



## Children's Cabinet Advisory Board Meeting

### Minutes

May 12, 2017

Claiborne Building – Thomas Jefferson Room 136 A&B

#### **Attendees: Members**

Sarah Hinshaw-Fuselier, Ph.D.  
Rhenda H. Hodnett  
Alfreda Tillman Bester  
Glenn Holt  
James E. Hussey, M.D.  
Ashley Politz  
Mary Beth Scalco  
Marsha Shuler  
Ernise Singleton, Ph.D.  
James A. Sprinkle  
Mark A. Thomas (represented by Tiffany Dickerson)  
Michael W. Victorian  
Kahree A. Wahid

#### **Non-members**

Erin Porche'  
Bambi Polotzola  
Sussette Gonzalez  
Jodie Roberts  
Casey Phillips  
Luke St. John McKnight  
Renee Greenwood

#### **Call to Order:**

Children's Cabinet Executive Director, Dr. Dana Hunter called the meeting to order at 10:35am. She gave an overview of the meeting and presented results of the priorities the Board had previously voted on; and she informed them that they will have the opportunity to select which priority they would like to work on before the meeting adjourns.

### **Executive Directive Report:**

Dr. Hunter informed the board that the priority from the Governor has been the Child Hunger Initiative; to end child hunger in Louisiana. She advised that there was a meeting with the Governor, Deputy Chief of Staff, the Director and herself with the largest national non-profit organization in the United States, Share Our Strength, which targets child hunger. They discussed a plan for Louisiana and the opportunity to apply to be 1 of 8 states to participate in a learning lab to obtain expert advice from Virginia and the leads in the United States on ending child hunger. The application required a team of five for Louisiana which included the following persons: Mac Williams, Director of Food Services with the Department of Agriculture, Melissa Campbell with the Department of Education, Rhonda Jackson who is the Louisiana Director of the "No Kid Hunger Campaign" in New Orleans, Louisiana, State Senator Regina Barrow and Dr. Dana Hunter. Dr. Hunter informed the board that the application was completed and Louisiana was one of the states selected. The team will go to Virginia in June 2017 to meet with experts to develop a comprehensive plan to provide breakfast and lunch to rural parishes and cities where children are not eating.

Dr. Hunter reported that The Raise the Age Report has been submitted to the legislators.

Dr. Hunter informed the board she participated in the Louisiana Partnership for Children Legislative meeting held around the state. She also took part in the Pinwheel plan to prevent child abuse in April which was Child Abuse Prevention month.

### **Update on Legislative Session:**

Dr. Hunter stated a significant piece of legislation, Senate Bill 66, extends the sunset of the Children's Cabinet through August 2022 and also moves the duties of the Child Poverty Prevention Council, established in 2008, under the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board. Also, the bill was amended to move the Louisiana Trust Fund under the Children's Cabinet. The Senate bill has passed in the Senate and is moving to the House and should be heard within the next week.

Glenn Holt, with office of Juvenile Justice, has been tracking the following bills which will impact them:

- House Bill 74 sponsored by Representative Marcelle
- House bill 506 sponsored by Representative Jefferson
- Senate Bill 16 sponsored by Senator Claiter
- Senate Bill 156 sponsored by Senator Lambert
- Senate Concurrent Resolution 38 sponsored by Senator Morrell
- House Bill 141 sponsored by Representative Miller

Dr. Hunter stated that the significant cuts that passed through the House will affect several state departments that deal with our kids. She asked Rhenda Hodnett discuss what those cuts would mean to Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Rhenda stated that any cuts would be critical for them being that they have a high turnover rate and that the 67 present positions that are presently available would not be able to be filled.

Dr. James Hussey, Assistant Secretary for Behavioral Health, advised that he will give information based on Dr. Gee's May 2 press conference. He stated that roughly 750 million total funds has been identified as needing to be dealt with for Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and approximately 230-240 million in the Department of Health. He stated that a disproportionate burden of the cuts is falling on behavior services. At the moment psych- social rehabilitation are on the elimination block and cuts may affect licensed practitioners.

Tiffany Dickerson, representing Mark Thomas, Assistant Secretary of the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, stated that they do not have anything else to cut. They are looking at Pine Crest Developmental Center which is their only support center in the state which presently has a high census. Their biggest concern is the Early Steps program being cut. Without services from birth to three years of age there is the potential that children will require more extensive special education and Medicaid paid services.

Donald Songy with the Governor's Office stated that one of the cuts with Louisiana Department of Health is for school base health centers. Cuts of Approximately \$240,000 with a federal match of \$300,000 will impact schools because, for some kids, health centers are their health care.

Mr. Songy stated that the Governor's package included a bill that would eliminate corporal punishment with children with disabilities, which this board has been supporting. It has gone through the House of Education Committee unanimously, House Floor unanimously and looks like it will go in similar fashion through the Senate.

### **Choosing Work Groups:**

Dr. Hunter had the board to refer to the CCAB Priority Area Survey which was the results of recommendations the group made in November 2016 and March 2017 on certain topics and priority areas they wanted to focus on for the next five months. Afterwards, recommendations will be made to the Cabinet. Based on the survey, the four sub-committees that will be formed are as follows:

- Childhood Hunger;
- Children with Disabilities;
- Early childhood Mental Health; and
- Transitional Services Youth Aging Out

Dr. Sarah Hinshaw-Fuselier, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Services at Tulane University, gave a synopsis of Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) which she stated, is a cross sector issue. ECMH is social readiness, helping children be in a place to build brain structures they need in a time frame that is really critical and being able to build the capacity to self-regulate which is critical to their success. Zero to Three is a national organization that

promotes early childhood mental health awareness. Action plan is to come up with a strategic plan for the state for early childhood mental health; the continuum of intervention and prevention.

Dr. Hunter advised that Terri Ricks, Deputy Secretary with DCFS has been working with the flood recovery efforts and is trying to garner support from parish presidents to look at child specific needs. Ms. Ricks would like to begin a round table or create a task force to better understand the needs of the kids that have been impacted by the flood.

Dr. Hunter also advised that Sherry Guarisco, with Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, wanted them to know that her annual meeting, Legislative Wrap up Meeting, will be June 15. Ms. Guarisco will be giving an overview of what happened with the session and discussing how we move forward.

**No Other Comments**

**Meeting Adjourned**