

**Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)
Meeting Minutes, December 6, 2016**

GACDA held a meeting on December 6, 2016 in the Press Room at the Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chairperson Lynette Fontenot presided.

Members Present:

Lynette Fontenot	Sharon Hennessey
Gale Dean	Linda Kocher
Lauren Mayfield	Mark Thomas
Laura Brackin	Stephen Kauffman
Kelly Monroe	Jamie Karam
Libby Murphy	Sandra Winchell
Amy Dawson	Sharon Buchert
Nancy Hicks	Tara Delee
Tara Leblanc	
Donna Breaux	Lashonda O'Connor for Christopher Kirby
Linda Theriot	Brynn Millet for Paula Rodriguez
Katie Corkern	Brenton Andrus for Sandra Winchell

Members Absent:

Pam Darby, Harry Brady, Cynthia Obier, Joshua Hollins, Representative John Schroeder, Senator Gerald Boudreaux, and Ava Dejoie (p)

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH UPDATE

Office of Aging and Adult Services Update

Tara Leblanc provided an update on behalf of LDH. The department is in the midst of creating policies that will increase accountability. A public dashboard to collect data from providers and citizens with disabilities has been created. The department is undergoing IT updates that will help support coordinators. The department will focus on emergency preparedness and transitioning and discharging individuals from special need and other shelters. LDH will continue to serve families with transitioning from the flood in March and August.

Office of Behavioral Health Update

Tara Delee provided an update on behalf of OBH. Resources and links were sent out relative to programs that assist individuals with behavioral health needs. There is a new commissioned formed that will help identify the needs of individuals. The office will be involved in the upcoming legislative session. OBH is working with other agencies and Medicaid that will provide greater assistance for individuals who need treatment for various disorders. OBH has received various grants to expand treatment for pregnant women and minorities. OBH has a webpage that provides constituents with resources. There will be trainings available for individuals who may be interested.

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Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities Update

Mark Thomas gave an update on behalf of OCDD. OCDD has downsized to the publicly operated AFTD. OCDD are working on transitioning medically fragile patients in the community. There will be some closures of facilities in the near future, and will make arraignments to serve individuals in the community based setting. OCDD will be taking more programmatic oversight for certain facilities, and make sure that facilities are meeting Title 19 requirements. The department will ensure that there is improvement on the quality of service and overall health of constituents. The department will ensure that all agencies and providers are compliant with CMS; there will training and resources available to individuals and groups who need them. The Development Disabilities Council Initiative has begun and will assist identify providers who need training and assistance with infrastructure. The department has created the Center Planning Initiative and a request for service registry to assess the needs of individuals.

Chairperson Remarks

GACDA Chairperson Lynette Fontenot thanked everyone for their participation in the GOLD Awards and Inclusive Arts Contest and expressed gratitude for having an award named in her honor- the Lynette Fontenot Excellence in Inclusion Award.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

GACDA Members reviewed the minutes from the September 20th meeting. Mark Thomas made a motion to accept the September 20th meeting minutes, the motion was seconded by Lauren Mayfield. The motion was approved unanimously by the council. There were no questions or discussion.

APPROVAL OF BYLAWS

Donna Breaux made a motion to approve of the GACDA bylaws. Libby Murphy seconded the motion. The motion was approved without any opposition or discussion.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Transportation: The committee reported that they discussed the current transportation programs within the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) with Tina Anthalone. The committee discussed conducting a statewide survey to human service providers, constituents, and interested parties. The survey will gauge each parish and zip code. The survey will be live for one year; quarterly reports will be made available. Strategic targeting will take place if participation is lacking in certain areas. The committee will draft the survey and submit it to the Council for approval.

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Education: The committee reported that they discussed the Governor's Advisory Council on ESSA. The GAC on ESSA is focusing on state assessments, evaluation of teachers and preparation, support for struggling schools, early childhood, and funding. The committee expressed concerns with language within the regulations of the ESSA relative to pathways to diplomas. The committee would like to send a letter to the delegation asking them to pay attention to the issues as the final regulations are coming out. The committee also discussed the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline created by Act 522 of 2016. Teacher training and ongoing support for teachers in the area of behavioral issues is a focus of that council. The committee would like to look into the availability of children's mental health and intervention supports in schools. The committee discussed a date report from LDE relative to corporal punishment in schools.

A motion from the education committee was approved by the Council requesting that a letter be sent from GACDA to the congressional delegation asking them to be aware of language in the regulations of ESSA that affect diploma/graduation options for students with disabilities as well as potential disincentives to educate students with disabilities. Superintendent John White, BESE Members, and House and Senate Education Committee members should be CC'd in letter.

A motion requesting that Bambi Polotzola and Dr. James Gilmore discuss with the Governor's policy staff the elimination of corporal punishment in schools for students with disabilities in upcoming legislation was approved by the committee.

Employment: The committee discussed the employment first initiative and executive order. The committee mentioned that Governor Edwards would like to see a workgroup in regards in developing an inclusive workforce. A letter expressing this is expected to be written. The committee discussed the State of Louisiana becoming a model employer. The committee made a recommendation that a workgroup to advance Employment First priorities be created and that the governor begins to make steps to make Louisiana as a model employer for people with disabilities. The Council approved the recommendation.

Accessibility: The committee discussed accessibility issues as a result of the flood in August. There was a lack of communication during the flood in shelters to provide news for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. The committee discussed the inhabitable of homes after the august flood. A letter will be written to FEMA to address relative to the FEMA integration team.

Jolan Jolivette will attend State Bond Commission meetings and provide updates relative the accessible projects and other ADA issues during the aftermath of the August flood. The committee has discussed monitoring of the state fiscal accessibility issues. There needs to be good faith assessments in making sure that state facilities are accessible.

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Legislative Priorities Discussion

Steve Kaufman would like clarification on shortfalls and budget deficits for the 2017 budget. Members were recommended that they submit issues in writing that should be addressed at the legislative level.

It was discussed that LRS should be fully funded so that LWC/LRS can get the full federal matching funds of \$3.67 per \$1 state funds. Motion made by Libby Murphy, and seconded Linda Kocher that fully funding LRS be made a priority by the governor and the legislature within the 2017 budget. No opposition.

There have been some concerns relative to the budget of the commission of the Deaf. Motion by Steve Kaufman to rebalance the resources for the telecommunication from land lines to cellphones seconded by Dr. Brackin and was approved by the committee.

It was encouraged that each agency share what policies they are support because there may be some common interest.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Bambi Polotzola provided a recap on the GOLD Awards, which took place on November 16, 2016. Videos will be released of the award ceremony with full captioning. GOV Talks will take place in January regarding opiate addiction. GODA will begin working on the annual reports which must be submitted in January. The Governor's Office of Disability Affairs is currently preparing for the upcoming legislative session.

2017 Meeting Schedule Review

The next meeting will take place on March 21, 2017 in the Claiborne Building. The following meetings will take place on June 27, 2017, September 19, 2017, and December 19, 2016.

MEETING ADJOURNED made by Libby Murphy, seconded by Nancy Hicks. No opposition.