

**Council on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**  
**September 21, 2015 at 10:00AM**  
**East Baton Rouge Parish Library-Main Library**  
**7711 Goodwood Blvd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room A, Baton Rouge, LA 70806**

Minutes

**Members Present:**

Toni Buxton, Department of Children and Family Services  
Stesha Rampersad, Louisiana Workforce Commission  
Amanda Brunson, Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana  
John "Eddie" McAuliffe, Louisiana Bar Association  
Kathy Coleman, Grandparent citizen committed to raising grandchildren  
Rose Noel, Grandparent Committed to raising grandchildren  
Danna Spayde, Grandparent Committed to raising grandchildren  
Rita Hathorne, Grandparent Committed to raising grandchildren

**Others Present:**

LaTrese LeCour, Department of Children and Family Services

**Members Not Present:**

Representative Regina Barrow, Louisiana House of Representatives  
Senator Sharon Broome, Louisiana Senate  
Mary Norris, Department of Health and Hospitals  
Leslie Hill, Louisiana Department of Education  
Donna Bowie, Office of Juvenile Justice  
Stacy Mills, Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs  
Christie Smith, Children's Cabinet  
Carmen Weisner, National Association of Social Workers  
Kathleen Richey, LA CASA  
Anthony Recasner, Agenda for Children  
Dot Thibodeaux, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren organization

Participants were present in the meeting room at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library-Main Library; 7711 Goodwood Blvd, 2nd Floor, Room A, Baton Rouge, LA 70806.

A quorum was not present, so minutes from August 28, 2013, November 20, 2013, March 25, 2014, May 9, 2014, August 12, 2014, December 8, 2014, and March 17, 2015 were not able to be approved.

- 1) Toni Buxton led discussion on the agenda items, including the legislated purpose of the council.
- 2) Mr. McAuliffe suggested the council to utilize conference calling in order to increase participation. DCFS will obtain further information regarding this from our Bureau of General Council. He also indicated he could provide an alternate meeting location in Baton Rouge for the upcoming meetings.
- 3) Ms. Brunson recommended we move the meetings to the same date and time as the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board since most of those agency representative are the same for this council. The central location and time should encourage the likelihood of designees to attend. Ms. Brunson also suggested that if we continue to have problems with participation that we request to sunset the council and add the issue of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren to the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board Strategic Plan and possibly create a workgroup.

- 4) Members requested DCFS contact the legislatures and request that they contact each agency to require their agency to participate in the council meetings.
- 5) Members agreed that they would like an updated members list, strategic plan and grandparents fact sheet for Louisiana.
- 6) Other members suggested the Grandparents Council be added to the annual abolishment bill to sunset the council.
- 7) Danna Spayde stated the Annual Grandparents Meeting will be on April 22, 2016 from 8am to 3pm at Holiday Inn in Baton Rouge.
- 8) Lastly, other members feels that the council should be moving forward because it can play an important role in the community, but the lack of participation by members is a hindrance to the purpose.
- 9) DCFS provided a draft of the Grandparent Fact Sheet. Members recommended the fact sheet should include demographic information over 5 years instead of one year; include parish specific information; include a information sheet of local agencies grandparents can utilize; and include that Louisiana has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest rate of children not living with their parents.
- 10) DCFS discussed the annual report is due to the governor in December 2015, so the next meeting may not be included in the annual reporting. However the annual report will be distributed to council members when it is finalized.
- 11) The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 8, 2015 at the Claiborne Building at 9am to 10am. Once the room reservation is confirmed, DCFS will notify all members of the location, date and time of the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned.