



NEVADA CHILDREN'S COMMISSION
CHILD WELFARE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday, June 10, 2020

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

TELECONFERENCE LINE: 1-312-584-2401

EXTENSION: 486948

1. **Call to Order** – Megan Miller, Tim Burch, Judge Cynthia Lu, Amber Howell
The meeting was called to order at 2:08 p.m. by Megan Miller.

2. **Welcome and Introductions (Roll Call)** – DCFS Staff
Members Present: Megan Miller, Tim Burch, Judge Cynthia Lu, Amber Howell

DCFS Staff: Elvira Saldana

Public: Cynthia Carstairs

3. **Public Comment and Discussion:**

There was no public comment.

4. **For Possible Action:** Minute Meetings from March 27, 2020
Megan Miller asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. Judge Cynthia Lu requested name corrections on page 2. Carrie Pruitt the first name should be Keri and Liz Flores' last name should be Florez.

Elvira Saldana stated she would make the corrections.

Action: A motion was made by Amber Howell to approve the minutes with the name corrections, seconded by Tim Burch and carried to approve the minutes of March 27, 2020.

5. **For Possible Action:** Committee Goals- Megan Miller, Tim Burch, Judge Cynthia Lu, Amber Howell
Megan Miller informed the two items discussed at the last meeting, the survey of needed reforms and the presentation on system misconceptions and successes in other jurisdictions, are not items the committee will need to complete. One of the main goals for this time period will be prioritizing gaps in training on evidenced based or best practice trainings. In the last meeting, the committee could not identify any gaps in training either in the North or the South. Megan Miller asked if there has been a change since the last meeting.

Judge Cynthia Lu and Amber Howell stated it has not changed.

Megan Miller stated the other item is core goals of technology and data sharing gaps. Megan Miller reported a big change in the last couple of months relating to the use of technology in the South. In terms of gaps in the South, they are using Blue Jeans to conduct hearings and trials.

Judge Cynthia Lu commented they have been using Zoom with court reporters to allow staff to be remote. So far it has gone well. The Human Services Agency has provided access to a computer if a parent is unable to connect via a cell phone or home computer.

Megan Miller stated visitation is another gap in child welfare they have been experiencing. There has been a directive which has temporarily halted in person visitation and it is now setup through audio/visual methods. There has been feedback from parents indicating it is difficult to keep younger children on the phone for that long. Megan Miller asked if anyone else has been experiencing that barrier as well.

Judge Cynthia Lu stated they have the same policy in the North. They have had some litigation on the issue. Another motion was submitted about in person visitation. The motion will go through the mediation and settlement process. The Human Services Agency is planning to re-open the Family Engagement Center.

Amber Howell stated the Family Engagement Center has reopened.

Tim Burch commented in Clark County they have the same statewide order. However, due to the budget shortfall, county management laid off part-time positions. They have two visitation centers and they will be opening soon. They also have tablets available for parents.

Megan Miller informed some feedback she received from case workers is the increased focus on technology has increased the contact with parents. The contact with parents is more successful.

Amber Howell reported they have seen a lot of positivity and have been able to pilot the teleworking model.

Tim Burch informed they are currently in a pilot with DIONA and it will be agency wide in the fall and fully integrated with UNITY sometime in the winter.

Megan Miller asked if there were any other gaps not mentioned.

Judge Cynthia Lu stated the court had to get up to speed with working remotely.

Megan Miller asked if there were any upcoming goals relating to technology and data sharing that are of importance or priority.

Amber Howell stated the Prime initiative was delayed and will happen around August. The UNITY changes Tim mentioned are significant. Both will make a difference.

Megan Miller asked if there were any other goals for technology and trying to get ahead of the second wave in the fall.

Amber Howell replied one of the things they were able to do during this time was to make sure they had enough laptops for workers. They are ready when the next phase comes.

Megan Miller asked if anyone has any other goals or gaps.

Tim Burch stated the gap they had was how child welfare fits within the mobile area command structure.

Amber Howell informed it was bad for them as they got lumped into that category. The county did not know how to treat them and what it would look like. It was difficult trying to keep staff motivated and inspired, to come to work and feel safe.

Tim Burch commented there was concern of the federal pay act labeling child welfare first responders however not receiving hazard pay.

Judge Cynthia Lu stated the workers are on the frontline. Part of the issue is, not knowing how to define child welfare.

Tim Burch stated exposure is not discussed. Questions have been brought up as to why they are not as careful with tuberculosis, Hepatitis C, or anything else staff are exposed to. Besides bloodborne pathogens training, there needs to be more about workforce support and protection for staff.

Judge Cynthia Lu asked if it could be one of the committee's ideas/item to promote and create public awareness about it.

Megan Miller stated it would be a goal to bring to the Commission to talk about.

Judge Cynthia Lu suggested the committee bringing it to the forefront.

Tim Burch commented their union has expressed concerns in their weekly meetings.

Megan Miller stated it would be great. The first step would be to bring it to the Commission to talk about and obtain ideas to get the recognition and additional support. Megan Miller asked if there were any other goals or gaps.

There were no additional goals or gaps provided by the committee members.

Judge Cynthia Lu expressed concern in gap of services. In the North, one of the adolescent mental health facilities is closing their adolescent unit. There are fewer adolescent mental health facilities and kids end up being sent to Las Vegas or out of state. Judge Cynthia Lu stated she was unsure if it fits in with the committee or an issue for the committee to discuss.

Megan Miller stated one of the less frequently addressed topics in court she hears is the lack of mental health services and facilities for kids.

Judge Cynthia Lu commented she was unsure if the committee could add youth mental health as another topic.

Tim Burch added, Medicaid does not have a classification for secured transport.

Megan Miller asked if there were any other gaps the committee needed to focus on.

There were no other gaps provided by the committee members.

Megan Miller asked if any of the members had any updates on identification of stakeholders to invite to future meetings.

Amber Howell reported she has two foster parents who would like to be involved and one of them will be selected.

Judge Cynthia Lu informed she received a response from Rechelle Murillo from the Washoe County School District, and she has agreed to participate. The name received from Juvenile Services was Ali Banister with Carson City Juvenile Probation.

Megan Miller stated she would confirm if the committee needs to vote on the stakeholders before inviting them.

6. For Possible Action: Discuss and Decide Upon Next Steps- Megan Miller, Tim Burch, Judge Cynthia Lu, Amber Howell

- Assign Tasks to Committee Members (if needed)
- Specify Agenda Items for the Next Meeting
- Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time

The next meeting date for the Child Welfare Committee will be Friday, July 24, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

7. Public Comment and Discussion:

There was no public comment.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.