**Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board Meeting**

**Unapproved Minutes**

**January 14, 2025**

**Member Name: Attendees (Not sure of all members who attended)**

Ursula Anderson

Krystle Mitchell

Amanda Moody

ReShonn Saul

Rebecca Hook

Susan East Nelson

Ernise Singleton

**Staff:**

Jolie Williamson, Children’s Cabinet Executive Director

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:**

ReShonn Saul, Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board (CCAB), Chair called the meeting to order at 10:08 am and welcomed members and guests.

1. **Roll Call:**

Amanda Moody, Vice Chair, CCAB (need to verify this)

1. **Approval of Minutes:** (Not sure who made the motion-I believe it was Susan Nelson) made a motion to approve the amended minutes of the November 19, 2024 meeting. All approved, Motion carried.
2. **FASD Training:**

William J. Edwards, Deputy Public Defender III, provided information about a training session on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) scheduled for January 23, 2025, from noon to 4:00 PM at the Baton Rouge Public Library. This training is open to anyone working in child welfare. Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits will be available for judges and social workers. A registration link will be sent out to members, and attendance is free.

ReShonn Saul requested that the members allow Chief Justice Weimer to speak about a steering committee he is forming. Chief Weimer discussed the issue of truancy in detail, highlighting the significant problems caused by absenteeism, runaways, ungovernable youth, and truant students, all of which are affecting the youth in our state. He encouraged the members to consider joining the steering committee to help address this issue. Members interested in serving on the committee were urged to contact ReShonn Saul.

1. **Children’s Bureau of New Orleans:** Mr. Jonas Chartock, the Director, presented to the members about the services provided by the Children’s Bureau. He shared that the agency has been operating for 132 years and offers mental health services to children in the Orleans region. The Community Mental Health workers are actually survivors themselves, which allows them to provide unique support to clients.

The agency serves 15 out of the 65 schools in its service area and has 20 clinicians available to assist up to 20 clients each. Although they are looking to expand their services, they are currently facing budget shortfalls due to the VOCA funding crisis. As a result, the agency may have to reduce the number of clinicians due to a 52% reduction in their budget.

After the presentation, ReShonn Saul thanked the director for sharing information about their services and encouraged members to reach out if they had any questions.

1. **Health Freedom Louisiana:**

Jill Hines, the Director, presented to the Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board about the services offered by the agency, which focuses on ensuring that parents are aware of their rights and can protect their freedom regarding vaccinations. The agency was established in 2019 in response to the founder's personal experience concerning her choice to vaccinate her child.

The agency actively works to protect and strengthen parental and human rights in relation to healthcare decisions by educating the public and collaborating with legislators. They believe that bodily autonomy and family autonomy are constitutional rights that are non-negotiable. As a result, they empower parents to advocate for their children and assert their rights.

Jill discussed the Voluntary Informed Consent (R.S.17:170) and explained that the legislature supports the idea that parents should always have the choice to vaccinate their children or not. She further clarified that the state does NOT mandate vaccinations; instead, they merely request health records, and parents have the right to opt out of providing them.

After her presentation, Dr. Sarah Hinshaw asked the staff to consider inviting someone to present scientific information supporting vaccinations at the next meeting to ensure all members are well-informed.

1. **Partners in Protecting Children:**

Amanda Moody, Co-chair of the subcommittee, provided an update on the progress of the group. The subcommittee was established during the last legislative session under HR 305 and Senate Bill Act 40, known as Ezekiel’s Law. Its primary responsibility is to study the needs of the child welfare system in Louisiana. The committee agreed that in order to effectively analyze the system and make recommendations, they would require additional time to gather information by interviewing staff and exploring other relevant systems.

1. **Other Business:**
2. **Nominations and vote for Secretary** - ReShonn Saul pointed out that the committee needed to elect a secretary, as Michelle had been fulfilling that role for quite some time. She nominated Krystle Mitchell for the position, and Krystle accepted the nomination. Susan Nelson then made a motion to approve Krystle Mitchell as the Secretary of the Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board. Dr. Sarah Hinshaw seconded the motion. The committee members all approved, and the motion carried.
3. **Perfect Attendance:** Jolie Williamson stated that we did not need to vote on adding additional members to the Partners for Protecting Children Subcommittee.
4. **Form Solutions Summit Workgroup:** RReShonn Saul emphasized the need for members to serve on the workgroup. The following individuals were nominated: ReShonn Saul, Storm, Angela Wiggins, Dr. Singleton, Chenier Montz, Stubbs, and Tangela, who will designate staff members to participate in the workgroup. An email will be sent to all workgroup members regarding future meetings. Susan Nelson made a motion to approve the nominees, which was seconded by Dr. Singleton. The motion was passed unanimously.
5. **Perfect attendance:** Jolie Williamson thanked everyone for their service on the committee. She noted that two members attended all meetings in 2024, and she presented certificates to Amanda Moody and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Jolie encouraged all members to attend meetings in the future.
6. **Children’s Day at the Capitol:** Susan Nelson stated that Children’s day at the Capitol will be held on May 29, 2025. More information is forthcoming.

**IX. Public Comment:**

June 2, 2025 is the Child Care Association Day at the Capitol.

**X. Adjournment:**

Susan Nelson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:26 am. Dr. Singleton seconded the motion. All approved. Meeting adjourned.