



**STATUS ON THE COUNCIL OF GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN
MINUTES**

August 21, 2020
Via Videoconference

Members in Attendance:

Talya Bergeron
Heidi Bourgeois
Rose Dolittle
Leslie Hill
Tewabetch Negatu
Mary Norris
Kathleen Richey
Lakeisha Robertson
Amanda Skinner
Ayn W. Stehr
Michael Stewart
Brenda Swanigan
Joanna Tonguis
James Vidacovich

Guests in Attendance

Jarwanda Harris

Call to Order:

Talya Bergeron called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Approval of the Minutes:

Talya made a motion to approve June's minutes, Ayn Stehr and Leslie Hill second the motion

Updates of Sub-Committee

Talya provided the Council with information related to the sub-committee on enrolling children into schools. The Louisiana's provisional mandate is like Georgia's affidavit except a few differences. The major difference being that the Louisiana's provisional mandate must be signed by one of the parents. Members of the council felt as though the mandate wasn't effective since some schools required a judge to sign the mandate, thus creating an additional burden on the caregiver. Additionally, members also expressed that some schools complained the mandate would allow for some children to stay with a caregiver to get into a higher performing school.

Ms, Leslie Hill believed it would be wise to get the Superintendent Association and School Board Association on board in addition to the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board. The logic was that if we bring these stakeholders together the council could recommend a bipartisan solution.

Effects of grandparents parenting during COVID-19

Jarwanda Harris expressed frustrations on a lack of centralized IT assistance for kinship care providers. Ms. Leslie Hill provided feedback stating that every school district is different in its'd handling of IT problems. Michael Stuart stated that in some district's faculty members are designated as the IT specialist and that additional resources could typically be found on a school's homepage.

Ms. Brenda stated that IEP is not yet available with virtual learning. Ms. Hill expressed that IEP services should still be met as much as possible and that kinship providers should reach out to their school system to resolve this matter.

Michael Stewart stated that his organization will hold a virtual conference on next week. The objective of the virtual conference is to bring families and educators together. The conference will touch on social emotional learning and traumas with virtual learning. The conference is free to the public and partner organizations include EBR schools, ICARE, and counselors. He stressed that family engagement is important now more than ever and the need for parent-teacher collaboration is equally important.

New Recommendations

The Council was informed that at the next meeting members will discuss recommendations for 2021.

CENSUS

The last day to fill out the CENSUS questionnaire has been moved to September 30th. Currently, field operators are going door to door to help individuals complete the questionnaire. As of today, Louisiana has a response rate of 57.9%, individuals can call 1-844-330-2020 or go online to my2020census.gov to complete the questionnaire.

Other Business

Tewabetch asked the council to provide her with additional marketing strategies that can be utilized to draw attention to the free courses that CrossRoads have agreed to provide to grandparents and kinship care providers.

Closing Remarks

September is Kinship Caregiver month

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 a.m.