

MINUTES

Statewide Citizen's Review Panel

April 29, 2025

9:00am

1. Call to Order – Jane Saint, Chair

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM.

Members Present:

Name	Organization
April Stahl	Division of Child and Family Services
Ariana Barbuti	TBD
Caleb Bay	Children's Cabinet
Devan Bartmus	WCSD
Jane Saint	Serving Our Kids
Lauren Pow	Children's Cabinet
Molly Blanchette	Washoe County
Wonswayla Mackey	Clark County

Absent:

Name	Organization
Kim Coats	Nevada CASA
Laurie Jackson	Division of Child and Family Services
Lindsey Marquez	WCSD
Mike Wurm	Boys and Girls Club Truckee Meadows
Salli Kerr	Vice-Chair

Guest:

Name	Organization
Jennifer Bevecqua	Division of Child and Family Services

Staff Support:

Name	Organization
Dylan Nall	Division of Child and Family Services

2. For Information, Roll Call – Jane Saint, Chair

Dylan Nall called the roll. There was a quorum.

3. Initial Public Comment Discussion only: (Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled for action at a later meeting) – Salli Kerr, Chair

There was no comment.

4. For Possible Approval: Consideration, Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Statewide Citizen Review Panel January 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes – Jane Saint, Chair

Jane Saint noted a misspelling of a participant's name, and one other typo. Dylan Nall corrected these. Molly Blanchette moved the minutes, as corrected, be approved. Lauren Pow seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

5. For Information: Presentation and Discussion of the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) – Dylan Nall, Division of Child and Family Services

Dylan Nall said the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) is a five-year plan where the Division and the child welfare agencies come together and collaborate. So, the five-year plan outlines goals and objectives that the Division of Child and Family Services will carry out in administering programs and services to promote the safety, permanency and health and well-being of children and families. It provides DCFS with the opportunity to implement a system of coordinated, integrated, culturally relevant and family focused services. The primary purpose of the plan is to facilitate DCFS' s integration of federally funded programs that serve children and families along the child welfare continuum. The following programs are coordinated by the submission of the 2025-2029 CFSP:

The Stephanie Tubbs Jones Child Welfare Services Program (title IV-B, subpart 1); Promoting Safe and Stable Family Program (title IV-B, subpart 2); Monthly Caseworker Visits Funds; Chafee Program and Training Voucher Program; Adoption Incentive Funds; The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) as it relates to activities funded by CAPTA in supporting achievement of the goals and objectives of the CFSP.

Dylan then put up the goals and strategies of the Plan: Goal 1 is to enhance Nevada's capacity to address the needs of children, youth and families to prevent maltreatment. Strategy 1 would be to develop a Prevention Data Dashboard for planning primary and secondary prevention. Strategy 2 is to Collaborate with the existing prevention program. Strategy 3 is Increase Differential Response Services throughout Nevada. Strategy 4 is Enhance Nevada's Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) program.

Goal 2 is to enhance Permanency Services to address the needs of child, youth, and families. Strategy 1 is the implementation of Extended Young Adult Support Services (EYASSP). Strategy 2 is to maximize the use of the Kinship Navigator program across Nevada and increase Nevada's access to and use of KinGAP. Strategy 3 is increase pre and post adoptive services throughout Nevada.

Goal 3 is to enhance relationships between the child welfare agencies and court partners, resulting in improved court processes and increased timeliness to permanently. Strategy 1 is to collaborate with the Court Improvement Program (CIP).

Goal 4 is a Healthy Workforce. Strategy 1 is for Nevada to have developed a plan to improve the recruitment and retention of its child welfare workforce.

Goal 5 is Continuous Quality Improvement. Strategy 1 is enhance the existing CQI program. Strategy 2 is to create a community of collaboration with agency, community, and system partners.

Jane Saint said she wanted to ask about "the big elephant in the room." With all the cuts that are happening and freezes in federal money, what impact is that going to have, or has it had, on this plan? Dylan said that we are turning in our application for federal assistance for CAPTA funding. We have reapplied for our Children's Justice Act Task Force funding. She hasn't been told anything beyond that. She added that when we do Round 4 of our Federal reviews, we are more than likely going to go on a program improvement plan for the whole state.

Jane Saint asked, how long does that take usually. Molly Blanchett said It's about three years. They'll give us three to six months to develop the PIP and get it approved and then we have two years as the implementation period and then on the last round we do case reviews to demonstrate compliance. This round is going to be a little bit different according to the Children's Bureau. We're going to be doing some different demonstrations. So, say we don't do a statewide activity, but we implement an activity in one area of the state. We may be looking at a different way to demonstrate to the Children's Bureau that the practice changed and the results got better.

Jane Saint asked if that is a nice way to say that we can't do one size fits all. The worlds are different; the South is different from the North and the North is different from the South. Molly Blanchette said she thinks that's what they've proposed. Last round they wanted to see us do statewide things. The CFSR is in round four and the Federal rule says they can change it as needed. It's kind of an experiment. So, each round they learn some stuff and then they make it a little different. This time they're going to give us the opportunity to say some of the areas in our state are different, which is interesting because in round one they said, Oh my gosh, you're so different. Get a practice model and be all the same, and then we've been trying to do that and it's really very challenging. We do have three very different child welfare agencies and different population needs. It'll be kind of interesting to see where the Fed's lead us this round.

Dylan Nall said, just to give everyone a little bit of context, our state is nearly unique. There's only one other state, Wisconsin, which practices their child welfare structure the same way. We have two counties, Washoe and Clark, who are in charge of their own child welfare agencies. They hire and have their own child welfare agencies because their populations are over 100,000, according to Nevada NRS and then the rurals are through the Division of Child and Family Services Rural Region. Rural Region has different offices based on their own jurisdictional offices. For instance, Elko County serves Elko, Lander, and half of Eureka County and another county. Then, we have State oversight, which is her office that is in charge of all of the Federal funding reports for Nevada and then the Nevada state policies because each child welfare agency has their own policies on top of our state policies. It's very confusing.

Wonswayla Mackey said we are basically county driven, but we're state funded and so as a state, they're having statewide assessment meetings to see the commonalities of the different items within the CSFR, so more than likely we probably will be on a PIP as Molly mentioned. So, we're trying to just make sure that we're completely prepared for that as well.

Jane Saint asked, have we ever NOT been on a PIP after a review? Molly Blanchett said, no one has ever not been on a PIP. Every state has had a PIP after each round and they expect that that will continue. There are systemic requirements, which is, like, how's our foster care licensing system? How's our data system? Then, there is big picture agency level functioning stuff. Then there's case level requirements that we review during a case review. So, 2 separate sets and no state has ever passed them. So, the PIP is like: we want you to get to 90%, you're at 67% by the end of the PIP. We want you at 73% and they work out all those percentages with magical math that nobody understands, but we agree upon and then we work towards and it is continuous quality improvement, so it's just to make continual incremental change.

Molly then thanked Dylan for her presentation about the DFSR, and asked to be reminded of our job as a group is. Dylan said we get CAPTA funding, which we apply for when we turn in our annual report in June. In order to get CAPTA funding, we have to have three citizen review panels. This is one of them. We had a third one, so we only have two right now. She is actively working on figuring out a third one and our Children's Justice Act is our second. The reason why they are important is because citizen review panels, in theory, they help make changes and they can help submit recommendations to the state or local level child welfare agencies; these recommendations could be to change or update policies that the group feels would impact child welfare, safety and permanency. Here are some examples. So, we could theoretically look at state policies and she knows that's a little bit hard for the people who are not in child welfare because they're a little bit child welfare heavy and acronym heavy, and we use a lot of language that does not make immediate sense, like 'present danger' and 'immediate danger;' – we could ask the state to look at that. We could ask the state to look at all the counties to look at improving systems. We can look at asking the state to provide supervisor training for all supervisors because we know that's an issue. So, our recommendation can go to our Administrator at the Division of Child and Family

Services, or we could send it to Clark if we're finding that Clark is having some issues, or Washoe, or our administrator again because the rural region has the same administrator as DCFS. We provide these recommendations, and then whatever agency we send them to has to respond within six months. That's in our NRS statute and that allows us to get this federal funding.

Wonswayla Mackey said that she was on a meeting yesterday when there was some mention of the need for a task force related to children's mental health. That's a heavy topic throughout the state and in all jurisdictions. Because of the lack of mental health, behavioral health, and emotional health services for children, we're starting to see now adoptive and post adoptive parents really frustrated and starting to surrender some of their children back to the welfare system. If you're thinking about a task force and because we're CAPTA related, do we have to work on the front-end or the back-end services or can we do both? For child welfare in the state, that would be probably a huge need to address.

Dylan Nall said she would e-mail Wonswayla separately to figure out if we can get that set up in Clark. From reading real fast from CAPTA law, it has to relate to child welfare services and family preservation and family support services; that's pretty broad. It doesn't specifically say safety related.

Wonswayla Mackey said that in Clark County that have just developed a new office, The Office of Clinical and Community Services. Their previous director, Jill Morano, is over that office and what they are doing is they've taken clinical services out of Family Services and then they also are working with juvenile justice services and social services trying to address some of the children mental health needs specifically in that office. They've also taken some of prevention services over and moved those services over so that they can meet those kids at the front door instead of when parents are getting frustrated when they are having a hard time managing children's behaviors. It's not necessarily that those parents have an abuse or neglect issue. It's more that they are lacking resources, so that may be something if you're looking for the development of a task force.

Dylan Nall read out some CAPTA language: 'each panel established pursuant to this paragraph shall examine the policies, procedures and practices of state local agencies when appropriate and evaluate the extent to which state and local child protection service agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities,' – again, that's pretty broad. We can use some existing panels or start a new one in order to meet that federal requirement. We have to meet four times a year and it has to be an open meeting. She can help with that because she already does that. She will e-mail further details to Wonswayla.

Jane Saint asked for clarification, going back to our recommendations, if we are unable to move forward with that right now because we're waiting for the data? Dylan Nall that in the January meeting this task force was unable to do recommendations for this fiscal cycle or state cycle calendar year because you didn't feel comfortable doing so, as it was literally your second meeting and Dylan would have needed them before this April. So, in the July and October

meeting, she will provide significantly more data and more information to help the group come to a conclusion about recommendations. Jane Saint thanked her.

Molly Blanchette asked what kind of data are you getting for us to look at? Dylan said she was to pull DFSP data for the last three reviews. She noted that our next agenda item is consideration, discussion and possible vote on future agenda items. Is anyone requesting data at this time which could be a future agenda item?

Molly Blanchette said that our Goal #1 talks about a Prevention Data Dashboard. She wondered if we were interested in asking Dylan in getting the committee any information that would help in formulating what our recommendation(s) would be. For instance, she was thinking about the dashboards in general in child welfare are going to be so helpful for the workforce, for the supervisors, for everyone. Being able to pull up the data and look at it on your screen and understand where cases are at and where your agency is at is so helpful and it makes her want to say we should make a goal that says to formalize a plan to create this dashboard so that we know that it's happening.

Jane Saint said that was a good point, as that's how so many decisions are made through data. The more we can get, the better. Molly said in her experience we have a lot of data because we put everything into the UNITY system. So, we have lots of data and then we've tried to create reports for it but then trying to trickle down the reports to getting a worker to actually pull the report and use it and let it help them in their practice, that has been a struggle. With all of the technology that's just exploding now the dashboards are a realistic thing that can happen. In Washoe County they have Power BI which can pull data from UNITY and create dashboards pretty easily. She feels if she was a worker and could pull up her 15 kids and tell if she had seen them that month, and when, that would be very helpful. It's not outside the realm of something that can happen. The technology is already here, and agencies are starting to work with them. Jane Saint asked if there would be no Fiscal Note with this because it's already there, they just have to have someone who can pull the data? Or would there be additional money needed? We're in legislative session and the question is always, so what's the Fiscal Note to this? How much is it going to cost?

Wonswayla Mackey said that at Clark County they have their Cognos system, which creates a dashboard for them internally within their agency that can pull some data. They have CFSR results they have broken down and she can send them along. She noted in Goal #1 that one of strategies is increasing Differential Response. They are working on that as well in Clark. They can assist with information on that, too.

Caleb Bay said he would be interested in getting data on resource families, recruitment and retention numbers, where resource families tend to drop off, how many drop off during training and licensing versus after the first case? If, when a family decides not to renew their license, is there are any kind of exit interviews to get insight into their experience in that decision? Dylan Nall said she would see what she could do.

6. For Possible Action: Consideration, Discussion, and Possible Vote to Approve Future Agenda Items – Jane Saint, Chair

Jane Saint asked what we have to consider for future agenda items. Dylan Nall said the CFSP for the last three rounds that were completed in January, February and March, maybe some items that we're working on to figure out what DCFS and the agencies are doing to complete the CFSP items and strategies and then possibly getting information about foster parents when they close their license, what is the fallout on that, etc. Molly Blanchette asked if Dylan can pull the last four reviews, so we can have a whole year. Dylan agreed.

Molly Blanchette moved that these be accepted for future agenda items. Lauren Pow seconded. Approved unanimously.

7. For Information: Member Announcements Regarding Their Agencies – Jane Saint, Chair

Wonswayla Mackey said every knows caseloads are a hot topic in the legislative session, so they are preparing and gearing up for that. It's looking likely that they may pass the 30 kid count for caseloads. They have a consultant that they are working with in regard to looking at how they process cases through intake and assign them to the staff, so that should be beneficial to help out with that. They are doing a lot of training around fatalities and near fatalities. They have some training that's happening in their specialized unit that they have contracted with physicians to look at some of those abuse and neglect cases and give their medical opinion. They are addressing some of these issues that are going to come up on the CFSR to enhance statewide

Jane Saint said for those who are unaware, the Child Welfare Network used to be called The Network. The coalition has reestablished itself, meeting every other month. It's being done through the Children's Advocacy Alliance. Annette Dawson Owens is heading that up and just had a fantastic meeting earlier this month, bringing everybody together and finding out what was going on. It was a great conversation and if you're interested, you can follow up with Annette or with Jane to get that information and be on the list. She thought they would be meeting every other month, the first Tuesday or Wednesday.

**8. Final Public Comment Discussion Only: (Action may not be taken on any matter brought up under this agenda item until scheduled on an agenda for action at a later meeting)
- Jane Saint, Chair**

There were no comments.

9. Adjournment – Jane Saint, Chair

Meeting adjourned at 10:00.