

**Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)
Meeting Minutes, March 21st, 2017**

GACDA held a meeting on March 21, 2017 in the Thomas Jefferson Room at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chairperson Lynette Fontenot presided.

Present:

Lynette Fontenot	Christopher Kirby
Pam Darby	Paula Rodriguez
Donna Breaux	Lauren Mayfield
Laura Brackin	Stephen Kauffman
Libby Murphy	Sandra Winchell
Amy Dawson	Sharon Buchert
Cynthia Obier	Mark Thomas
Representative John Schroeder	Tara Leblanc
Senator Gerald Boudreaux	Linda Kocher
Ken York (proxy for Ava Dejoie)	Rosemary Morales (proxy for Gale Dean)

Absent: Joshua Hollins, Kelly Monroe, Linda Theriot, Jamie Wong, Sharon Hennessey, Tara Delee, Harry Brady, Katie Corkern

Call To Order and Introductions

GACDA Chairperson, Lynette Fontenot, called the meeting to order, and asked everyone to briefly introduce themselves. A quorum was present.

Approval of minutes

Lynette asked members to review the minutes for approval. Libby Murphy motioned to approve the minutes and Lauren Mayfield seconded. There were no objections and the minutes were approved.

Committee Assignments

Laura Brackin has resigned as the Transportation committee chair for GACDA. Jamie Karan expressed she would be interested as serving as chair. Mark Thomas motioned for Jamie Karan to be the chair for transportation and Libby Murphy seconded. There were no objections. Following that motion Sharon Buchert motioned to accept the appointees to the committees and Amy Dawson seconded.

Nicholls University Bridge to Independence Presentation

Dr. Breaud informed the Council Bridge to Independence is a two year certificate program for students with intellectual disabilities which is the only program recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. She stated the program offers tutoring, weekly social skills seminars, supported advising, academic monitoring, and has reserved residential options. She indicated Nicholls makes changes to supports needed so

students can be successful. The students accepted in the Bridge to Independence Program must have the following: high school diploma or equivalent, navigate campus independently, specific I.Q. range, safety skills in unsupervised setting, practical reading and writing, and be their own guardian.

LA Department of Health Updates

Mark Thomas gave an update on efforts to provide additional waiver slots. OCDD plans to make an informed request based on the needs of applicants to get kids on the waiting list for the correct waiver. DD Council and OCDD have a partnership to work with home and community based providers to provide them with training and technical support so they can continue to provide support for people with the highest need. There are currently 4 providers enrolled, and goal is 10 by the end of the year. Already seeing a reduction in critical outcome events, complaints, emergency room hospitalizations, and seeing individuals more involved in the community and with opportunities for employment. He is asking for anyone with knowledge of providers who would benefit from this program to contact him. Mark's office says providers are spending a lot of money to onboard new employees and get them through orientation only to have them leave shortly thereafter, so they are looking at ways to help providers with planning and recruitment. OBH provided a written report to GACDA members.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

Transportation: Jamie Karan informed the Council the transportation development survey has gone out to seniors and results should come around May. Paula Rodrigues from Death Focus suggested reaching those who are hearing-impaired with braille copies and ASL translation.

Education: Laureen Mayfield discussed uncertainty of ESSA regarding regulations implemented by the Obama administration. Governor's ESSA council is recommending a further reduction in standardized school testing, opposing additional 3% set-aside, considering growth factor missing from the superintendent's plan, and submitting the plan in September rather than April to get more authentic stakeholder input so the public can weigh in on areas of disagreement. Laureen reported that the Education Committee recommend the council write a letter to LDOE and BESE urging them to wait until September to submit the ESSA plan in order to seek and incorporate more stakeholder input, especially pertaining to students with disabilities, and provide justification for feedback that was not considered and incorporated. Laura Brackin motioned and Stephen Kaufman seconded to write a letter to LDOE and BESE supporting a September submission of the Louisiana ESSA Plan in order to seek, consider, and incorporate more authentic stakeholder input, especially into items affecting students

with disabilities: the amount of growth factor in the accountability formula and the weight of school quality indicator, and ask LDOE to provide justification for stakeholder input not included in the plan. Laureen also talked about HB 79 filed by Rep. Foil, which bans corporal punishment for children with disabilities because they are disproportionately punished through corporal punishment, and it is far too often related to their disability.

Employment: Libby discussed the SILC Congress meeting that would be held in 2018 and 2019, as well as the Employment First Workgroup meetings being held with the next meeting being held Thursday at the State Capitol in the Press Room from 10am-2pm. Fully funding LRS is a legislative priority, and Mark Martin wrote a letter on Feb 22nd saying all orders of selection are closed, but people are still encouraged to submit applications. It is possible that all orders of selection will remain closed throughout the next fiscal year, which is disconcerting.

Accessibility: Stephen Kaufman discussed HB2 and the ADA facilities the money goes towards for state facilities and the difficulty of getting funding for ADA projects. He also discussed the lack of effort to identify projects for funding, as well as addressing the accessibility of the Capitol. Jamie made a motion and Jim Sprinkle to compile a list of issues and recommendations and send it to those committee members. There were no objections.

Executive Director Report

Bambi Polotzola informed the Council that Jamar Ennis has left Disability Affairs and will now be the Executive Director of LYFE. Bambi mentioned to members to please email their events that are disability related so it can be posted on the calendar on Governor's Disability Affairs website and let the council know about the monthly newsletter.

Other Business

Amy Dawson let the council know the EMDAC has acquired a small grant to stage equipment. The Louisiana emergency preparedness association will talk about access and functional needs and do table top exercises. The tabletop exercises will be a hazmat scenario to see how people will develop plans that come from these situations. The funding can also be used to bring interpreters and educate how to better warn our citizens of disasters and evacuation. One of the sessions will be held in New Orleans.

NEXT GACDA MEETING

The next GACDA meeting will be June 27, 2017.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Linda Kocher motioned and Jamie Karan motioned to adjourn.