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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Cindy Pitlock, DNP
Administrator

Nevada Children's Commission Education Committee Meeting Minutes

DATE: Friday, May 27, 2022

TIME: 11:30 A.M.- Adjournment

VIDEO CONFERENCE:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NDljZTFkZDYtMmE0ZS00NGRmLTk4NWMTNTM5NmEwNGU3MjBh%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%22e4a340e6-b89e-4e68-8eaa-1544d2703980%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22be58909a-421c-4f56-857e-c5f7d4ef6f7f%22%7d

TELECONFERENCE LINE: 1-775-321-6111

CONFERENCE ID: 687 654 569#

- 1. Call to Order** – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Jesus Jara, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner
The meeting was called to order at 11:32 a.m. by Janice Wolf.
- 2. Welcome and Introductions (Roll Call)** – DCFS Staff
Members Present by Video: Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Jesus Jara, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner

DCFS Staff: Elvira Saldana

Public: Jennifer Lords, Jonathan Norman, Gillian Barjon

- 3. Public Comment and Discussion**
There was no public comment.
- 4. For Possible Action:** Meeting Minutes from November 30, 2021– Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Jesus Jara, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner
Janice Wolf asked committee members if there were any corrections or changes to the meeting minutes.

No recommendations were made.

Action: Kimberly Palma-Ortega made a motion to approve the minutes as they are written, seconded by Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, and carried to approve the minutes of November 30, 2021.

5. For Information Only: Nevada Department of Education Behavioral Health Coordinator Updates- Jennifer Lords

Jennifer Lords stated she is the Statewide School Behavioral Health Integration Coordinator. It is a shared position working under the Nevada Department of Education Office for Safe and Respectful Learning in collaboration with the Division of Child and Family Services System of Care and the Division of Public and Behavioral Health. In the shared role, the focus is on integrating school behavioral health services and collaboration across agencies. In an advisory statement on protecting youth mental health in December 2021, the Surgeon General emphasized youth were already facing significant mental health crisis before the COVID-19 pandemic. It has increased into a critical issue demanding immediate action in areas including addressing increasing mental illness, suicide, stressors such as bullying and the influence of social media. Integrated support across education and community and addressing socioeconomic and social barriers were also included as priorities. The White House recently released a statement encouraging schools to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to integrate services. Nevada remains a mental health care desert with significant shortages of mental health providers across every county of the state. The resource strain means Nevada children face increasing behavioral health challenges with limited access to care. These difficulties affect their ability to engage in the academic and social tasks of school and create increasing burdens on the classroom teachers to stabilize and intervene with challenging behavior or emotional needs as they present in the classroom. Across the state, districts and schools are working to establish avenues for students to engage more deeply in their academic by building pathways to access behavioral health and nursing services. School health services result in improved student outcomes, reduced exclusionary discipline, and improved teacher outcomes. School based health services allows students to access services in their every-day environment in neutral, non-stigmatizing places. Youth are six times more likely to complete their treatment when it is delivered in schools rather than in a community setting. Receiving services in school has greater efficacy when behavioral health providers can integrate their services into the school community rather than co-locating. Currently the Nevada Department of Education is in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services to create shared policies, protocols, and guidelines for School-Based Behavioral Health Systems with the goal of providing training, coaching, and technical assistance to local education agencies as they increase access to integrated behavioral health services at school. Currently the local education agencies are preparing to bill Medicaid for the provision of the expanded free care services. Nevada currently has 8 local education agencies (LEAs) with contracts in place to bill for Medicaid services. In addition, there are a few counties who have their applications in progress. In April 2020, the State Board of Education adopted the non-binding recommended ratios for specialized instructional support personnel based on the national standards for best practice. However, they see big differences across the state from the ratios depending on the position and location. The district education partners and the Nevada Department of Education are still working together to increase staffing ratios. Other investments they are working with their LEA partners include funding, training, and implementation of technical assistance; multi-tiered systems of support; safe voice anonymous school safety tip line; trauma recovery demonstration grant; project AWARE; Social Emotional Academic Development Center. With the projects they have identified some priorities of where they are working to continue to roll out the work of integrated behavioral health support for students in Nevada. One of the new projects is the DCFS Mobile Crisis Response Team is collaborating with the Clark County School District crisis teams to expand the system of responding to acute crisis in school including suicide threat assessments and risk and threat assessments for harm. They are working closely with LEAs and the Department of Health and Human Services to strengthen the districts' ability

to provide school health services and bill for Medicaid free care. They are also working to sustain the Chief School Nurse position and continuing to work on the workforce challenges both in the community and at the school level.

Janice Wolf asked if there are timelines for implementation for any of the items.

Jennifer Lords stated they are working with Project AWARE districts to setup and pilot a care coordination model, so they are leveraging some of the funding from Project AWARE to roll it out with hopes to start billing Medicaid in those districts as early as this coming fall. They would like to be able to roll it out statewide however, the limits on funding for the care coordination software is the challenge. They are working to identify funding sources or grant funding. The work with the Mobile Crisis Response Team and Clark County schools and the workforce challenges are in progress. They are hoping to start seeing revenue come in from Medicaid in the next school year.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner asked if they anticipate the plan being highly responsive and what if any other supports or services are needed at this time.

Jennifer Lords stated the need is extremely great. They have a little bit more than 70% of Nevada's children statewide are eligible for Medicaid. It is an area they can certainly start to make an impact. The pressure and need are there.

Dr. Jesus Jara commented it is not going to be solved overnight and it is not new. Dr. Jesus Jara commended Jennifer Lords for talking about the mental health desert for children they are in. In their school district, since COVID they have had over 1800 suicide ideation protocols. They had 45,000 kids who needed assistance. They do not have the people in the state to be able to provide the assistance. They have some long-term plans. They have also established a partnership for telehealth. Dr. Jesus Jara's concern is what the state is going to do to invest to have the resources moving forward, when the federal funding runs out.

Janice Wolf asked what the committee can do to assist.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated if they can eliminate barriers in the reciprocity process of being able to recruit from other states. They are having internal discussions for teachers.

Janice Wolf stated the committee could put it on their list of things for the committee to look at and facilitate. Janice Wolf asked committee members if there were additional questions.

There were no additional questions from committee members.

6. For Possible Action: Workplan Committee Goals – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Jesus Jara, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner

- Review and discuss workplan and timeline

Janice Wolf stated the committee has not met since November. The workplan was included with the meeting material to get some feedback from committee members on where the committee is at relative to the May-June timeline. Janice Wolf is concerned the committee has fallen behind.

In reviewing the minutes from the November meeting, Nancy Brune was going to send a letter asking about training. However, Janice Wolf is unsure if the letter was sent and/or if a response was received. Janice Wolf asked Elvira Saldana if she received a response from Nancy Brune.

Elvira Saldana stated she followed up with Nancy Brune and the last update was Nancy Brune was waiting for a response.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega stated she can check with Nancy Brune to see where the letter went. In the last meeting it was mentioned she had resigned however had asked to still be a participant. Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked Elvira Saldana if that is still accurate, if Nancy Brune will be participating on some level.

Elvira Saldana stated Nancy Brune had requested to remain in some sort of capacity; however, she is unsure whether she will be.

Janice Wolf stated she has attempted to get an update on what has been done. Except for the November meeting minutes, there is not much institutional history for the committee.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega suggested initiating a conversation about trainings while they wait on the response from Nancy Brune on the letter. Maybe the committee members can chime in on different areas they are working on in accomplishing the outline.

Janice Wolf asked Dr. Jesus Jara if he has a contact or designate someone relevant to training for campus personnel as they have discussed.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated he can designate someone. In reviewing training development in the workplan, Dr. Jesus Jara stated Clark County has done some training which is not being incorporated in the workplan. Dr. Jesus Jara stated he could designate someone to update it for Clark County. Technology and data sharing capability is an issue for the Clark County School District. They do not receive enough information on children before they are placed in schools and at times they are placed in the wrong setting. It is an issue which needs to be addressed. Brigid Duffy and Dr. Jesus Jara have talked about bringing it to the Commission. Dr. Jesus Jara stated he could designate a staff member to provide an update on what the Clark County School District is doing and bring it back to this committee and then the full Commission to see where it could be parallel to colleagues across the state.

Janice Wolf stated one of the challenges that came up in the November meeting is most of the data they have is related to Clark County. They are having some difficulty finding the points of contact in other counties and school districts statewide. Janice Wolf is wondering if Dr. Jesus Jara can provide contacts in other parts of the state.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated as of July 1st he will be the President of the Nevada Association of School Superintendents. It can be a conversation they could have moving forward after having the discussion with his colleagues.

- Review and discuss disparity statistics

Janice Wolf stated at the November meeting the committee discussed trying to identify the scope of some of the ethnic and racial disparity issues which are a part of where the committee is going in terms of children's mental health. The legal research staff at Legal Aid Center, Children's Attorneys Project researched what statistics they could put together. A document titled, CCSD Police Activities and Concerns was included with the meeting material. It touches on training and looks at disproportionality. Janice Wolf stated she would like to open the discussion on what the disproportionality statistics look like and what the committee can do to address it.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated it aligns with the work they are doing with the School Justice Partnership to eliminate the school to prison pipeline. They are seeing an improvement in their student's data, getting suspended and expelled. They are not at the level they need to; however, they are moving in the right direction and there has been a lot of training. Dr. Jesus Jara suggested having someone write out their plan and what they are doing.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if the program Dr. Jesus Jara is working with Brigid Duffy, if the Family Advocate will be working with the truancy program or if it is a different area he is speaking on.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated it is a combination. Mr. Jack Martin is involved with the truancy work.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if there is going to be any follow-up because of COVID for individuals in foster care, whether they were in foster care and the school system or if they found themselves further in outside of the diversion whether it would be parole or probation and making sure they were able to finish their education. For those who have IEPs within the system, Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if there is anything in the works for making sure there is an outreach. Kimberly Palma-Ortega also asked if the meetings are public and if there is anything the committee can add to assist with.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated they have done a lot of work and they may need to update the Children's Commission on everything they are doing around foster youth, students with IEP, and the disproportionality in suspension, expulsion, arrests, and truancy. They recently presented to the school board. They are reporting quarterly to the board. Dr. Jesus Jara suggested the Clark County School District present an update to the entire Children's Commission on all the work they are doing to see the alignment they have put together.

Janice Wolf asked Elvira Saldana how they request the presentation be placed on the agenda for the next Commission meeting.

Elvira Saldana stated she would need to verify with the Co-Chairs if they would like the presentation to be placed on the agenda for the June or October meeting.

Janice Wolf stated their Children's Attorneys Project at Legal Aid Center received a major grant to expand their education advocacy program to work with the kinds of issues discussed and to advocate for the students discussed, i.e., the school to delinquency pipeline, children affected by

COVID who are exhibiting major mental health issues which are affecting their learning and their ability to remain in school. They are looking for attorneys and advocates.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated he would start preparing the presentation. It would be best to provide an update to the Commission at the June meeting.

Elvira Saldana asked Dr. Jesus Jara if he would be presenting.

Dr. Jesus Jara stated he could or one his staff.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega commented providing an update would be a good start. Kimberly Palma-Ortega suggested Janice Wolf and her could follow up on previous meeting minutes. Ross Armstrong had previously mentioned funding had been received and they could see where it is going.

Janice Wolf stated they would go through the meeting minutes to come up with something the committee can present for the Commission meeting. Janice Wolf asked the committee members if they would be ok to meet before June 10, 2022.

The committee members agreed to meet.

- Discuss goals and objectives going forward

Janice Wolf asked committee members if there were any other goals or objectives besides Dr. Jara's presentation and the review of actions of previous minutes.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega commented the committee has a good footing. After the full Commission meeting, they can come back together and digest some of the issues the rest of the Commission puts together and move along further.

Janice Wolf stated after the next meeting it may be worth touching base with the other committees to ensure they are not duplicating, to supplement, or coordinate with other ongoing efforts.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if committee members should be looking to consider other people who may have other workings in the community regarding education to possibly add more people.

Janice Wolf stated they are looking for broader representation and people who can bring resources to the committee. If anyone has ideas or suggestions, Janice Wolf can bring it back to the Commission Co-Chairs.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega stated she would do an electronic greeting between Janice Wolf and Laura from Nevada System of Higher Education. They are doing great presentations on the brain development of adolescents.

7. **For Possible Action:** Discuss and Decide Upon Next Steps – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Jesus Jara, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner

- Assign Tasks to Committee Members (if needed)
There were no tasks assigned.
- Specify Agenda Items for the Next Meeting
Follow up of meeting minutes- review of actions of previous meeting minutes
- Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time
Thursday, June 9, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.

8. **Public Comment and Discussion**

There was no public comment.

9. **Adjourn**

A motion was made by Dr. Jesus Jara to adjourn, seconded by Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, and carried to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.