



**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**  
*Child and Family Strengthening*  
*Advisory Board*  
**Minutes of January 10, 2020**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

GREG COX  
First District

DIANNE JACOB  
Second District

KRISTIN GASPAR  
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER  
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND  
Fifth District

**Members Present:**

Supervisor Greg Cox, County Board of Supervisors  
Supervisor Nathan Fletcher, County Board of Supervisors  
Judge Kimberlee Lagotta, Juvenile Court  
Alethea Arguilez, First 5 San Diego  
Crystal Irving, Protective Services  
Sarah Pauter, Phenomenal Families  
Meredith Riffel, District 2 Appointee  
Adam Reed, Dependency Legal Services  
Carolyn Griesemer, Children's Legal Services of San Diego  
Stephen Moore, Voices for Children, Inc.  
Jeff Weimann, Angels Foster Family Network  
Cheryl Rode, San Diego Center for Children  
Kimberly Giardina, Child Welfare Services  
Nick Macchione, County Health and Human Service Agency  
Maddy Kilkenny, District 5 Appointee  
Suzanne Starling, Chadwick Center for Children and Families  
Chief Adolfo Gonzales, County Probation Department  
Sade Burrell, Former Foster Youth  
Melissa Villagomez, Former Foster Youth  
Simone Hidds-Monroe, San Pasqual Academy  
Jessica Heldman, AB & Jessie Polinsky Children's Center

**Members Not Present:**

Dr. Paul Gothold, San Diego County Office of Education  
Armand King, Paving Great Futures  
Patty Boles, Straight from the Heart, Inc.

**Staff Present:**

Stephanie Gioia, Supervisor Nathan Fletcher's Office  
Khea Pollard, Supervisor Greg Cox's Office  
Kyle Sand, County Counsel  
Sandra McBrayer, The Children's Initiative  
Sarah Rafi, County Health and Human Services Agency  
Rachel Weber, County Department of Human Resources

**1) Welcome and Introduction**

- Supervisor Cox brought the meeting to order at 9:02 AM. Advisory Board members did roll call.

**2) Public comment**

- Two members of the public addressed the Advisory Board.
  - A member of the public raised concern and frustration regarding the enrollment numbers at San Pasqual Academy. The member of the public advocated for housing for those in substance abuse programs and spoke of the lack of funding in the southeast population.
  - A second member of the public questioned the data presentation from Dr. Webster. She inquired about what happens with unsubstantiated cases in Child Welfare Services.
    - Sandra McBrayer responded that the purpose of the presentation was to demonstrate what's possible on the data site. There were no conclusions in Dr. Webster's report.
    - Kim Giardina shared that a recent board letter that was approved by the Board of Supervisors was in support of a multidisciplinary team for phone calls that come through on the Child Welfare Services hotline. Unsubstantiated phone calls are now being forwarded to the 211 call center so they can be assessed for other types of services which may be needed.
    - Sandra McBrayer requested the speaker write her questions down to be shared with Dr. Webster for response.

- County Counsel reminded the Advisory Board that extended discussion in response to public comment should be limited.
- Supervisor Cox thanked Joan Scott and the Friends of San Pasqual Academy for their role in the success of San Pasqual. Supervisor Cox confirmed that the declining enrollment is a concern and shared that the County is doing what can be done to address the concern. Supervisor Cox shared that the County is exploring options and making this a high priority.

### **3) Approval of the Statement of Proceedings/Minutes for the meeting of November 22, 2019**

- Supervisor Fletcher called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2019 meeting, Maddy Kilkenny moved to approve, Nick Macchione seconded the motion, with all members present voting in favor.

### **4) Subcommittee Updates**

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the work of the subcommittees and turned the update over to Sandra McBrayer.
- Sandra McBrayer shared that while the subcommittees had a robust agenda, not all agenda items were addressed. Sandra explained that the conversation was vast on the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). Sandra shared that the meeting materials for today's meeting contain the minutes from the subcommittee meetings as well as the CCR presentation from Kim Giardina.
  - **Workforce Development**
    - There was deep conversation regarding how Child Welfare Services makes certain our school liaisons are working in partnership with Child Welfare Services staff.
    - Members questioned how schools are notified when children enter the system and what the support for the children looks like.
  - **Child and Family Services**
    - The conversation centered around emergency shelters and the limits on timeframes. A former foster youth member requested the Advisory Board look into how to request an exception to the ten-day timeline for sibling sets.
      - Is there a way to lobby for state regulations to be modified to say sibling sets should be another exception to the 10-day limit?
      - Sandra McBrayer invited Simone Hidds-Monroe to share her experience.
      - Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that she advocates for youth to be included in the conversation rather than decisions being made solely based on policy.
      - Supervisor Fletcher shared his commitment to figuring out what changes need to happen with the state in order to make the change locally.
      - Carolyn Griesemer shared that she may have a contact to help facilitate the change.
      - Kim Giardina agreed to research what will be required to move forward.
- Supervisor Fletcher allowed opportunity for questions or comments, thanked the subcommittees, and reminded members of the public that all subcommittees are open to anyone interested in attending.

## 5) Child Welfare Data

### A) University California Berkley-California Welfare Indicators Project

- Supervisor Cox introduced the UC Berkley presentation and turned the update over to Sandra McBrayer.
- Sandra McBrayer shared that the University California Berkley-California Welfare Indicators Project was brought to the Advisory Board at the request of a Board member at the September 13, 2019 Advisory Board meeting. Sandra explained that the Advisory Board should look at if the County needs to pursue legislation that involves making sure data between the different entities is shared in a way that is beneficial.
- Sarah Pauter commented that one of the downsides of the continued efforts to have more data sharing between entities is that some of the data that is available now will be lost.
- Sandra McBrayer suggested that the subcommittees work to come up with recommendations on what kind of fix is needed (policy, legislation, etc.) to bring back to the full Advisory Board at a future meeting.
- Nick Macchione shared on the importance of not losing sight of Housing and Community Development's role. Housing is in the capability of the state. Nick encouraged the Board to look at legislation to promote housing. Nick shared that San Diego would love to be a pilot to help the state understand how the County uses this type of data to discern the needs of the children and youth.

### B) San Diego County Child Welfare Data Book

- Supervisor Cox introduced Kim Giardina and shared that at the last meeting of the Advisory Board, there was discussion around the importance of more transparent data sharing between Child Welfare Services and the Public.
- Kim Giardina explained that Child Welfare Services has been working on developing a data book that will be available to the public on Child Welfare Service's website. The book will focus on key data points in Child Welfare Services, from calls to the hotline, following the caseload timeline. Child Welfare Services is focused on telling a story rather than just providing numbers. Child Welfare Services is working with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency in conjunction with the County's IT systems to be very user friendly. The intent is to have the data book operational by the end of the current fiscal year. Kim will continue to provide updates to the Advisory Board.
- Supervisor Cox invited members to ask questions of Kim Giardina or Sandra McBrayer.
  - Stephen Moore questioned if there is any information on the data that's available through the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) and when it might be available to utilize.
  - Kim Giardina shared that the State did build a tool with CANS in the new statewide database called CANS Cares. The tool only allows for input and doesn't allow for extracting of data. Child Welfare Services is exploring other software options that could be used. Child Welfare Services had to wait to see what was available to use from the State and has since determined nothing is available and is now looking at what can be done locally.

## 6) Upcoming Board Letters

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced agenda item six, upcoming board letters, and turned the item over to Kim Giardina.
  - Kim Giardina shared that the item was follow-up from a previous meeting. The programs are currently part of one contract. In March of 2019, the Board of

Supervisors approved separating the two programs out into two separate contracts. Kim explained that the board letter coming forward is requesting a four-month extension of the existing contract to allow more time to implement the two separate contracts.

## **7) Title IV-E Waiver Presentation – Dr. Elizabeth Harris**

- Supervisor Cox introduced agenda item seven and explained that the Title IV-E Waiver is not being extended by the federal government but, instead, transitioning to the Family First Prevention Services Act. Due to many inquiries on the impact of not extending the Title IV-E Waiver, the Board brought Dr. Elizabeth Harris to address the Board and Community.
  - Kim Giardina introduced Dr. Elizabeth Harris and shared her bio (Attachment A)
  - Dr. Elizabeth Harris presented on the Title IV-E Waiver (Attachment B)
  - Dr. Harris inquired if the Board had any questions on the information she shared in her presentation.
    - Supervisor Fletcher asked how Child Welfare Services can continue to provide the necessary services with the Title IV-E Waiver funding going away.
    - Dr. Harris turned to Kim Giardina to confirm how Child Welfare Services will use the ongoing funding that went into effect in December of 2019.
    - Kim Giardina spoke about the path forward with the Family First Transition Act. Kim explained that the Transition Act allows Child Welfare Services to maintain 90% of it's Waiver funding this fiscal year and 75% of the Waiver funding next fiscal year until being fully transitioned into the new way of funding from the federal government.
    - Child Welfare Services is actively preparing for how they will move forward with the funding under the Family First Prevention Services Act.
    - One challenge is that the new source of funding only pays for prevention services in the areas of mental health, substance abuse, and in-home parenting.
    - Kim Giardina explained that while there are a lot of quality programs in San Diego, the programs that can be funded using the Family First Prevention Services Act have to meet certain evidence based criteria. There is also a federal clearing house that is researching a number of programs and deciding which will qualify to be paid for under the new funding source. Kim shared that there are currently 11 approved programs.
    - Child Welfare Services is going to begin a series of stakeholder sessions this year to make sure they are hearing from everyone on what San Diego really needs and how to best prepare for the Family First Prevention Services Act which must be implemented by October 2021.
    - Nick Macchione added to Kim Giardina's comments that there will be a funding gap and the Agency is taking a hard look across the entire Health and Human Services Agency, including Probation. The Agency is also looking across mental health, home visitation programs, and First Five Commission. The Agency is having to rethinking some of its programs to support the evidence-based interventions that have driven results. The Agency is working feverishly to figure out how to narrow if not close the funding gap.
    - Supervisor Fletcher questioned if it's possible to assess what the gap is.
    - Kim Giardina confirmed that it's possible and Child Welfare Services is working on the number now.

- Maddy Kilkenny asked why there was a switch from the Title IV-E Waiver to the Family First Prevention Services Act.
- Dr. Harris responded with her opinion that because not all States opted into the waiver project and that advocates of the Family First Prevention Services Act thought the new program would create a fairer distribution of funding.
- Nick Macchione added that Child Welfare Services were able to meet the targets of the Title IV-E Waiver but were also able to reinvest the savings from the waiver program because of how Child Welfare Services implemented the Waiver program in San Diego, which is why losing the Waiver program is so negative for the community.
- Maddy Kilkenny requested to know if the 11 approved programs were tested by race and gender.
- Dr. Harris confirmed that all programs were tested by race, gender, and age but these are not the main criteria.
- Kim Giardina shared that this is one of the biggest concerns of agencies. There is concern that the clearing house will not take into consideration the needs of the different populations being served.
- Jessica Heldman mentioned the two optional interventions that San Diego put into practice, the Permanent Connections and Family Visit Coaching, and questioned whether there were other interventions beyond those two that San Diego used the Waiver fund for.
- Kim Giardina shared that some funding was augmented to improve developmental screening and enhancement programs for children under six and there were some funding increases for community services for families.
- Maddy Kilkenny proposed that from the results seen, Child and Family Services was able to create a nexus between the programs and the success of San Diego.
- Dr. Harris explained that the results did not show that there was a nexus between the programs and success as easily as she'd have liked. Safety-organized practices is a system level change intended to impact every child, family, and social worker. There's no control group in San Diego so Dr. Harris couldn't speak to Maddy's exact question.
- Jeff Weimann requested to know if Dr. Harris' analysis considered the impact the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) had on the outcomes.
- Dr. Harris explained that the analysis considered the impact of the CCR on outcomes and believed it is difficult to confirm what affect the CCR had on each individual county.
- Jeff Weimann inquired about whether the research would continue in order to see the changes between the Waiver and Families First.
- Dr. Harris agreed that it is necessary to monitor the transition but that the CA Department of Social Services has not funded the research going forward.
- Jeff Weimann asked Dr. Harris if the analysis took into account the volatility in funding in each county prior to the Waiver, during the Waiver, and after the Waiver.
- Dr. Harris shared that, yes, it was looked at and there is a full cost study component, but she is not an expert on cost study.
- Carolyn Griesemer questioned if there was an average length of time for programs to get into the clearing house.

- Dr. Harris explained that the clearing house hasn't been around for very long so it's difficult to predict how long it will take in the future. It's an incredibly complex process.
    - Adam Reed asked Kim Giardina if it was clear that the state would be opting into the Family First Act.
    - Kim Giardina shared that yes, the state is going to opt in. Kim explained that there are eight parts to the act and part one is the part that allows the County to opt in. The County must be in compliance with all the other regulations, especially the ones around part four of the act.
  - Crystal Irving commented that while equal results for all children appears to be a good thing, it's not necessarily positive when Child Welfare Services is consistently dealing with disproportionality in the system. Crystal questioned the parenting courses and if they are trauma informed. Finally, Crystal wanted to see the County be progressive on how they conduct preventions from the start.
  - Maddy Kilkenny suggested it would be helpful to learn what's going away and where we can improve.
  - Supervisor Fletcher proposed two recommendations:
    - Determine how to triage the damage that will come locally from the federal policy, whether it's funding or policies.
    - Continue to make sure the County advocates with the federal government to fight to lessen the negative impact of losing the Title IV-E Waiver funding.
  - Alethea shared that this is a great time to look at the systems that have been in place over the years through First 5 Commission. Alethea expressed that this is a tremendous opportunity to leverage the resources we have throughout the County. Alethea would like to come to the Board to present some of the working models in place today.
  - Nick Macchione explained that it's critical we look at wrap around services that are going to be lost. These services will impact the cross over youth in our Probation Department.
  - Adolfo Gonzales shared that Probation doesn't want to lose the progress that's been made due to loss of funding.
  - Sade Burrell commented on the importance of words and tones in different cultures. She wanted to make sure families in the system aren't being asked to change who they are as a person because that may be stripping them of their culture. She encouraged the Board to seek ways to coach in a way that doesn't change a family's culture.
- Supervisor Cox invited the public speaker to the podium.
  - A member of the public requested clarification on the percent reduction in foster care for African American children. She was also interested in seeing the type of questions that were asked to gauge the parents and whether they are culturally competent.
    - Dr. Harris shared that there was about a 38% reduction in foster care for African American children. Dr. Harris confirmed she would be able to share the information on the questions that were asked to gauge the parents.
  - Sarah Pauter reminded the Board and public that the Title IV-E Waiver funding was going away regardless of the new Family First Prevention Services Act. The Act was implemented in order to salvage some of the funding being lost.

## 8) Advisory Board Member Updates

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced agenda item eight and turned the item over to Kim Giardina to share Child Welfare Services updates.
  - Kim Giardina shared that the multidisciplinary team board letter was approved and she will be sharing an update on the program at the February Board of Supervisors meeting. She shared that Child Welfare Services is working jointly with other partners and coming back to the Board of Supervisors with updates regarding the Strong Families Thriving Communities Project and some recommendations about how to carry that work forward. Kim updated the Board on crisis response teams for caregivers—there is new legislation that passed and requires the County to develop a family urgent response system. Kim explained that ideas are being tested and she will continue to provide the Board with updates on the program. Kim also let the Board know they all received an updated Child Welfare Services organizational chart.
  - Alethea Arguilez shared that United Way First 5 and First 5 San Diego will be cohosting a 2020 Census event focusing on outreach to families with children 0-5. An Eventbrite will be sent to the Board and list serve.
  - Carolyn Griesemer stated that one of the positives coming out of D.C. is a new regulation change—Title IV funding can now be drawn down for legal services for children and parents, not just County Counsel.
  - Jessica Heldman asked Kim Giardina for additional information regarding the hotline multidisciplinary team. She would like to know if there is a process for tracking what 211 does with those contacts.
    - Kim Giardina shared that Child Welfare Services has contracted a full evaluation of the program and will be monitoring the results from the Child Welfare Services and 211 data.
    - Maddy Kilkenny questioned if part of the evaluation is being able to assess the users' experience with 211.
      - Sandra McBrayer shared that 211 has a built-in mechanism to do spot checks on not only the reference to the service made but whether the caller received the service provided and what was the quality of service they experienced across the board.
      - Dr. Harris shared that there is an interview component to talking to the families, so yes, there is a way to assess user experience with 211.
  - Sandra McBrayer informed the Board and public that the Census Eventbrite would be sent out. She shared that the report from Dr. Harris will be emailed to the Board and list serve, as well as added to the Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board website. A future agenda item for the subcommittee meetings will be conversation on Title IV-E Waiver.
  - Crystal Irving took a moment to honor Bryce Gowdy and his family.
  - Sandra McBrayer reminded the Board and public that there was a letter in their packets under communications received. The letter was from SAY San Diego and outlines information they felt was misrepresented at a previous Board meeting.

## 9) Adjournment

- Supervisor Cox announced that the January meeting was Judge Kimberlee Lagotta's last meeting serving on the board. He thanked Judge Lagotta for all her work with the Board and her service in Juvenile Court.
- Judge Lagotta thanked Supervisor Cox and Fletcher for their leadership and shared that it was an honor to be able to serve on the Advisory Board.

- Supervisor Fletcher reiterated Supervisor Cox's thanks to Judge Lagotta.
- Supervisor Cox would like to see 211 come present to the Board at a future meeting.
- Kim Giardina will report back to the Board on seeking an exception to sibling sets being exempt from the 10-day limit at Polinsky.
- Sarah Pauter will work with the subcommittees on developing recommendations on state level data collection and sharing.
- Supervisor Cox invited the Board and public to attend the State of the County on February 19, 2020 at 6:30 PM on the USS Midway.
- Supervisor Cox reminded the Board and public that the upcoming subcommittee meetings are on February 27, 2020 at the County Operations Center.
- Supervisor Cox adjourned the meeting at 10:44 AM.

**Next Meeting:**

- March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Distributed:**

- Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of November 22, 2019 Meeting
- Summary of December 19, 2019 Subcommittee Meetings
- Continuum of Care Reform Presentation
- Continuum of Care Reform Handout
- January 28, 2020 Board Letter to Extend Child Welfare Services Contract
- Biography of Dr. Elizabeth Harris
- Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration Project Presentation
- Updated Child Welfare Services Organizational Chart
- Communications Received – Letter from SAY San Diego

Meeting minutes were submitted by Rachel Weber. Please call her at (619) 531-5123 if you have corrections or suggested revisions. She may also be contacted for agenda items or general information.