

## Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee

### MINUTES FROM THE JUNE 30, 2009 MEETING

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Committee Members Present: Carleen Anderson, tribal representative; Judge Leonard Costello, Superior Court judge (ret); Mark Courtney, Partners for Our Children; Susan Dreyfus, Secretary for Dept. Social and Health Services (DSHS), co-chair; Nancy Foll, private agency representative; Darcy Hancock, Children's Administration (CA) Division of Licensed Resources; Marian Harris, Racial Disproportionality representative; Carole Holland, governor's designee; Sheila Huber for Steve Hassett, Attorney General designee; Catherine Lanham, foster parent; Jeanine Livingston, Washington Federation of State Employees; Brenda Lopez, birth parent; Mary Meinig, Office of the Family and Children's Ombudsman; Jerry Meninick, tribal representative; Liz Mueller, tribal representative; Ken Nichols, CA regional administrator; Sharon Osborne, private agency representative; Rebecca Peck for the Honorable Henry Cagey, tribal representative; Nancy Sutton, CA regional administrator; Gwendolyn Townsend, private agency representative; Chris Wickham, Superior Court judge.

Committee Members Absent: Mary Armstrong, performance-based contracting expert; Charlotte McCullough, performance-based contracting expert; Maureen McGrath, private agency representative.

Staff Present: Julie Dunnington, Partners for Our Children; Jennifer Strus, Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee; Sydney Forrester, House Early Learning and Children's Services Committee.

Others Present: Rep. Mary Helen Roberts; Rep. Ruth Kagl; Randy Hart, Interim Assistant Secretary for the Children's Administration; Tom Byers, facilitator, Cedar Rivers Group; John Howell, facilitator, Cedar Rivers Group.

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Mark Courtney and Susan Dreyfus gave introductory remarks and described the background and responsibilities of the facilitators.

The Committee members introduced themselves and provided some background about themselves.

Rep. Ruth Kagl, prime sponsor of 2SHB 2106 addressed the Committee. She thanked the committee members for their interest in serving on the committee and assisting the legislature and the Governor in this process. She also thanked those who expressed interest in participating on the Committee and encouraged those who were not selected to attend the meetings. Rep. Kagl said she sees the legislation as having real potential to transform the child welfare system. She explained the major components of the bill and explained that the legislature structured the bill in such a way that there would be a thoughtful process of implementation. The first step in the process is to take the next 18 months to put in place performance-based contracts. Rep. Kagl also explained that there is a strong prevention component to the bill including provisions for early engagement of families and early focus on the needs of children.

Senator Hargrove's letter to the committee was read to the Committee by the facilitator.

Susan Dreyfus addressed the group about building capacity in communities across the state to partner with the Children's Administration to accomplish the tasks required in the legislation. Susan indicated

that the state is in alignment to accomplish this with the legislature invested in having the child welfare system work better, a Governor who wants to see the best things happen for children and families in the state and a university invested in improving the child welfare system.

Susan indicated that the legislation is not about privatization; rather, it's an opportunity to talk about how we can ensure that the money the legislature appropriates for the child welfare system buys the kind of performance that is needed for every child who comes into contact with the system. It is a complex job. As a committee, we need to think broadly about partnership and performance. We can only get the work done in a full, transparent partnership. She encouraged the committee to think about the questions that should be asked and answered in designing the pilot projects. She suggested that the overarching question that should guide all deliberations by the committee is, "Is it good for the child?".

Each Committee member was provided with a To Do List which listed all of the statutorily required responsibilities of the TDC. Mark Courtney went through each item with the Committee. Each Committee member was also provided with a timeline explaining all of the due dates required in the bill. Rep. Roberts suggested adding to the To Do List children of incarcerated parents.

A Committee member asked why the legislation requires CA to reduce the number of contracts it currently has with providers. Rep. Kagi responded that CA currently has about 1800 contracts with providers. She said the legislature had concerns that so many contracts increased the complexity for social workers trying to match their clients with needed services and hold those providers accountable for the services they are to provide.

Another Committee member questioned why the demonstration sites could cross regional boundaries. Randy Hart explained that in order to obtain sufficient numbers to demonstrate the impact of the pilot projects required by the legislation, there had to be the ability to cross regional boundaries. Some regions do not have sufficient population to obtain good numbers. Randy also explained that CA was concerned that if the pilot sites were wholly contained in one region that they would lose staff to other regions. Having the flexibility to cross regional boundaries in selecting the demonstration sites allows CA to maintain staff and more easily manage the preparation of the demonstration sites.

In response to a question about the conversion of current contracts to performance-based contracts, Randy also explained that CA will examine all current contracts to determine if the contracts are appropriate for the conversion to performance-based contracts. Randy indicated that some contracts will not lend themselves to being converted to performance-based contracts and CA will explain the process and its determination to the legislature and this committee. Randy indicated that he sees an opportunity to improve social work practice as part of the conversion in addition to improving CA's business practices. CA will be engaging providers in this conversion and asking for assistance from those who have experience with performance-based contracting. Randy indicated that as the conversion continues, CA will regularly check with the Committee to make sure CA's work in this area is aligned with where the Committee is going.

Susan Dreyfus suggested that the TDC have a discussion about what principles of PBC should be followed. Several members voiced their perspectives:

- In a dependency matter, under the current configuration, when things don't work out, it is difficult to know who to hold accountable

- Are investments in the right place? Look at current contracts and determine if the investment is worth it.
- Should ask consumers if they are satisfied with the services for which CA is contracting on their behalf.
- When determining PBCs should look at the entire family and whether a contractor can provide services to the entire family rather than just discrete members.
- Timeliness of the contract - what may be good for a child if it's not timely for the child's development may not be good the child at all.
- Susan Dreyfus asked whether CA or its partners ever looked at the services that the majority of families served by CA need around which PBCs could be organized? She asked whether this should be a principle that should be included by the group. Susan also indicated that services should not vary much from region to region. There should be a core set of services that are needed in each region and CA can assist private agencies to develop these services across the state.
- In developing core principles, need to talk to parents - they will be very helpful in developing the core services needed.
- Foster children should be consulted as well, especially what they needed to stay out of the system to begin with.
- Contracts should be standardized across the state; contracts should be simplified; use PBCs to obtain data and information from private providers.
- Available services should not drive what CA does; should decide what services are needed for children and their families and then develop PBCs to obtain those services.
- The principles should allow for diverse families and diversity in families.

The facilitators reviewed the Ground Rules with the Committee members. They asked that the members review the rules in preparation for voting to adopt them at the next meeting.

Trudy Marcellay from the Indian Policy and Support Services unit in DSHS explained the history and content of the Centennial Accord, the Millenium Agreement, DSHS Administrative Policy 7.01 as well as other handouts and websites on the Indian Child Welfare Act. Trudy also discussed the Tribal-State Agreement and indicated that the agreement is available on-line at the CA home page. Trudy emphasized the government to government relationship between the tribes and the state.

The facilitators asked each committee member to finish the following sentence: "when my work with the committee is over, my vision of success is . . . . ." A summary of the committee member responses is attached to these notes.

A discussion of the second co-chair ensued and Sharon Osborne nominated Judge Costello; the motion was seconded by Jeanine Livingston. Judge Costello was elected unanimously as the co-chair of the Committee.

There was a discussion of the configuration and use of subcommittees. A number of members indicated that there should be a meeting before September and it was decided that a conference call in August would be scheduled.

Susan Dreyfus asked if there are other voices or perspectives that should be included in the committee's deliberations. Some of the suggestions included youth being served by the child welfare system, birth fathers, others raising children (grandparents and other relatives), social workers, and tribal court

judges. There was also a request to discuss, at a future meeting, plans for reaching out to different stakeholder groups.

A committee member requested that a list of committee members, with contact information, be circulated to the committee. Staff agreed to do so.

The next meeting dates will be the afternoon of September 16, 2009 and all day on September 17, 2009. The meeting will be held in the Sea Tac area at a location to be announced.

The Committee took comments from the public.

# Attachment #1

## Visions of Success

Each committee members was asked to complete the following sentence, “*When my work with the committee is over, my vision of success is...*” The following provides a summary of the members’ comments and separates the statements into those focused on improving the child welfare system and those focused on the Transformation Committee process.

### Visions for System Improvements

- More prevention services. Children and families are served early and we avoid entry into the system.
- Recognize the unique aspects of each community. Leverage our unique communities to improve conditions for children in care-safety, timeliness, accountability.
- Children standing with their own parents is paramount.
- Increase services available for children and families that are culturally appropriate and there is accountability.
- Make sure services are equitable. Dismantle disproportionately in the system.
- Lives are better as measured by the length of time children spend in our system. Children are in our system for a shorter time.
- Create community ownership, responsibility and awareness of child welfare system. Build a permanent coalition to advance children’s causes.
- Identify resources that allow children to be safe, in homes.
- Accountability of roles with clear division of labor.
- Agree on what are positive outcomes for children and families.
- Will take time to find solutions. Establish foundation for next generation. The work becomes an effective framework for the future – stop “shifting in the wind.”
- Create a simpler system.
- Improve the lives of families, children and communities.
- Steady commitment to effective services for all communities throughout state over time.
- Create a smooth transition to a new system.
- Develop a comprehensive system – not work in silos. Create a broad system.
- Determine how to have continuing process improvement.
- Enhance capacity of individual families to provide care for children.
- Confirm a public norm that every child is wanted by their family, welcomed by their community and assured love and safety by both – with support of public and private entities.

- Effective partnership between state and community. Focus on being good stewards of public resources through management of resources and creation of partnerships
- Address developmental needs of children.
- Safety, permanency and well-being are hallmarks of system.

#### Visions for the Transformation Committee Process

- Opportunity for all voices to be heard.
- Consensus and collective ownership of outcomes. Broad consensus committed to working within framework.
- Agree on resources needed – and courage to implement. Do not let economic considerations limit our solutions. Don't let politics get in the way
- Does not create a new forum for political debate.
- Transparent and fair process.
- Not a report that sits on the shelf.