

Child Welfare Transformation Design Committee Suggested Principles

At the June 30th meeting, Secretary Dreyfus requested the committee's suggestions for principles that could guide the Department in converting to performance-based contracts. The following key points emerged from committee discussion.

1. The community's aspirations for child welfare can only be achieved through partnership among state and tribal government agencies, nonprofit service providers, families, foster parents, foster children, law enforcement officials, the courts, and the broader community.
2. The ideas of all groups of stakeholders, including parents, foster parents, and youth who have experienced foster care, should be sought and valued in transforming the system.
3. The transformation process should be transparent to stakeholders and the public through open meetings and the posting of information on the committee Web site.
4. The measures taken to transform the child welfare system should:
 - Reflect a holistic perspective of the needs of children and families.
 - Recognize the diverse factors (such as family poverty) that affect "safety, permanency and well-being."
 - Invest scarce public resources in a thoughtful and strategic way.
 - Emphasize prevention.
 - Build upon the assets provided by current state employees, tribal leaders, community-based service providers, advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders.
 - Reduce the extent to which multiple and constantly changing layers of expectations impede progress.
 - Build the capacity of communities so that core services can be delivered in a consistent manner throughout the state.
 - Hold public staff, contractors, parents, and other stakeholders accountable for timeliness, consistency and communication.

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- Identify and address the causes of disproportionately among ethnic communities and socioeconomic groups.
- Develop strategies to address the challenges – and opportunities – created by the geographic, ethnic, and cultural diversity of our state.
- Build a clear community consensus around a manageable set of system goals and outcomes.
- Provide accountability to the public through performance measures that mark progress toward the desired outcomes.
- Incorporate evidence-based practices in contracting.
- Incorporate the good work that has been done by stakeholders on the needs of children of incarcerated parents.
- Create a sense of community ownership of the system.
- Provide for a smooth transition.
- Reduce the potential for “unintended consequences.”