



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Child and Family Strengthening
Advisory Board
Minutes of September 10, 2021

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

NORA VARGAS
First District

JOEL ANDERSON
Second District

TERRA LAWSON-REMER
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

Members Present:

Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor Nora Vargas, County Board of Supervisors
Aimee Zeitz, District 2 Appointee
Alethea Arguilez, First 5 San Diego
Carolyn Griesemer, Children's Legal Services of San Diego
Stephen Moore, Voices for Children, Inc.
Judge Ana España, Juvenile Court
Kimberly Giardina, Child Welfare Services
Nick Macchione, County Health and Human Service Agency
Simone Hidds-Monroe, San Pasqual Academy
Patty Boles, Straight from the Heart, Inc.
Joy Singleton, District 3 Appointee
Jeff Wiemann, Foster Family Agency
Mara Madrigal-Weiss, San Diego County Office of Education
Melissa Villagomez, Former Foster Youth
Sandy Mueller, Children's Health Care Professional
Scott Huizar, County Probation Department

Members Not Present:

Crystal Irving, Child Welfare Services, Protective Services
Jessica Heldman, Polinsky Children's Center
Cheryl Rode, San Diego Center for Children
Maddy Kilkenny, District 5 Appointee
Adam Reed, Dependency Legal Services
Sade Burrell, Former Foster Youth

Staff Present:

Stephanie Gioia, Supervisor Nathan Fletcher's Office
Ruth Martin, Supervisor Nora Vargas' Office
Kyle Sand, County Counsel
Sandra McBrayer, The Children's Initiative
Jocelyn Nuñez, County Health and Human Services Agency
Kayla Iliff, County Department of Human Resource

1) Welcome and Introduction

- Supervisor Vargas brought the meeting to order at 9:01 am and Sandra McBrayer introduced Aimee Zeitz, the Advisory Board's newest member. Sandra then conducted roll call for the Advisory Board.
- A quorum was present

2) Public Comment

- Supervisor Vargas asked if any of the public members wished to address the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the public asked why the Race & Equity Ad-hoc committee is not on the agenda.
 - Several members of the public of the public stated the importance of having the Race & Equity Ad-hoc committee discussed at very meeting.

3) San Pasqual Academy

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Sandra to provide an update.
 - The County of San Diego has been be working with the Children's Initiative and Harder+Company to conduct focus groups with various stakeholders to re-imagine San Pasqual Academy.
 - Focus groups will include former SPA alum, court partners, community partners, SPA staff and partner staff, SPA advisory members, and other relevant stakeholders.
 - The findings from the focus group will be presented to the Board of

Supervisors in December and will be brought back to this group during the November meeting.

- Supervisor Vargas opened the item to public comment.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any other comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - A member of the Advisory Board asked for an update on the current number of youths at the SPA campus.
 - Kim shared there are currently 43 youth on campus.

4) Update on the Foster Youth Subcommittee – September 09, 2021

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item asked Simone Hidds-Monroe to provide an update.
 - Simone provided a brief update on the status of the Reimaging SPA Survey.
- Supervisor Vargas called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - There were no member comments.

5) Family Urgent Response System (FURS) Presentation

- Supervisor Vargas introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Kim Giardina. Kim then introduced Daphyne Watson and Marrisa Simmons from Mental Health America (MHA) San Diego.
 - Daphyne and Marrisa provided an overview of FURS, which included a background on the referral process and response process.
 - Family Urgent Response System is a statewide, crisis response for foster youth, former foster youth, and caregivers.
 - FURS utilizes a statewide hotline that youth and caregivers can call whenever there is a crisis in their home.
 - The statewide hotline will triage the call and determine if an in-person response is needed. If it is, they refer the call to MHA so they can provide a local in-person response.
 - MHA will de-escalate the immediate crisis and link the family to any ongoing services that might be needed.
- Supervisor Vargas called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Vargas requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the advisory board asked to see current statistics on referrals and response time.
 - One member of the public suggested to provide all the schools with information on FURS.
- Supervisor Vargas concluded the agenda item by stating she would like to see data for the first 6 months of utilization to see who is utilizing the system and how can we better support this program.

6) Child Welfare Services, Director's Report

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and asked Kim Giardina to provide a Director's Report.
 - Kim gave an update on Family First, a new piece of Federal legislation that provides new funding for prevention services for substance use, mental health, in-home

parenting, and kinship navigation. FFPSA also requires changes to congregate care so that more children/youth are placed in a family like setting.

- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested comments from members of the Advisory Board.
 - One member of the Advisory Board stated it would be good for FAYCES to be a voice at the federal level.

7) Approval of Recommendations from Subcommittees

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the agenda item and turned it over to Sandra McBrayer. Sandra provided an overview of the Subcommittees and turned it over to Kim Giardina to review the recommendations.
 - Workforce Development Recommendations
 - Completed – Implement a long-term STS-specific intervention for supervisors and caseworkers.
 - Child & Family Services
 - Completed–Ongoing – Child’s right to be present at court hearings
 - Placement of Sibling Sets Together
 - Completed–Ongoing – Attempt to keep homes that can accept multiple children free until they can be filled by sibling sets, rather than placing multiple individual children in those homes
 - Completed–Ongoing - Keep sibling sets at Polinsky Children’s Center longer than 10 days, if necessary, in order to facilitate sibling sets being placed together
 - Completed - Ask Child Welfare policy experts to review the Policy Manual and include directives to case-carrying social workers of the requirements of WIC 16002 and WIC 306.5 as needed in policies related to placement and visitation
 - Completed–Ongoing - Make a referral to the Promises2Kids Camp Connect program to ensure quality visitation for the children if there is no option other than to split up a sibling set
 - Resource Family Approval
 - Completed–Ongoing – Develop a responsive system of training for resource families that identifies, prepares, and delivers ongoing trauma-informed training at the time needed in relation to the development of the children in their care
 - Completed - Investigate the use of a psychological evaluation tool to improve the speed and quality of the written family evaluation
 - Completed - Develop a process to determine which relative family member to select for the RFA approval process when multiple relatives have been identified and express interest in caring for the child(ren)
 - Completed - Establish a CWS unit focused on providing same day/after hours (24/7) responsive support to caregivers
 - Organizational Structure Recommendations
 - Completed - Review and update all vendor contracts to ensure alignment with the requirements of CCR/RFA
- Supervisor Fletcher called for any public comment on this item.
 - No public comments were requested.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested any comments from members of the Advisory Board.

- Several members of the Advisory Board discussed possible resolutions to the issue of siblings being separated.
- Supervisor Fletcher made a motion to approve the recommendations. 2nd by Aimee Zeitz.
 - Motion passed with all members voting I.
- Sandra shared at the last subcommittee meetings the groups have decided to sunset the Workforce Development and Organization Structure subcommittee.
- Supervisor Fletcher asked how many recommendations have been completed.
 - Kim shared 81 of the 88 recommendations have been approved by the advisory board. All recommendations will be completed by the next advisory board meeting in November.
- With that being said Supervisor Fletcher stated we need to start thinking how we are advancing the interest of our children and families and focusing on prevention efforts.

8) Advisory Board Member Updates

- Supervisor Fletcher opened the floor to members with updates.
 - Patty shared her organization has been given funding for extra curriculum activities for youth. Please contact Patty if you have any ideas for this funding.
 - Kim shared Margo Fudge will be leaving the County of San Diego.

9) Adjournment

- Supervisor Fletcher closed the meeting.

Next Meeting:

- November 12, 2021

Distributed:

- Meeting Agenda
- FURS Presentation
- Recommendations of Subcommittees

Meeting minutes were submitted by Jocelyn Nunez. Please call Jocelyn Nunez at (619) 550-8815 if you have corrections or suggested revisions. She may also be contacted for agenda items or general information.

