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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DIVISION OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES
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Washoe County Children's Mental Health Consortium Meeting Minutes 11/20/2025 **DRAFT**

1. Call to Order:

Chair Annie Zucker called the meeting to order at 10:04 am. Kristen Rivas, from the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), conducted a roll call, confirming that a quorum was established.

2. Introduction:

VOTING MEMBERS' PRESENT:

Annie Zucker, Ana de la Maza, Jessica Goicoechea-Parise, Megan Evans, Rebecca Arvans Feeney, Mala Wheatley, Rhonda Lawrence, Mala Wheatley, Stephanie Brown, Natalie Sanchez, Holland Schubach, Misty Vaughan Allen, Venessa Justice

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

Brenna Hardtner, Megan Weller, John Gracia, Joleen Walker, Kristen Rivas, Fireflies notetaker Elyse, read.ai meeting notes, Amanda Avelar, Killian Keeli, William Wyss, Aimee Fitch, Tracy Ceragioli, Taylor Morgan, Kimberly Weller, Nicole Schembre, Josef York, Marla McDade Williams

3. **Public comment and discussion:** Brenna Hardtner, representing Youth MOVE Nevada, noted that many participants may have already seen the email announcing the Kindness Poster Contest for youth across Nevada. She explained that three winning posters have been selected and will be printed and distributed to local youth organizations and schools. Two of the posters were created by youth from Washoe County and one by a youth from Las Vegas. Brenna extended an open invitation to anyone interested in receiving a poster, encouraging participants to either provide their email in the chat or contact her directly so that distribution can be arranged. She further explained that the posters were designed by youth to promote kindness and provide bullying prevention information. Each poster will include the Safe Voice logo at the bottom along with a brief note identifying them as youth-created works from Nevada, while the main design will remain the youth's original creation. Brenna concluded her remarks by thanking everyone and reaffirming her commitment to ensuring the posters reach those who would like to display them. Annie Zucker chair reported that she had a productive meeting with Dr. Megan Weller, who will be preparing the annual report due in January. She emphasized the importance of the upcoming timeline and asked members to be present at the next meeting, where last year's report will be reviewed and cross walked against current needs in preparation for the January submission. She confirmed that the next two meetings are scheduled for December 18, 2025, and January 15, 2026, noting that quorum will be required at both sessions to approve the plan. Annie also stated that she will be sending out a request for information to streamline the reporting process for Dr. Weller, particularly for those who have contributed to the report in the past.

- 4. For possible action:** Review and Approval of Outstanding Meeting Minutes – October 16, 2025
MOTION: Natalie Sanchez moved to approve the meeting minutes of October 16, 2025.
SECOND: Megan Evans
VOTE: Motion carried with unanimous approval.
- 5. For information only:** Family Voice: A time to hear from families and those in attendance who work with families about their experiences, successes, challenges and themes, Brenna Hardtner speaking on behalf of Britt Young of Nevada PEP, reported that several parents are expressing difficulty accessing services, particularly Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. Parents also shared concerns that school districts are not adequately individualizing their IEPs. Instead, families feel they are being offered a predetermined set of services or rigid programs that do not fully meet the needs of their children. Natalie Sanchez representing Health Psychology Associates, sharing that families and community members have reported challenges in obtaining psychological assessments for youth covered under Anthem Medicaid. She explained that while Anthem Medicaid is accepted, services for autism and ADHD assessments have been consistently denied. Natalie invited anyone with questions to reach out to her directly, noting that she is working to understand the situation and explore ways to help restore access to these critical services.
- 6. For information only:** A presentation on current community services that will assist in achieving the WCCMHC Long term plan Objective 1F: Expand and sustain school-based services and support. 1F.1 Develop policy and coordinate system-level partners to conduct a review of resources allocated to the Safe Voice program in Washoe County and expand resources to support WCSD staff and their coverage of the Safe Voice hotline (e.g., dedicated positions, pay for on-call staff). · 1F.2 Develop policy and coordinate system-level partners to integrate counselors, Safe School Professionals, and other school-based personnel into the community-based crisis response and stabilization and stabilize service systems. Presented by Keeli Killian. WCSD Keeli Killian explained that Safe Voice reports are coded by the Department of Public Safety and often include duplicate reports of the same incident. Schools provide training and promote Safe Voice through posters and student badges. Megan Evans added that the data reflects raw reports, not confirmed cases, and bullying numbers are lower than other categories. Brenna Hardtner highlighted Safe Voice Nevada as a resource for youth to report bullying and cyberbullying and mentioned sharing a flow chart to explain reporting outcomes. Killian reminded the group that department goals align with the district's strategic plan, focusing on student voice, safety, belonging, and trusted adult relationships. She reviewed staffing, noting 220 licensed professionals, but caseloads often exceed the recommended ratio. Tracy Ceragioli shared updates on the social work program, describing the National School Social Work Model and how services are delivered through a multi-tiered system of supports, ranging from schoolwide campaigns to targeted interventions and intensive therapy. Tracy Ceragioli highlighted the importance of connecting students and families with basic needs resources and thanked community partners for their support. Annie Zucker asked about building a district-wide culture that values mental health and belonging. Keeli Killian explained that safety and belonging are part of the district's strategic plan, supported by student voice teams, collaboration across departments, and ongoing training. Stephanie Brown shared her positive experience at a student mental health fair, noting strong engagement between staff and students.
- 7. For information only:** Presentation and update on the Nevada System of Care Grant- William Wyss, Director of the Nevada System of Care Grant, presented an overview of the four-year, \$12 million grant awarded in October 2024. He explained that the grant focuses on serving a unique population that requires

coordination across different systems. He outlined three main goals: establishing a state leadership and governance team to oversee the grant and break down silos, building evidence-based practices by bringing national and state vendors to provide training, and developing a statewide training plan that will continue beyond the grant period. Wyss emphasized the importance of creating a service delivery model that includes pathways, referral systems, provider rosters, family engagement, care coordination, and quality management. He noted challenges with contracts but expects progress once approvals are secured in January. The grant runs through 2028, and the team is working to ensure collaboration across agencies and long-term sustainability.

- 8. For possible action:** Review, discussion, and approval of recommendations for the Washoe County Children's Mental Health Consortium FY 2026 budget. Kristen Rivas reported that the FY 2026 budget recommendations are expected to be finalized this week and expressed enthusiasm about moving forward. She confirmed that the FY 2026 final budget has been received and will be forwarded to Annie Zuker for inclusion in her upcoming report. In addition, John Gracia has distributed an email to voting members and the chair with instructions on how to access consortium funds.
- 9. For possible action:** Nomination and vote of a new treasure for the WCCMHC – All members, with Chair Annie Zucker presiding, reported that no volunteers have come forward to serve as Treasurer. As a result, this agenda item will be carried forward and placed on next month's agenda for further review and discussion.
- 10. For information only:** Consortium member announcements – To provide the voting members a chance to share any updates they may have, and to discuss important issues impacting children's mental health such as upcoming events, services, legislation, and related community factors Natalie Sanchez announced that Health Psychology Associates and several MFT supervisors will host a holiday party on December 8. She invited community members to attend and asked that those interested email her so she can coordinate food. Sanchez emphasized that the gathering is an opportunity to connect outside of work, build relationships, and foster community spirit during the holidays. Stephanie Brown Reno Behavioral Health shared that the outpatient department has created an alumni group for adults who have graduated from the chemical dependency intensive outpatient program. The group meets on the first Wednesday of each month and participation is free. She noted that while the current meeting was focused on youth, this update may be helpful for anyone who knows adults who have completed the program.
- 11. For possible action:** Approval of next meeting date and agenda items – The next meeting is scheduled for December 18, 2025, at 10:00 am. Proposed agenda items include discussion of the WCCMHC FY 2025 Annual Report and selection of a new Treasurer.
MOTION: Venessa Justice motions to approve the next meeting date on December 18, 2025, at 10:00 am
SECOND: Stephanie Brown
VOTE: Motion carried with unanimous approval.
- 12. Public comment and discussion:** Vanessa Justice, representative of the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, noted that she did not have a public comment but instead raised a question for the group. She requested information and resources available to teens and homeless youth in northern or rural areas, specifically for individuals under the age of 18. Vanessa acknowledged Eddie's House as a resource but

clarified that it serves youth ages 18 to 24. She asked for recommendations on other sites where younger youth may access free clothing, food, or other support services. She mentioned the Washoe County School District as one known resource but is seeking additional options. Vanessa invited members to email her directly with suggestions.

13. Adjournment: Chair Annie Zucker adjourned the meeting at 11:01am