advisory group to determine involvement, and Sarah Helvey will discuss with their fellowship positions to determine involvement.

## **VII. Strategic Plan Priorities**

Amanda Adams noted that it was discussed at a recent meeting that the Commission priorities don't align with the Commission's Strategic Plan. She noted that the Commission will discuss the alignment at the next meeting.

## **VIII. Legislative Update**

Amanda Adams noted that there is a Commission Legislative Workgroup meeting to decide which bills to focus on this session. She noted that the group has discussed LB 945, which requires documents and materials to be provided to young adults prior to aging out. There has been discussion regarding health records. Sarah Helvey shared that this bill was brought up from youth. She noted that documents required were included due to concerns brought up from youth. She noted specific details regarding the release of these documents being decided by a judge.

Adamas shared that LB 1089 discusses fees and fines that should not be required to be paid by youth. She noted that Douglas County generally currently waives the fees.

Sarah Helvey shared that LB 911 is a bill regarding ICWA data collection. She also noted that LB 42 looks at the definition of neglect, and LB 271 changes the definition of mandatory reporting. She shared that these are both being monitored as carryover.

## **IX. Workgroup Updates**

### **a. Sustainability Workgroup**

Keenan Page shared that the group has met to determine the 2024 yearly priorities.

### **b. Data & Evaluation Workgroup**

Amanda Adams noted that the group has not met.

### **c. Immigration Status Workgroup**

Felipe Longoria-Shinn noted that the group is working to consolidate recommendations to a concise two to three recommendations in the future.

**X. DHHS Update**

Deanna Brakhage shared that she doesn't have a current CQI packet for review due to the timing of this meeting. She continued that Youth Thrive has been moving forward. She noted an upcoming meeting to discuss the survey position.

Deanna Brakhage shared that there are no changes to structure specific to b2i. She noted that there have been no recent updates. She noted that Kathleen Stolz is the new interim Deputy Director, and Director Bish started at the end of December. Amanda Adams noted that she will invite Medicaid to join the conversation at upcoming meetings.

Deanna Brakhage noted that there are ongoing conversations between income maintenance and Medicaid regarding eligibility. Brakhage gave kudos to the Kathy Anstine and Tish for reaching out and staffing cases and applications by the Tribes. She noted that it is moving in the right direction.

Lana Verbrigghe noted that DHHS is looking to change the way that they track and report data to show positive outcomes.

**XI. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**XII. New Business**

Members discussed ideas for guests such as Junior Achievement and Jobs for American Graduates

**XIII. Upcoming Meetings:**

- a. January 16, 2024, 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM virtual

**XIV. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 AM