



CHILDREN'S CABINET BOARD MEETING

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

October 12, 2017

Capitol Press Room 4th Floor

Cabinet Members/Representatives Attendees:

Deputy Secretary OJJ Dr. James Bueche, Jr.

Judge Desiree Cook Calvin

Secretary DCFS Marketa Walters

Secretary LWC Ava Dejoie

Secretary LDH Dr. Rebekah Gee

Secretary LED Donald Pierson, Jr. (Represented by Sherry McCall)

Deputy Chief of Staff, Programming and Planning – Johnny G. Anderson

Call to Order:

Dr. Dana Hunter, Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m. and welcomed members and guests to the October 12th Children's Cabinet Board Meeting.

Roll Call:

Roll call following the welcome remarks by Dr. Hunter was conducted by Stephanie Neal.

Approval of Minutes:

Dr. Hunter, Children's Cabinet Executive Director, called for a review of the minutes and agenda. Secretary Marketa Walters made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Judge Desiree Cook Calvin seconded the motion. All approved. Motion approved.

Update on Children's Cabinet Initiatives: Dr. Dana Hunter presented the update on Children's Cabinet Initiatives. Dr. Hunter requested information regarding any initiatives that Children's Cabinet member's Departments are implementing in their offices at this time to see if there is any opportunity for collaboration. Dr. Hunter stressed the importance of collaboration, partnership and information sharing between Departments.

- a. Human Trafficking Symposium: Dr. Dana Hunter reported that the Human Trafficking Symposium was held at BRCC in the Magnolia Theatre. Partners in the event included State Police, non-profit organizations, state agencies etc. Speakers at the symposium included a human trafficking survivor as well as human trafficking expert, Alliece Cole. The symposium closed with a panel consisting of providers across the state to discuss human trafficking.
- b. Regional Human Trafficking Summits: Regional Trafficking Summits will be held regionally with the help of a \$150,000 grant from the National Criminal Justice Center. \$25,000 has been set aside to host the Summits. The series of Human Trafficking Summits statewide are in the process of being organized and will be held in each region of the state. \$125,000 will go to staff salaries and administrative fees. These funds will be used to gather information from the Summits and a report using the information gathered during the regional Summits will be produced. Dr. Hunter and the Human Trafficking Commission are in the process of creating a master list of people who should be invited. Children Cabinet Members were invited and encouraged to send in names of key stakeholders to discuss the services that exists as well as the challenges in each region of the state. A list of the dates for the Summits was distributed to Children's Cabinet members.

Secretary Walters was asked the question as to whether or not any of the facilities that house Human Trafficking victims was licensed. Secretary Walters informed the Board that as of this time the only facilities licensed include Eden House, Free Indeed as well as Metanoia Manor which as of this time has yet to open due to building code issues. Metanoia Manor expects to open by November 1st. Secretary Walters also stated that generally victims are brought into the facilities in most part as part of sting operations through State Police. Discussion followed.

- c. Human Trafficking Commission and Advisory Board meetings: The Human Trafficking Commission has held two meetings as of this date and time. The Commission is in the process of developing a strategic plan and working with local and state agencies to do a comprehensive assessment as to what is really happening in the state, what services exist, what task force(s) exists and what reports exist. Discussion followed.
- d. "No Kid Hungry Louisiana" Launch Event: The launch of the "No Kid Hungry" Initiative was held at Wildwood Elementary. Governor John Bel Edwards and First Lady Donna Edwards along with other esteemed leaders attended. The program allows students to have access to free breakfast and lunch regardless of household income. Studies show that schools, who offer free meals show that the students were able to focus better, showed better test scores and were healthier. Dr. Hunter continued to let other Cabinet Members comment on the issue.
- e. School Breakfast Challenge: The Executive Director discussed the statewide "School Breakfast Challenge". Monetary rewards will be given to schools across the state with the highest percentage of breakfast participation in their schools.

Introduction of LCTF Director: Mr. Johnny Anderson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of Programs and Planning introduced Ms. Katina Semien, the new Children's Trust Fund Executive Director.

Open Discussion:

- a. **New Initiatives:** DCFS Secretary Marketa Walters reported on the Louisiana Fosters Initiative. Louisiana Fosters is a state-wide campaign focused on Louisiana's children sponsored by First Lady Donna Edwards to link government, faith, non-profit, business and community to create united support for our state's foster care system.

The Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) recently embarked on a system change for foster care called Quality Parenting Louisiana. Quality Parenting requires foster parents, birth parents, and DCFS workers to partner in improving the quality of parenting each child receives. For DCFS, that means recruiting, training and supporting foster parents, and giving the caregiver a voice in the everyday decisions of the child. Changes have been made to the recruitment of foster parents as well as the training of foster parents due to the fact that DCFS is now requiring more of foster parents.

Due to the lack of DCFS employees there are fewer DCFS employees and workers and more support is needed from the foster parents. More community support and support programs for foster parents are needed statewide. It was also discussed that there are more churches than there are foster children and that faith based communities should be contacted and asked to provide more support for foster children and their foster families.

Cabinet Members discussed having Dr. Rebekah Gee and Secretary Marketa Walters meet with CEO's and their Medical Directors of statewide health plans and Medicaid to discuss health care services for foster children in the state of Louisiana. CEO's need to be informed of the issues and the needs of the 4,000 children in custody that needs to be discussed. Discussion by Cabinet members followed.

It was stated that current health plans are not serving youth that are placed out of state. When a child is placed out of state they still need to visit siblings, birth parents and their workers monthly. DCSF is responsible for these costs as well as the cost of out of state health care expenses. Discussion followed.

Dr. Rebekah Gee spoke regarding more collaboration between agencies. Instead of having a care coordinator for foster care, one for managed care, one for early steps, a social worker, healthy step coordinator and someone from the church. Dr. Gee spoke of a model in Oklahoma where they have one person per family that takes care of all the needs. Dr. Gee suggested that Louisiana look into using one of these models. Discussion followed.

In addition, Dr. Gee spoke of the Nurse Family Partnership that deals with first time mothers in their first trimester. These funds could be used to expand this program. It was discussed that Dr. Gee meet with DCFS Secretary Marketa Walters and Children's Cabinet Executive Director, Dr. Dana Hunter.

Legislative Recommendations:

- A.) Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: How can we help? Legislation is needed to help grandparents/kinship caregivers.
- B.) Childhood obesity: Levy a tax on sugar/fructose sweetened drinks to help combat the issue of childhood obesity.

C.) Birth control: Needed to avoid the epidemic of unwanted pregnancies.

D.) Funding of abstinence programs through schools and churches. Louisiana has one of the highest rates of syphilis in the country.

E.) LA CHIP: The LA CHIP program was not reauthorized. LA CHIP provides health insurance to approximately 100,000 children.

Other Business: Dr. Hunter requested that agencies work together and share resources etc., even if it is just sharing of information.

Public Comments: No comments

Adjournment: Dr. James Bueche, Jr. made a motion to adjourn. Secretary Marketa Walters seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried and meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: December 12, 2017

Capitol Press Room, 4th Floor