

Nebraska Children’s Commission Meeting

August 7 2025
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Virtual
and
Foster Care Review Office
1225 L Street, Suite 401
Lincoln, NE 68508

1. Call to Order

Melissa Nance welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM She asked attendees to introduce themselves. Roll call was taken by Adam Anderson through introductions.

a. Introductions and Roll Call

Commission Members Present (9)

Jarren Breeling	Sara Hoyle	Melissa Nilges
Misty Flowers	Melissa Nance	Lana Temple-Plotz
Ron Giesselmann	Felicia Nelsen	Susan Thomas

Commission Members Absent (3)

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty
LaShawn Young

Commission Ex-Officio Members Present (8)

Senator Christy Armendariz	Monika Gross
Proxy for Dr. Alyssa Bish, Camas Holder	Dr. Tom Janousek
Lane Carr	Kari Rumbaugh
Jennifer Carter	Judge Amy Schuchman

Commission Ex-Officio Members Absent (1)

Senator Glen Meyer

Roll call was taken through introductions, and a quorum was established.

Guests in Attendance (6)

Adam Anderson, Nebraska Children’s Commission
Bryson Bartels, Nebraska Legislature
Mikayla Findlay, Nebraska Legislature
Chloe Fowler, Nebraska Children's Commission
Carol Gooden-Rice
Theresa Goley, Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee Co-Chair
Tina Hutchens
Nick Koehler, Apex Family Care
Jennifer Snyder
Emily Walker

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 Meetings Calendar and Nebraska Children’s Commission websites 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 Children's Commission Website.

2. Policy Analyst Introduction and Update

Chair Melissa Nance introduced the new Policy Analyst, Chloe Fowler.

3. Approval of the Agenda

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Jarren Breeling to approve the agenda as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Jarren Breeling

Misty Flowers

Ron Giesselmann

Sara Hoyle

Melissa Nance

Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges

Lana Temple-Plotz

Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (3):

Abigail Fox

Richard Hasty

LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

Note that the order of items in the minutes will not be reflective of the original agenda.

4. Approval of the Consent Agenda

- a. [April 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes](#)
- b. [Member Nomination Report](#)

It was moved by Lana Temple-Plotz and seconded by Misty Flowers to approve the consent agenda items as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (9):

Jarren Breeling

Misty Flowers

Ron Giesselmann

Sara Hoyle

Melissa Nance

Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges

Lana Temple-Plotz

Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (3):

Abigail Fox

Richard Hasty

LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

5. Commission Membership & Vacancies

Adam Anderson shared news regarding the appointment of the 2025-2027 Commission, and he welcomed new members. Anderson explained the process the Executive Committee took to nominate Chair and Vice Chair. During discussion, a public comment was made by Emily Walker expressing concern and disappointment regarding the lack of diversity on the Commission. Members noted that commission appointments are made by the governor from applications received and that efforts were made to involve the public in the application process.

a. Chair and Vice Chair Elections

It was moved by Felicia Nelsen and seconded by Jarren Breeling to elect Melissa Nance as Chair and Ron Giesselmann as Vice Chair. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (7):

Jarren Breeling
Misty Flowers
Sara Hoyle

Felicia Nelsen
Melissa Nilges
Lana Temple-Plotz

Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (1):

Ron Giesselmann

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

6. Chair Report

Chair Melissa Nance stepped away from the meeting briefly. Adam Anderson opened up the floor to the Executive Committee for input. Ron Giesselmann noted that there is a lot of restructuring happening at the committee level and with a new Policy Analyst, Chloe Fowler coming on he feels that he is ready to make some progress this year.

7. Committee Update and Annual Reports

a. Alternative Response Committee

Looking to meet in September. Delay due to start of Policy Analyst.

Jennifer Carter discussed the OIG Special AR report. Since 2021 OIG has received notifications of three child deaths and six serious injuries following an Alternative Response case. Carter noted that generally, exclusionary criteria is working. Lower and moderate risk cases are not flagged for traditional response. It was found that moderate and high risk families are being served, due to the risk assignment being made after contact. She noted that in eight of the nine cases the incidents occurred within four months of the AR intake. Adam Anderson will send report to whole Commission.

b. Bridge to Independence Advisory Committee

Adam Anderson and Chloe Fowler directed the Commission attention to the annual report. They discussed the process of getting the report to this point, and what changes have been made. They discussed the issues regarding the recommendation regarding immigration status legislation related to B2i participants. Members discussed.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Melissa Nilges to approve the 2025 B2i Annual Report with minor changes as discussed. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty Flowers,
Jarren Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges
Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

i. LB 346 Impact

Adam Anderson explained the impact of LB 346, which sunsets the B2i Committee and FCRRRC on July 1, 2026. With that sunset, there is the chance for interruptions in the annual report which will be due by the Commission on September 1, 2026. Anderson noted that the B2i Committee recommended to incorporate the B2i as a Subcommittee of the Commission, effective July 1, 2026 as it exists on August 7, 2025.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Felicia Nelsen to incorporate the B2i Committee as a subcommittee of the Children’s Commission, as it exists on August 7, 2025, effective July 1, 2026. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty
Flowers, Jarren
Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen
Melissa Nilges

Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

c. Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee

Co-Chair Felicia Nelsen noted planning a meeting for September. Co-Chair Theresa Goley shared some info regarding the updated NCR form. Lana Temple-Plotz cautioned about exaggeration of the youth level of need. Goley stated that the form is currently in the testing phase, and the workgroup is aware of the past iterations of the NCR and what difficulty that presents. Members discussed the history of the NCR.

i. LB 346 Impact

Adam Anderson noted that the same impact affecting B2i also affects the FCRRRC. Members discussed.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Felicia Nelsen to incorporate the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee as a subcommittee of the Children’s Commission, as it exists on August 7, 2025, effective July 1, 2026. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty
Flowers, Jarren
Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen
Melissa Nilges

Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

d. Juvenile Services Committee

Deb VanDyke-Ries discussed the work of the Committee, and noted that there was discussion at the most recent meeting regarding the recently passed LB 530 and the impact of 530 on youth that are justice involved. VanDyke-Ries thinks that that may be some focus of the work moving forward into this next year to understand the impact of that legislation. VanDyke-Ries discussed the ‘One Nebraska’ Workgroup: The former Racial and Ethnic Disparities Workgroup being rebranded and renamed 'One Nebraska' to broaden its focus to all marginalized populations and to center individuals with lived experience. The Access to Services Workgroup will be recommending a pilot to implement a bundled funding model for high-needs youth, including Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) waiver services. VanDyke-Ries discussed the Continuum of Care Workgroup will be recommending increased transition planning, centered on the family, for the youth justice population. Additionally, the JSC is also involved in the education-focused truancy Legislative Resolution, LR 196.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Ron Giesselmann to approve the 2025 JSC Annual Report as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty Flowers,
Jarren Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges
Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

e. Strengthening Families Act Committee

Ron Giesselmann shared information about restructuring the Strengthening Families Act Committee. He talked about reducing the labor involved in some of the workgroups. He noted that there are many public and private entities involved in reducing trafficking.

Deb VanDyke-Ries recommended reaching out to Grace Johnson and Kirby Williams for help in the workgroups.

It was moved by Felicia Nelsen and seconded by Sara Hoyle to approve the 2025 SFA Annual Report as presented. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty Flowers,
Jarren Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges
Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

8. Children’s Commission Annual Report

Chloe Fowler discussed the creation of the NCC Annual Report. She highlighted that the report contains the annual recommendations of all the Committees under the Commission umbrella. Members discussed minor grammatical and spelling changes.

It was moved by Susan Thomas and seconded by Ron Giesselmann to approve the 2025 Children’s Commission Annual Report with minor changes as discussed. There was no further discussion. Roll call vote as follows:

FOR (8):

Jarren Breeling
Proxy for Misty Flowers, Jarren
Breeling

Ron Giesselmann
Sara Hoyle
Felicia Nelsen

Melissa Nilges
Lana Temple-Plotz
Susan Thomas

AGAINST (0):

ABSTAIN (0):

ABSENT (4):

Abigail Fox
Richard Hasty

Melissa Nance
LaShawn Young

MOTION CARRIED

9. DHHS Update

Dr. Janousek provided updates regarding the implementation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs):

- CCBHC Certification: Seven clinics have begun the process of becoming Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CCBHCs).
- New Payment Model: The CCBHC model, passed by the legislature, represents an evolution in how community behavioral health centers are reimbursed and operate.
 - It shifts from a fee-for-service model to a consolidated daily rate that covers all expenses.
 - This change ensures reimbursement for critical services not typically covered by the traditional model, such as care coordination and community outreach.
- Expanded Services: The newly certified clinics will offer a broader array of services, including counseling, community treatment, and assertive services. CCBHCs must be able to serve both adults and youth.
- Children's Behavioral Health Facility: There was discussion about a new children's behavioral health facility under construction in Omaha, which will include an eating disorders wing and various access points, but is not currently undergoing CCBHC certification because the model requires serving both youth and adults.

Camas Holder talked about the federal review for Children and Family Services. Nebraska is beginning the planning and initial updates for its fourth CFSR, which is the federal review conducted by federal partners approximately every five years and this year will be a self-review with a secondary review conducted by the federal partners.

Camas Holder provided regarding the CFSP A federal law, the Supporting America's Children and Families Act (Public Law 118-258), was passed in January. Initial conversations indicate this new law will replace the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) with a more formal annual template for the submission of a 4B funding application to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

Camas Holder shared that the second FFPSA plan was submitted to ACF in March/early April. The CFS team received initial feedback and is working to submit a response back to the federal government by September 1st. A major change in the new plan is the inclusion of the Bridge to Independence (B2I) program as a prevention service. Approval of this in the FFPSA plan would allow the state to access federal 4E funding for the program's infrastructure

Camas Holder shared that Kinship/Relative homes will be internalized with the implementation of the Arizona Kinship Navigation Program, when the youth are system-involved and an action plan is in the works.

Holder discussed the internalized new worker training, which began around December/January of the past year, has received positive survey results from new staff. The Learning and Development Team is now moving into a Phase 2 of professional development, which includes building out training for supervisors, administrators, and ongoing professional development for post-year staff.

Holder shared that since January, 12 court orders have been issued for probation youth to enter the B2I program, with eight youth having officially entered. This follows the holding of a Supreme Court appeal, enabling active efforts to train and inform potentially eligible youth.

10. Probation Update

Kari Rumbaugh stated that Probation is seeing increase in this year from last. YRTC numbers are increasing as well. This year YRTC Kearney is at 100 compared to last year at 64. Lincoln and Hastings have remained the same. Probation is continuing to see a drop in recidivism rate.

Rumbaugh discussed staffing changes. She noted Gene Cotter is the new Probation Administrator and the Juvenile Division is fully staffed. Kari Rumbaugh will share org chart with Adam Anderson to share.

Rumbaugh shared that with LB 530 there is a lot of support from Judges and there is a very short implementation date of September 3, 2025. She noted there will be a lot to changes in intake and specialization, collaboration.

Rumbaugh spoke about JJSEN. The workgroup that was dissolved after JJSEN will be coming back as a youth justice advisory group. It will have judges, community partners, youth with lived experience, advocates. This group will launch on August 19, 2025. Positive feedback has been received prior to launch.

Rumbaugh spoke about the transition into an evidence-based environment in Juvenile Justice. She noted that UNK is completing an environmental scan in greater Nebraska. She added that there is a study about the RAI screening tool that will be wrapping up soon. She noted that there will be presentations regarding these studies soon.

Rumbaugh noted that Probation will be assisting with LR 196 looking at truancy.

Rumbaugh talked about the work with NDE on LB 296 that enhances the data sharing between the systems. She spoke about the implementation of the work of the Bell Weather report. She added that this will help with immediate urgent information regarding system-involved youth.

11. New Business

Chloe Fowler discussed being involved in the LR 196 discussions and she stated that she will informally be involved in LR 216 discussions regarding other options.

12. Upcoming Meeting Planning

- a. November 18, 2025
- b. February 10, 2026

13. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:36 AM

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Anderson