

**JOIN HANDS FOR CHILDREN**  
**MINUTES FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON SITE SELECTION**  
**AND TRANSITION ISSUES**

**March 18, 2010**

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**Members Present:** Jeanine Livingston, Nancy Sutton, Mark Courtney, Mary-Jeanne Smith, Joe Mienko, Trudy Marcellay, and Tommy Williams (on phone)

**Staff Present:** Julie Dunnington, Melissa Takade, and Benjamin Berres, Partners for Our Children (POC)

**Others:** Gwen Gua, SPIPA/IPAC; Stephanie Lee and Marna Miller, Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP); Irina Sharkova, DSHS/Research Data and Analysis (RDA); Roberta Nestas, Lutheran Community Services; Robin Donart, Maple Star Washington, Carrie Hoon (on phone)

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Committee Co-Chairs Jeanine Livingston and Nancy Sutton conducted the welcome and committee/public introductions.

**First Agenda Item: Criteria Used to Determine Site Selection.**

Jeanine Livingston reviewed criteria to determine site selection. The number needed to get outcomes that meet statutory requirements and appropriate statistical power is approximately 828 children placed out of home (per site). For the draft presentation, percentages were used (28% of caseload in the entire state, per site, half treatment, half comparison).

Jeanine Livingston said Sen. James Hargrove indicated the Legislature would entertain extending the demonstration for a year if, at the end of the first year, WSIPP finds it's not getting the information it needs. A 10% change in outcomes is needed.

Criteria reviewed by the committee include:

- One site must be located on the eastern side of the state. The other site must be located on the western side of the state.
- Neither site must be wholly located in any of the department's administrative regions.

The committee recommendations for additional site selection criteria are:

- 10% change in key outcomes
- 28% of annual statewide caseload (14.25% in treatment and 14.25% in comparison group)
- Encompass rural and urban characteristics in both east and west demonstration sites
- Boundaries must be drawn to fully include or fully exclude tribal land boundaries
- Boundaries must be drawn to fully include or fully exclude office catchment areas
- Boundaries must be both geographically and practically contiguous via roads
- Minority composition of sites need to be proportionate with the approximate minority composition of families being served

The committee recognized Matt Orme of Partners for Our Children and Irina Sharkova of the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division for their hard work on the site selection maps.

There was discussion regarding the disparity between the number of child removals that occur on the east side of the state and the west side of the state. Specifically, was there a possibility that the east side numbers could be smaller for the evaluation? And, is there an assumption that there will be two evaluations rather than one? WSIPP is running on the assumption, based on the language in the current bill, that there must be two evaluations.

There was a question regarding the 10 percent changes in outcomes – what exactly does that mean, and how long would the evaluation period extend if it's readily apparent 10% is or is not being met? The primary concern is for the safety of the child. Marna Miller clarified that the way the demonstration is set up over the 2-year period, WSIPP will be able to pick up quickly if things get very worse. If performance deteriorates in the demonstration sites, Marna Miller stated that WSIPP would promptly speak up. Julie Dunnington also said that we have to report back to the legislature on an ongoing basis and that WSIPP will be part of those updates. Jeanine Livingston said Sen. James Hargrove's statisticians think that will be a larger change in outcomes and that 10 percent is a conservative estimate.

Jeanine Livingston asked for and received committee consensus to move forward with the criteria.

### **Second Agenda Item: Review of information/maps presented at March 10<sup>th</sup> RDA meeting.**

Irina Sharkova reviewed the maps and data for the committee and answered questions. Data were based on the address of the child removal and the address of the child placement.

Transition issues identified, which will be discussed at a later date, include:

- Courtesy supervision and how that would work between DSHS Children's Administration (CA) and the supervising agencies in the demonstrations.
- Case transfer and how/when it happens.
- Any "trump" conditions, such as keeping siblings together if they enter care at different times.
- How tribal-payment-only would work (remain with the state or transfer over with random assignment for payment only).

Mark Courtney suggested the demonstration site should reflect the ethnicity of the families being served by DSHS CA, not for the entire state. Otherwise, those families will be under-sampled. It was noted that some of the racial/ethnic data seemed low for the east side and are not reflective of the cases that DSHS CA has. The information came from 2008 CAMIS data, which is not updated. There is no alternative to the CAMIS data, so the committee must work with the data it has. However, since random assignment is being used within the areas, the point is moot. Mark Courtney cautioned to not pick a scenario that is severely underrepresented.

The committee decided to prioritize the criteria, with the criteria around office, tribal and geographic boundaries to be considered first.

Nancy Sutton asked the committee what they wanted to go forward with for the March 22-23 CWTDC meeting – with recommendations and request for a vote, or descriptions of scenarios being considered and request for feedback. The final selection is due in June. Jeanine Livingston said that some committees, such as Financial Issues, can't go forward with their own work until the site is selected; however, she suggests going to the CWTDC March meeting with scenario options and a request for feedback. The committee concurred.

Based on the criteria and numbers needed for statistical power, the committee adjusted and narrowed down the number of site selection scenarios to two for the east side and two for the west (pending further input from the public and others) – these scenarios are subject to change:

- East Side Scenario A: includes DSHS CA Offices of Ellensburg, Goldendale, Moses Lake, Sunnyside DCFS, Toppenish, Wenatchee, White Salmon and Yakima
- East Side Scenario B: DSHS CA Offices of includes Colville, Ellensburg, Ferry County/Republic, Goldendale, Moses Lake, Omak, Toppenish, Wenatchee, White Salmon and Yakima
- West Side Scenario A: DSHS CA Offices of includes Aberdeen, Olympia DCFS, Pierce West and South Bend
- West Side Scenario B: DSHS CA Offices of includes Bremerton, King West DCFS, Lynnwood and Sky Valley

The co-chairs asked Irina Sharkova to reconfigure the maps to show the preferred scenarios for a presentation to the Transformation Design Committee on March 23.

### **Third Agenda Item: Additional data and information.**

Sutton reviewed the draft March 23 CWTDC presentation for the committee: topics to be covered include a progress update, criteria development, maps of the four preferred site scenarios, and next steps.

It was decided to ask for input from other committee co-chairs regarding the decision timeline and other necessary information, during the monthly co-chair meetings with Asst. Secretary Denise Revels Robinson.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment. Meeting adjourned.