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Marla McDade
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Nevada Children's Commission Education Committee Draft Meeting Minutes

DATE: Thursday, March 28, 2024

TIME: 12:00 P.M.- Adjournment

VIDEO CONFERENCE:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_NjMyY2M1NzAtMTc3YS00NTRhLWE3Y2ItMzcxNWlwNzgwYWU0%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: 570 836 268#

- 1. Call to Order** – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon, Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove
The meeting was called to order at 12:04 p.m. by Janice Wolf.
- 2. Welcome and Introductions (Roll Call)** – DCFS Staff
Members Present by Video: Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon

Members Absent: Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove

DCFS Staff: Elvira Saldana

Public: Jackie Deam, Elyse Monroy-Marsala, Sabrina Schnur, Lacey Keele, Stephen Avillo, Anjelica Garcia, April St. James, Jake Matthews, Tara Raines
- 3. Public Comment and Discussion**
There was no public comment.
- 4. For Possible Action:** Meeting Minutes – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon, Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove
 - Review and vote to approve September 14, 2023 meeting minutes

Janice Wolf asked committee members if there were any additions or corrections.

There were no recommendations.

Action: A motion was made by Jodi Thornley to approve the minutes, seconded by Kimberly Palma-Ortega, and carried to approve the minutes of September 14, 2023.

5. For Possible Action: Update on committee goal and reassess impact of legislative changes to school discipline policies – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon, Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove

- Discuss and develop a plan to obtain statewide data relevant to school discipline, including but not limited to:
 - Length of suspensions
 - Use of alternative education settings and in-person options for students suspended or expelled
 - Develop learning loss surveys for families and students suspended or expelled
 - Identify areas where enforcement is lacking and address gaps in professional training and resources

Janice Wolf stated the inaccessibility of data in order to really get a handle on what is going on seems to be an issue that is stemming all of the committees. Janice Wolf has asked Gillian Barjon to update the committee on any developments in terms of dealing with school discipline.

Gillian Barjon stated there has not been a lot of development since the beginning of the school year regarding changes to policy. There is some underlying effort from several Clark County School District executives to try to get restorative justice training for the next school year. Discipline is on the rise. The type of instruction the students are receiving while they are suspended is an issue. The online alternative school students are being sent to as their disciplinary placement has seen an increase in enrollment of 300%. They suspect learning loss is happening. Some students may have this learning loss because of their inability to deal with the different setting, the different placement, or it may turn up in terms of kids with disabilities who cannot access their education in the same way anymore. They would like to identify who the kids are who are being suspended and what their categories are. Conversations at the Department of Education level need to take place about tracking these kids and follow up to find out what their quality of education is like. Gillian Barjon would propose that any parent whose child is suspended and told they must go to some sort of alternate instruction that they be given a survey they have to send to the state department saying what they were offered, and what happened with their child. Following up to find out what the impact is of the suspensions and expulsion is very important and it is missing.

Janice Wolf asked about the survey, if it is something Gillian Barjon is proposing the committee do or the Commission take on.

Gillian Barjon commented there are platforms for collecting this type of data and organizations who do it well already on a smaller scale. Perhaps figuring out the community resources who can help with building it. If not, then asking the Department of Education to build out their own tool/template.

Janice Wolf asked if Gillian Barjon is proposing a workgroup be established within the committee to address the survey, to approach the organizations who are doing this.

Gillian Barjon stated she would not want it to only be relevant to Clark County since it is a statewide issue. The first issue is to get input from the Department of Education on what would be the best way for parents to provide feedback.

Janice Wolf asked how the Department of Education gets approached and if the recommendation is for the committee to draft a letter to the full Commission and ask the Commission to request the information from the Department of Education.

Gillian Barjon stated she does not have an answer. Committee members may have certain connections with persons with the Department of Education who are already monitoring discipline. Those point persons may be the contacts the committee would want to use. On the restorative justice group that Gillian Barjon attends, there are members of the Department of Education who are following up on the issue of discipline and restorative justice. They may be the people to talk to about what that kind of initiative would look like.

Janice Wolf commented she is trying to come up with some specifics on how the committee or as individuals on the committee can move this from point A to point B.

Gillian Barjon stated she would volunteer, however is unable to.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner asked Gillian Barjon if there is anyone, she could partner with who could continue to move the discussion in her absence.

Gillian Barjon stated there may be. Their Strategic Initiatives Director, Bailey Bortolin, would be a good person to follow up.

Janice Wolf asked if any committee members would like to be a part of the immediate effort to get the information.

Laura Obrist stated she would be interested.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega stated she would be interested to help.

Janice Wolf asked committee members if anyone would like to make a motion to formalize the subgroup to undertake the effort to get a task force.

Elvira Saldana asked if a plan is being developed for obtaining data.

Janice Wolf stated the committee would like to develop an action plan for obtaining data using resources and connections and the parent survey to get feedback from parents on discipline.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if a survey from students can be added to capture the opposite end of the data.

Elvira Saldana asked Deputy Attorney General Stephen Avillo if the committee can create a task force.

Stephen Avillo stated he does not know of anything prohibiting the committee from setting up a subcommittee or task force. It can be done as long as it is under the Open Meeting Law, in terms of notice and agenda.

Janice Wolf asked committee members if she could have a motion to setup a subcommittee to develop a plan to obtain statewide data relative to discipline and the subcategories the committee discussed.

Action: Jodi Thornley made a motion as Janice Wolf stated, seconded by Kimberly Palma-Ortega, and carried to approve setting up a subcommittee to develop a plan to obtain statewide data relative to discipline.

Janice Wolf asked for a volunteer to be the Chair.

Gillian Barjon stated she would.

Janice Wolf asked if there was anything else on the agenda item.

Gillian Barjon commented she just received notification regarding a data update relating to suspensions and expulsions from the Clark County School District to their board tonight. It has a lot of information about disproportionate effects on different categories of students.

Janice Wolf asked if Gillian Barjon will be able to obtain the data being presented.

Gillian Barjon stated she would be able to obtain it.

Jake Matthews with the Children's Advocacy Alliance stated he has the PowerPoint presentation with the data and will share it.

- Discuss and identify any necessary policy and statutory changes.
Policy and statutory changes were not discussed.

6. For Possible Action: Discuss and identify initiatives to increase education advocacy statewide to assist students and families with educational rights – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon, Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove

Janice Wolf stated through the Legal Aid Center and their education advocacy team they have been very effective in terms of addressing outcomes for students, whether it is discipline or kids with special needs. It is not universal throughout the state. Janice Wolf asked Gillian Barjon and Jackie Deam, who is one of their education advocacy attorneys to talk to the committee about what education advocacy from a legal perspective looks like in Clark County, what it does, what issues it can help with, and discuss how the committee and through the Commission, can export education advocacy to improve outcomes for kids statewide.

Gillian Barjon stated Nevada PEP is the statewide parent training sort of hub, however their resources are not vast. The other issue is they are usually peer advocates and not attorneys. Right now, what their advocacy looks like is they take on cases anywhere from a low-level suspension and in different incidents, different conduct violations to expulsions. They work with the parent or educational decision maker to help them understand what their rights are and what their child's rights are. At Legal Aid of

Southern Nevada, they have advocates who have been trained in various education laws who are supervised by attorneys. Having advocates does not require an attorney nationwide. Parents have the right to bring whoever they want as an advocate to help them navigate the education process.

Janice Wolf commented Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada 19 years ago had 1 attorney and 1 paralegal in the advocacy program who advocated for education rights for kids in the foster care system. They now have a team of 3 attorneys and 5 advocates. Under state law, every child in foster care is required to have an education decision maker. The education decision maker is a court appointed person who stands in the shoes of the parents to make education decisions for their children. At Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, they have 1 advocate who is responsible for recruiting and training volunteer education decision makers. The laws are specific as to who can and cannot make education decisions for kids. Janice Wolf asked Jackie Deam to provide an overview of who their clients are and how they go to them.

Jackie Deam stated they have 2 pipelines; they receive internal referrals from the Children's Attorneys Project at Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada and referrals from the community. They have a model where they have an attorney and an advocate assigned to each case. Their goal is to step in as early as possible.

Janice Wolf commented there needs to be a way for them to maybe export this knowledge and training to larger communities, the rurals, and the North partners. Janice Wolf suggested a presentation on education advocacy and their model be presented to the Commission at a future meeting and then discuss ways they can set up training for communities and families throughout the state.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner stated she is supportive of it. Having a conversation about the role, what it entails, and identifying 1 to 3 strategies the committee would commit to would be helpful.

Janice Wolf asked committee members what they would like the next steps to be regarding education advocacy, if any.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner asked about how many other issues the committee thinks they could tackle or if Janice Wolf is proposing it is sequenced where the committee is tackling this specific issue now and then undertake another once there has been reasonable impact.

Janice Wolf stated at a previous meeting the committee had prioritized school discipline and related issues. Education advocacy and data gathering go hand in hand. If advocacy is being provided for children and families, there should be a better outcome in dealing with the school discipline issues identified by the committee.

Gillian Barjon commented she thinks they are both important. In terms of priority, the discipline is a priority. Regarding capacity, structuring a teaching or some sort of rollout of education advocacy training would take a lot and would be a long-term plan.

Janice Wolf stated she agrees with Gillian Barjon, and she is thinking more in terms of awareness.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner stated she is supportive of it, especially if it can be tied to the issue the committee is advocating on.

Janice Wolf stated that is her context. Having effective advocates can improve outcomes for kids who are being disciplined under the new statutory policies.

Gillian Barjon stated regarding a presentation to the full commission, she would like to make sure the committee has data points to share.

Janice Wolf stated she thinks just education advocacy, however if the committee would like to wait until there is data, she is open to all suggestions.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega asked if the educational information would be shared with not only Child Haven, but for kids being awarded to the state who still have working engagements with their family that may not be disciplinary only. Kimberly Palma-Ortega suggested reviewing the white paper the committee previously came up with.

Janice Wolf stated a review of the white paper could be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Kimberly Palma-Ortega stated she agrees with a review of the white paper.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner asked Janice Wolf if in terms of next steps if she is scheduling for someone to give a presentation on education advocacy or the role of advocacy.

Janice Wolf stated with this agenda item, she is looking at whether the committee wants to have someone give a presentation to the commission on education advocacy in general and what it does.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner stated she believes there is some representation from a policy advocacy organization present Janice Wolf can enlist to provide a presentation.

Janice Wolf asked committee members if they would agree to table this to the next meeting.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner suggested the committee figure out the next step.

Janice Wolf asked Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner what she would like the next step to be.

Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner asked if they could have the Children's Advocacy Alliance give a presentation on advocacy to the commission.

Tara Raines from the Children's Advocacy Alliance stated they can.

Action: A motion was made by Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner to recommend to the full Commission the Children's Advocacy Alliance present on education advocacy, seconded by Jodi Thornley, and carried to approve the recommendation.

7. **For Possible Action:** Discuss and Decide Upon Next Steps – Janice Wolf, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner, Laura Obrist, Jodi Thornley, Gillian Barjon, Dr. Leslie Strasser Congrove
- Assign Tasks to Committee Members (if needed)
Tasks were not assigned.
 - Specify Agenda Items for the Next Meeting
Review of the white paper
 - Confirm Next Meeting Date/Time

The next meeting date was not confirmed.

8. Public Comment and Discussion

There was no public comment.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:08 p.m.

DRAFT