

**Child**r**en’s Cabinet Advisory Board Meeting**

**Unapproved Minutes**

**August 30, 2022**

**Member Name: Attendees**

R. Renee Antoine Charles Coleman, M.D.

Kathy Coleman Gina E. Eubanks

Shanna Beber Julio Galan

Julie Foster Hagan Dr. Sarah Hinshaw Fuselier

Dr. Rhenda Hodnett Shavana Howard

Tamara Jones Susan East Nelson

Ashley Politz Lakeisha W. Robertson

Jill Roshto Marsha Shuler

Dr. Ernise Singleton Dr. Libbie Sonnier

Stephanie Sterling Karen Stubbs

Alishia Vallien Kahree Wahid

Lenell Young

**Staff:**

Dr. Melanie Washington, Children’s Cabinet Executive Director

Michele M. Rabalais, Children’s Cabinet Executive Assistant

Justin Standifer, Children’s Cabinet Coordinator

**Welcome and Call to Order**:

Susan East Nelson, Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board (CCAB) Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed all present at 10:01 a.m.

**Roll Call:**

Michele M. Rabalais, Executive Assistant, called roll.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Dr. Libbie Sonnier made a motion to approve the June 28, 2022 minutes. Lenell Young seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**Boys and Girls Clubs in Louisiana**: Missy Andrade, Chief Impact Officer, presented information regarding the Boys and Girls Clubs in Louisiana.

The goal of Boys & Girls Clubs in Louisiana is to lay the foundation for Louisiana to expand upon and grow the mission, vision, programs and outcomes of Boys & Girls Clubs to answer the needs of youth in the state while providing youth with a safe place to grow and learn.

**Geaux Far Louisiana**: Dr. Libbie Sonnier, Geaux Far LA Co-chair, presented information on the Geaux Far Louisiana program. The main vision of Geaux Far LA is an equitable, unified early childhood system **centering racial equity** and ensuring families access to seamless, high-quality early child development, health, and educational services.

The five main goals of Geaux Far LA are as follows:

1. A network that works – would allow all families to have access to resources that are accessible and coordinated systems with wrap around services;
2. Family friendly workplaces such as:
   1. Workplace supports
   2. Paid family leave
   3. Employer sponsored daycare
3. A healthy start – universal health care that is easily accessible as well as support for parents through the early years;
4. Equitable access to high quality, affordable child care as well as a well-compensated early care and education workforce;
5. Family and provider driven system where families and providers would be engaged and prioritized in leadership and decision making throughout the state. Discussion followed.

For more information, please visit the website at GeauxfarLA.org

**Budget Priority Recommendation Presentations*:***

***Vulnerable Youth*:** Mark Harris, Michelle Gros and Dr. Rhenda Hodnett presented the Vulnerable Youth recommendations. The Vulnerable Youth Subcommittee aims to improve outcomes for Louisiana youth most susceptible to parental abuse and neglect, human trafficking, violence, gang involvement, criminal involvement, substance abuse, physical and mental health disorders, homelessness, poverty and family instability and the consequences of these experiences. The Subcommittee is specifically focused on youth involved with the Office of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Children and Family Services as well as youth who are aging out of foster care. The Vulnerable Youth subcommittee proposes strategic recommendations to strengthen state and community supports that will decrease vulnerability to criminal and other adverse childhood experiences, enhance resilience and minimize long-term repercussions associated with these experiences.

The recommendations/budget priorities are as follows:

1. Prioritize a comprehensive caseload/workload analysis and compensation commensurate to ensure sufficient funding for the Child Welfare Division of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), the non-secure care facilities, secure care facilities, and formal Families In Need of Services (FINS) of the Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ) and Informal FINS to effectively serve children and families and fulfill mandated requirements.
2. Prioritize funding statewide for mobile crisis response and community crisis support for children on Medicaid.
3. Prioritize funding to convene a statewide Vulnerable Youth Summit.

***Family Stability***: Dr. Gina Eubanks provided the Family Stability recommendations. Dr. Eubanks reported that the main goal of the Family Stability Subcommittee is child hunger and the broader range of family supports.

It was also reported that as of Jan. 1, 2022 DCFS activated the No Wrong Door project to expand the pilot into an agency-wide infrastructure to enhance DCFS client services. Louisiana Department of Corrections (DOC) is now implementing some of these elements to enable the two agencies to better serve shared clients/families. This opportunity also provided Louisiana 211 with much needed capacity building resources to serve families, year-round and during times of disaster activations. The Louisiana Association of United Ways serves as the project contact administrator.

***Behavioral Health K-12***: Dr. Charles Coleman provided the Behavioral Health priorities/recommendations.

The newly-enacted federal Safe Communities Act contains billions of dollars in funding for behavioral health initiatives in schools. The mental health support includes dollars to provide training for and to hire counselors, social workers and psychologist, funding to train school staff to notice and address mental health challenges faced by students, grants for pediatric mental health care access as well as to increase the number of providers of school-based mental health services.

The recommendations/budget priorities are as follows:

1. Allow behavioral health providers to concentrate their efforts providing services to students would make it a more attractive position, help with retention and provide students with the help many of them need in today’s unsettling times.
2. Direct efforts at improving the behavioral health provider pipeline through such things as incentives for those in degree programs and partnering with various entities that can provide access to those who need clinical hours for licensing. The Louisiana Department of Education (DOE) has a rant through LSU’s School of Social Work, which places social work students in high-need schools to expand mental health services to students. Another initiative has taken place in the Lake Charles area where a partnership with its human services district provide Provisional Licensed Professional Counselors who worked in schools to earn clinical hours.
3. Other avenues to explore include:
   1. Additional school-based health centers that could provide needed behavioral support at school sites, especially in rural areas, which frequently report a shortage of access to providers.
   2. Tapping resources through Communities in Schools of the Gulf Coast, which provides mental health professionals inside public schools in five parishes who give direct intervention and school-wide preventive intervention to students and families.
   3. Establishing an electronic health record-data system for Behavioral Health use in schools, similar to the one use for students’ special education records. It would provide continuity of care for students from school to school and parish to parish.

***Early Experience/Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health*:** Dr. Sarah Hinshaw-Fusilier stated the Early Experience/Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Subcommittee had no recommendations/budget priorities to report at this time.

***Early Learning, Literacy and K-12****:* Dr. Libbie Sonnier provided the early Literacy K-12 priorities/recommendations.

The priorities/recommendations are as follows:

1. Continued funding for the READ program that came out of ACT 395 that came with a $5 million appropriation for one year only
2. Continued effort to increase the pay of educators from birth through 12th grade. Retention and recruitment across the educator continuum are increasingly important.
3. With the requirement of ACT 108 for K-3 teachers and school leaders to receive training in the science of reading, there is a need for additional funding to get to full implementation.
4. Full time literacy coach in all K-12 schools to support job-embedded literacy professional development and teacher support.
5. Invest $115 million of state funds, as recommended by the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission, to fully launch LA B to 3.

All reports will be combined into one document to be submitted to Governor Edwards. Prior to submission, a draft will be sent out to all CCAB Members for review and edits.

**Acknowledgement of Public and Public Comments:** No comment(s)

**Upcoming CCAB meetings:**

November 15, 2022 10:00 am – 12:00 am, 4th Floor Press Room

**Adjournment:** Kahree Wahid made a motion to adjourn. Julio Galan seconded the motion. All approved. Meeting adjourned,