



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Summary of Ad-hoc Committee Meeting

Ad-hoc Committee:

Race & Equity	1:00 - 2:30 pm
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Date: Wednesday, February 09, 2022

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Facilitators: Sandra McBrayer

Meeting Staff: Jocelyn Núñez, Kayla Iliff

Race & Equity Ad-hoc Committee Summary: 63 attendees took part in the Ad-hoc Committee.

Advisory Members Participating: Kimberly Giardina, Stephen Moore, Adam Reed, Jessica Heldman, Carolyn Griesemer, Ana Espana,

Sandra McBrayer opened the meeting with an introduction poll. While participants completed the poll, Sandra provided a brief overview of the agenda and the purpose of the Ad-hoc committee. Sandra then explained how the meeting was being conducted via the Zoom platform and provided attendees multiple ways to ask questions during the meeting. Lastly, Sandra encouraged participation from all attendees.

Introduction poll results:

- 53% of attendees identified as community members
 - 44% of attendees identified as County of San Diego employees
 - 6% of attendees identified as a current or former foster youth
 - 3% of attendees identified as a former foster parent
 - 0% of attendees identified as a current foster parent
- *note: the poll allowed participants to select all that apply*

III. Child Welfare Services Report

Sandra opened the agenda item and turned it over to Kim Giardina to present on the below data points.

- **African American children in non-English speaking homes**
 - 478 of 494 African American youths were placed in a home that speaks primary or secondary language of the child.
 - 9 African American children were not placed in a home that spoke either the primary or secondary language of the child.
 - 7 cases are still being investigated as language matching was unable to be determined at the time.
- **Questions:**
 - One attended asked for clarification on the above data as it seems relatively low compared to what is being stated in the community.
 - CWS confirmed that this data was accurate and current

- **Trend for petitions by region and ethnicity**
 - Data trends by ethnicity have been fairly consistent (between a 3% range) from fiscal year 2012/2013 to fiscal year 2020/2021.
 - Fiscal year 2020/2021 Data trend by race/ethnicity showed:
 - Central region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, Hispanic then Black individuals.
 - East region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, White, Hispanic, then Black individuals.
 - North Central region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, White, Hispanic, then Black individuals.
 - North Coastal region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, White, Hispanic, then Black individuals.
 - North Inland region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, Hispanic, White, then Black individuals.
 - North Central region has the highest percentage of petitions by race in the following order, Hispanic, White, then Black.
- **Questions:**
 - Can we get data showing the region the child was removed from and what region they were placed in?
 - Kim stated CWS is currently looking into this data and is sorting through what placement they want to classify as the placement (i.e. Is it the child's first placement or the longest placement?)
 - One attendee stated we need to start looking at solutions to address the number of petitions.
 - Another attendee expressed their concerns on the rising number of Hispanic cases.
- **Denials of relative care placements for African American children**
 - Of the RFA Denials in 2020, 19% of the denials were for African American individuals.
 - Of the RFA relative denials for 2020, 14% of the denials were for African American individuals.
- **Questions:**
 - Can we get the number of African American individuals that applied for RFA?
 - Unfortunately, prior to this fiscal year that data is not available. Moving forward CWS will have this data, fiscal year 2021/2022 will be the first full year of data.
 - Is it possible to provide definitions for the denial reasons so that the community can get a better idea of why RFA's are being denied?
 - What are the methods classes are being held for RFA?
 - CWS stated all classes are held virtual.
 - This is a concern as there is a large digital divide in the African American communities. How is the county looking at addressing this?
 - CWS staff responded and stated this is a strategy that the Ad-Hoc committee should focus on.
 - If an individual's application was denied that now wouldn't be under the new guidelines can we reopen that case if the child still needs a placement?
 - Yes, if they re-apply the case can be reopened.
 - Is there a way to outreach to those families that got denied and would now be approved?
 - CWS stated they are going to look into it and see how many cases that applies to.

I.V. S.B 354 Relative Care

Kim opened the agenda item and turned it over to Veronica Sarabia.

- Overview of SB 354
 - Removes barriers for relative placements
 - Expands the list of crimes for which criminal record exemptions may be granted.
 - Changes the criminal record exemption process during the Resource Family Approval (RFA) process.
 - Provides more discretion to granting criminal record exemptions for relatives.
 - Permits the juvenile court to order emergency or court ordered placements regardless of a criminal exemption or RFA status.
 - Allows discretion to grant a criminal record exemption for relatives with crimes listed on the state, federal, or five-year ban list, if:
 - It will be a child specific placement
 - The relative is found to be of good character
 - No misdemeanors within the last three years
 - No felony convictions within last five years for specific crimes.
 - Note: CWS is still awaiting further guidance from the state on this bill.
 - This conversation will continue with the Ad-Hoc committee as CWS gets further guidance on the legislation (i.e. what the expectations to crimes?).
- Questions:
 - What is the character requirement now?
 - If someone is applying for an exception, they will need to fill out a criminal records statement with the state, provide three references, and court documents or police reports.
 - Are the individuals that are reading the court documents and or police reports have specific training?
 - Yes, they receive training and look at the person as a whole by having direct conversations with them.

V. Goal for Ad-Hoc Committee – Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Disparities in CWS – Moving forward

- Data Measurements
 1. Allegations of Abuse or Neglect
 2. Substantiated Allegations of Abuse or Neglect
 3. Entries into Foster Care
 4. Children in Out of Home Care
 5. Kin Placement
 6. Reunification

Sandra provided an overview of the above data measurements that were presented at the last meeting. Sandra then proposed several questions to the group.

- Does this committee want to take one or two of these at a time to flush out ideas to give to CWS?
- How do we want to move forward with the six different data measurements?
- Discussion:
 - Provide this information to the community to get recommendations from the community members involved.
 - Focus on providers and hotline calls to address the first two data measurements.

- The biggest focus should be prevention/community support services, which includes resources, outreach, and community engagement.
 - How do we support families before they even get into the system?
- Look at item one and three together. Focus on providing outreach outside the Monday to Friday, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm timeframe.
 - Look at innovative ways to reach families, such as providing a table at a laundromat.
 - Focus on mandated reporting trainings as there has been a decrease in the number of trainings since the pandemic.
- We should focus on what do we need to do to strengthen families.
 - Ask the community what they need to get stronger.
 - The data will come as a result of the positive goals we have.

Next Meeting: April 13, 2022 1:00 pm

Sandra concluded the meeting by providing a meeting review.

- Review the denials of relative care placements for African American children
 - Identify the number of African American individuals that have applied for relative care placements.
 - Provide definitions for denial categories.
- Clarification on S.B. 354 on the crimes that are and are not allowable.
- Goal: Eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in CWS
 - Discuss focusing on strengthening families and what can be done to support them.
 - Discuss transitioning from a mandated reporter to a mandated supporter.