



AGENDA ITEM #3

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Minutes of November 22, 2019

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
Patty Boles, Straight from the Heart, Inc.
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
Armand King, Paving Great Futures
Suzanne Starling, Chadwick Center for Children and Families
Dr. Paul Gothold, San Diego County Office of Education
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:

Chief Adolfo Gonzales, County Probation Department

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 3:03 PM and the Advisory Board members did roll call.

2) Public comment

- Two members of the public addressed the Advisory Board.
 - A member of the public requested the Advisory Board address disproportionality in the Child Welfare Services landscape.
 - Supervisor Fletcher requested the public member speak with Sandra McBrayer following the meeting to look at bringing the item forward at a future meeting of the Advisory Board.
 - An additional member of the public reiterated the previous speakers request for the need to address disproportionality in the African American population and requested the Board support the Clinton Health Matters Initiative.
 - Supervisor Cox commented that he had the opportunity several years back to meet with President Clinton and the Clinton Health Matters Initiative and was successful in getting a three-year commitment from them. He shared that the San Diego Foundation is wrapping up their work on the project and he intends to have recommendations brought forward to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

3) Approval of the Statement of Proceedings/Minutes for the meeting of September 13, 2019

- Supervisor Fletcher called for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2019 meeting, Nick Macchione moved to approve, Maddy Kilkenny 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 Carolyn Griesemer for the Workforce Development subcommittee.
 - **Workforce Development**
 - Carolyn Griesemer provided comment on the Workforce Development subcommittee and shared that the Child Welfare Services Director, Kim Giardina, presented the status of four of the Child Welfare Service Review Working Group recommendations.
 - Carolyn Griesemer noted that there was robust conversation on recommendation number five: Provide access to licensed therapists throughout the regions who can provide ongoing support to workers and supervisors. Subcommittee members were interested in how the additional staff psychologists will be utilized. There was additional discussion on the remaining hiring needed in Child Welfare Services and the subcommittee shared their support for Kim Giardina and expressed their understanding of the process and how mindful Kim needs to be during the process.
 - An additional recommendation from the subcommittee included exploring ways to have Child Welfare Services Case Workers and resource families conduct presentations together in order to best serve the families.
 - Supervisor Fletcher allowed opportunity for questions or comments and then turned the update over to Jeff Weimann for the Organizational Structure subcommittee.
 - **Organizational Structure**
 - Jeff Weimann provided comment on the Organizational Structure subcommittee and shared that Child Welfare Services Director, Kim Giardina, presented the status of ten of the Child Welfare Service Review Working Group recommendations.
 - Jeff Weimann shared that there was a lot of discussion on three of the recommendations.
 - Recommendation number 12: Establish the position of the Chief of Social Work, reporting to the Director of CWS, who is focused on the transparent and unified delivery of social work practice across all Health and Human Services Agency regions.
 - Jeff Weimann shared that the recommendation has been implemented and the position was adapted as Director of Practice. The dialogue of the subcommittee focused on whether the new position would help make uniform practices throughout the regions.
 - Recommendation number 18: Determine as quickly as possible, the potential fiscal impact of the Title IV-E project ending.
 - Jeff Weimann confirmed that Child Welfare Services is exploring one-time fixes for the funding.
 - Recommendation number 30: The County must immediately leverage both internal and external technology resources to adopt/develop an RFA Applicant Management System.

- Jeff Weimann shared that Child Welfare Services is looking at implementing a new platform and, as a subcommittee, there was discussion on how to eliminate the delay brought on by the procurement process.
- Supervisor Fletcher allowed opportunity for questions or comments and then turned the update over to Crystal Irving for the Child and Family Services subcommittee.
 - **Child and Family Services**
 - Crystal Irving walked the Advisory Board through the recommendations that Kim Giardina provided an update for.
 - Recommendation number three: CWS to conduct quarterly audits of “unfounded” findings to ensure sufficient investigations are being conducted and to identify any training needs of this unit’s workers.
 - Crystal Irving expressed the subcommittee concerns for how these trends are being identified and shared with staff.
 - Crystal Irving also shared about the rich conversation on disproportionality and discussion on what will happen when an incorrect decision is made – what the process will look like.
 - Recommendation number one: Immediately take steps to ensure that children are readily able to attend their own court hearings.
 - Crystal Irving shared that the subcommittee discussed how we prepare children and youth for court. Additionally, the group spent time discussing how to make the courts as trauma-informed as possible and ways to empower children and youth while at court. Crystal also shared that the Bill of Rights for youth is in the process of being updated. The subcommittee wants to make certain Court staff are being provided trauma-informed trainings. A member of the subcommittee brought to light that some youth were prevented from attending court as a form of punishment. As a subcommittee, all in attendance agreed this was inappropriate and should never happen.
 - Recommendation number two: Create a special Emergency Response Unit to investigate reports of maltreatment while in care. This unit would be independent of regional case carrying social workers, have specialized training in interviewing children, and conduct independent investigations of hotline referrals when those referrals pertain to dependent children.
 - Crystal Irving informed the Advisory Board that the unit will launch in January of 2020. Crystal discussed the emergency response unit with coworkers and there is concern that the unit will not properly address personal rights violations.
 - An Advisory Board member expressed his concern for the eye-opening information shared on youth being unable to attend court as a form of punishment. He shared that he feels strongly about the Advisory Board investigating this practice.
- Sandra McBrayer requested Carolyn Griesemer give an update on the children and youth center at the court.
 - Carolyn Griesemer shared that the downstairs 10 and under children’s room has been updated at the court to be more inviting and trauma-informed.
 - Stephen Moore informed the Advisory Board that the upstairs youth room has been updated at the court to be more trauma-informed and allows the youth to be productive

- Carolyn Griesemer also shared that she and Kim Giardina have worked together on language for the Child Welfare case flowchart given to every client, a map of the courtroom, a “People to Keep Me Safe” handout, and “Know Your Rights” by age handout (foster care bill of rights).
- 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.
- Supervisor Cox commended the subcommittees on their work and acknowledged what a great turnout we’ve had at each meeting.

5) Child Welfare Data Dashboards

- Supervisor Cox introduced the Child Welfare Data Dashboards agenda item.
- Kim Giardina walked the Advisory Board through the changes made to the Data Dashboards. There was a primary request to focus on race and ethnicity and areas of disproportionality, each data set now includes this information as well as compares to the child population at large. Kim Giardina shared that the main content of the data dashboards has not changed.
 - Kim Giardina walked the Advisory Board through the data dashboards and spent time explaining the new sets of data, *Ethnicity and Path through Child Welfare Services*, which she explained, comes from U.C. Berkley’s data portal. Another new set of data, *Placements – Five Counties with the Highest Child Population Comparison on July 1, 2019*.
- Supervisor Fletcher asked for confirmation that the data sets were available online. Kim Giardina confirmed the data sets are shared on the Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board website.
- Supervisor Cox allowed opportunity for questions and comments.
 - Sandra McBrayer shared that in response to several Advisory Board members inquiring about what data is available, the Advisory Board and Child Welfare Services will be hosting Dr. Daniel Webster from U.C. Berkeley, on December 9th from 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM at the County Administration Center. Dr. Webster will review available Child Welfare Services data. Sandra confirmed the presentation is open to the public and all who wish to attend.

6) Approval of Completed Workgroup Recommendations to Date

- Supervisor Cox announced the presentation by introducing the Child Welfare Services Review Working Group, reviewing the groups purpose, and sharing the outcome of 88 recommendations. Supervisor Cox then turned the presentation over to Kim Giardina to update the Advisory Board on some of the progress Child Welfare Services has made on the recommendations.
- Kim Giardina provided an update on the following recommendations:
 - #22 – Increase caseworker training on assessing for safety across all regions and units. *Ongoing- Complete*
 - #15 – Engage in cross-training and shared learning opportunities with system partners and providers to increase trauma awareness and improve collaboration. *Ongoing*
 - #3 – Conduct quarterly audits of “unfounded” findings to ensure that sufficient investigations are being conducted and to identify any training needs of this unit’s workers. *Ongoing*

- #2 – Create an implementation team to expand and evaluate Safety Enhanced Together (SET) efforts. The implementation team should be inclusive of community stakeholders and focused on the achievement of intended outcomes. *Completed*
- #7 – Change the chair of the Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council (CAPCC) from CWS management to a community representative, ideally an executive level representative of a community partner with the experience and expertise to set an agenda that includes community concerns and can provide more transparency to the community. *Completed*
- #8 – Establish a Standing CAPCC subcommittee of concerned and knowledgeable community partners who can understand and effectively promote implementation of the recommendation in this report and monitor their progress. *Completed*
- #9 – Authorize the new (CAPCC) standing subcommittee permission to investigate and report to the CAPCC chair on issues raised by community partners, child and families, or the general public that pertain to the implementation of recommendations in this report. *Completed*
- #10 – Require the CAPCC to monitor and issue a periodic report to the County Administrative Office (AEO) and Board of Supervisors, in cooperation with CWS, on the current state of Child Welfare Services that includes the implementation of “...improvements in services to families and victims who are in public charge” per CAPCC responsibility #5. *Completed*
- #12 – Establish the position of Chief of Social Work, reporting to the Director of CWS, who is focused on the transparent and unified delivery of social work practice across all Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) regions. *Completed*
- # 18 – Determine as quickly as possible, the potential fiscal impact of the title IV-E project ending. *Completed*
- Supervisor Cox asked for clarification on how many of the 88 recommendations have been started.
 - Kim Giardina confirmed 17 recommendations have been completed, 2 recommendations haven’t been started and all other recommendations are in progress.
- Supervisor Cox called for a motion to approve the completed workgroup recommendations to date, Maddy Kilkenny moved to approve, Crystal Irving seconded the motion, with all members present voting in favor.

Supervisor Cox and Supervisor Fletcher announced Kim Giardina’s promotion from Acting Director of Child Welfare Services to Director of Child Welfare Services.

7) County Child Services Landscape

- Supervisor Fletcher introduced the County Child Services landscape, explaining that the agenda item is designed to help the Advisory Board understand all the pieces of the Child Services Landscape.
- a) **Polinsky Children’s Center**
 - Alfredo Guardado shared information on the purpose of the Polinsky Children’s Center. He shared that it’s a 24 hour,10-acre campus off of Ruffin road. He informed the group that the Polinsky Children’s Center offers schooling and activities for children. Alfredo informed the Advisory Board that around 1,000 children came through Polinsky Children’s Center in fiscal year 18/19.
 - Supervisor Fletcher commented that with recent changes in law, the population of Polinsky Children’s Center is changing, and staff are continuing to monitor what changes to implement in order to best serve the changing population.

- A member shared that the Polinsky Children's Center has an Advisory Board and it's open to the public and if anyone is interested in learning more about Polinsky Children's Center, they are encouraged to attend. The member shared that the Polinsky Advisory Board currently has one vacancy.
- There was a question on if children who experience trauma are given resources to address the trauma and help them understand where they go from Polinsky Children's Center. Kim Giardina shared that there isn't a formal program that focuses on transitions but that Child Welfare Services does do a lot of work with the resource families during transition visits. Kim also shared that children six and under are part of the Developmental Screening and Enhancement program which follows them through the transition.
- Crystal Irving spoke to the revolving door of Polinsky based on the 10-day turnaround. She inquired as to how we can address children being placed with families and then returning to Polinsky.
- There was a request for the Advisory board to look at making investments in the continuum of care gaps.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested the subcommittees look at how we can address the continuum of care gaps and the affect they have on the revolving door of Polinsky's Children's Center. Supervisor Fletcher requested the subcommittees add the agenda item at a future subcommittee meeting and bring recommendation(s) back to the Advisory Board on how best to address the issue.
- Crystal Irving also inquired about how children are expected to transition from Polinsky Children's Center to a home and would like to know how we are preparing the children and resource families.
- Supervisor Fletcher suggested that the Child and Family Services subcommittee meeting on December 19th add an agenda item to discuss Polinsky Children's Center and come to the next Advisory Board meeting with potential recommendations for how we transition children to homes.
- An Advisory Board member expressed interest in exploring how we can work a program that intentionally deinstitutionalizes the children's experience in Polinsky Children's Center.

b) San Pasqual Academy

- Supervisor Cox introduced the idea behind San Pasqual Academy in 1998. Supervisor Cox shared how he heard from many emancipated youths at the Board conference and the amount of schools and homes the children had to go to throughout their time in care. Supervisor Cox discussed the Board exploring what options were available to help the youth have a reliable transition into adulthood. The Board of Supervisors were able to obtain funding to acquire San Pasqual Academy and took time to determine exactly what was wanted from the Academy. The result is a residential education facility for older foster youth, primarily ages 14-18. San Pasqual Academy provides onsite education through the San Diego Office of Education. Supervisor Cox expressed his appreciation of the transitional housing available for San Pasqual alumni to attend two and four year universities. Supervisor Cox informed the Advisory Board that since opening in 2001, there's been a 65% reduction of youth in out of home care and an additional 80% reduction in group home placements. Supervisor Cox also shared that San Pasqual allows opportunities for younger siblings in Junior High to be reunited with older siblings by attending San Pasqual.
- Supervisor Cox turned to Simone Hidds-Monroe to share her experience with San Pasqual.

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- Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that she attended San Pasqual Academy for 5 years. Simone explained that San Pasqual was the only option for her and her siblings to be placed together. Simone expressed her excitement towards working with the Advisory Board and the opportunity to have intentional conversations about what San Pasqual is currently and who it serves. Simone stated she is a tremendous advocate for the Academy, because it works.
- Supervisor Fletcher requested Simone Hidds-Monroe share her post-Academy experiences with the Board and the network of people she came to know.
- Simone Hidds-Monroe informed the Board that the people of San Pasqual Academy became her family, throughout college she returned to her family each summer to work at San Pasqual. Simone expressed her opinion on the importance of community living for foster youth.
- A member of the public commended Simone and her siblings and shared with the members of the Board, how unique San Pasqual is because it gives the youth so many connections in the form of teachers, staff, and community partners. She also reiterated the importance of post-graduation resources for the success of San Pasqual graduates.
- A second member of the public shared that over 60 students are currently receiving secondary education and being supported by San Pasqual Academy.
- Sade Burrell questioned if there was an age limit for the graduates to return for services from San Pasqual.
 - A community member shared that this would be handled on a case-by-case basis.
- Supervisor Fletcher introduced Alethea Arguilez for First 5.

c) First 5

- Alethea Arguilez shared with the Board that their packets contained a fiscal year 17/18 Snapshot and fiscal year 17/18 Annual Report as well as informed the Board of the updated Annual Report posted to the Commission's website. Alethea provided a brief history on First 5, sharing that it's been around for 20 years and funding for the Commission comes for Prop 10 and is based on the registered live births in San Diego County. Alethea explained that the Commission is dedicated to leveraging the entire network of services available throughout the County for Children Services. Alethea also shared that First 5 is actively working to build strong support of cultural brokering and encouraged the Board to review the new strategies of the Commission on the website.
- Patty Boles commented on how critical ages 0-5 are and wants there to be a focus on finding ways to better serve the children with special needs, as well as foster families who have never had a child with special needs.
- Alethea Arguilez shared the "Are You on the Map" handout which is a way for cross-sector collaboration and she encouraged anyone with something to share on the first five years of life, to please do so.
- A member of the public commented that there is not enough outreach happening for African American members of the community. She is requesting action be taken to address the lack of outreach.
 - Alethea responded to the public comment by sharing that this is an area that is being worked on and stating that First 5 encourages the community to share input and ideas.
 - The member of the public stated she is interested in working directly with Alethea Arguilez to establish better outreach to the targeted population.
- Supervisor Fletcher introduced Brook Smith for Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council & Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Strategy Task Force.

d) Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council & Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Strategy Task Force

- Brook Smith shared that the Council and Task Force provide oversight to the Countywide system of Juvenile Justice. Brook informed the Board that the focus of the two groups is to keep kids out of the system. Brook stated that the two groups follow a national model of family strength programming, positive youth development, and trauma informed care built throughout all programs, initiatives, and trainings. Brook discussed that the groups continue to do everything possible to keep youth out of the system. Brook shared that both the Council and Task Force meet quarterly with a focus on supporting a comprehensive strategy to put resources on the front end and that each meeting is open to the public.
- Supervisor Fletcher reiterated the importance of continuing to be educated on the Child Services Landscape and suggested that for future meetings, there will be fewer items to allow for more robust conversation.

8) CAPCC Existing Committees, Projects, Allocations

- Supervisor Cox introduced agenda item eight and turned the item over to Kim Giardina.
- Kim Giardina provided a brief explanation of the previous CAPCC and then continued to brief the Board on CAPCC committees, projects and allocations:
 - Fairness and Equity Subcommittee – reviewed current research, promising practices, and developed an action plan for addressing disproportionality and disparate outcomes for Native American and African American families. The subcommittee was responsible for the development of the Cultural Responsiveness Academy for Child Welfare Services. The subcommittee stopped convening in 2017.
 - Stars Awards – Star stands for: supporting children and parents in the community, taking a positive perspective, addressing the issues, recognizing that parenting can be challenging and offering support and strengthening communities. The event was funded by CAPCC and included awards for community partners.
 - Parenting Expo – took place at multiple locations and was previously conducted in combination with Grandparents Raising Grandchildren events.
 - CAPCC Funding Summary – The AB 2994 Children’s Trust Fund (CTF) consists of funding from birth certificate receipts, license plate fees, child maltreatment court restitution fines, Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention funds and grants, gifts or bequests from private sources. The approved CTF Funding for Fiscal Year 2018-19 is \$2,050,000.
 - Kim Giardina shared that the Advisory Board will receive an outline of the proposed funding for the current fiscal year. Kim explained that the Board will vote to approve and then the item will be taken to the Board of Supervisors for approval of the spending plan. Kim also shared that funding will be reduced in the next year and funding for Community Services for Families will now come from Child Welfare Services.
 - San Diego Prevention Project – The goal of the project is to move upstream. Meredith Riffel and Alethea Arguilez are working on the project. This project is very true child abuse prevention. A multidisciplinary team of 10 attended the Child Abuse Prevention Summit, did an extensive data review of the County and is focused on building the capacity of parents and caregivers to promote early childcare and education as well as the quality of early childcare and education. The YMCA has been instrumental in the project and was able to secure a grant which will allow the project to be operational.
- Sandra McBrayer stated that when we look to the trust fund for 2021, we’ll be forming a small short term committee of non-interested parties to review how the trust fund can

support some of the recommendations from the Review Working Group as well as make recommendations to the Advisory Board.

- Supervisor Cox called for any additional questions or comments.
 - An Advisory Board member questioned if there will be conversation about increasing revenue to the trust fund now that funding is being reduced.
 - Sandra McBrayer confirmed that there would be conversation.
 - Supervisor Cox suggested the funding would be a good subject for a future subcommittee meeting.

Supervisor Cox called on the additional public speaker.

9) Advisory Board Member Updates

- Supervisor Cox asked Sandra McBrayer if she had additional information to share under Board member updates.
- Sandra McBrayer shared that the new agenda item was added at the request of several Advisory Board members. She encouraged members to share about work related to the Advisory Board, new projects members or what member organizations are working on, etc. Sandra informed the Board that this is also an opportunity for Board members to update the Board on items they were assigned to bring back to the Board.
- Judge Lagotta expressed her gratitude to the Board of Supervisors for their support of the renovations of the youth waiting areas in the Court. Judge Lagotta also shared that November 23rd is national adoption day and that in collaboration with HHSA, the Courts had a celebration for over 20 adoptive families in attendance.
- Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that Just in Time Foster Youth for 2020 will be creating lasting impact fulfillment tracking. She stated the purposes of the tracking is to access services and what impact they make for alumni after care. Simone discussed that instead of predicting success, they are measuring and determining areas that need to change and improve as well as confirming what's working. Simone shared that she is excited to bring the data to the Advisory Board.
- Kim Giardina reminded the Board that she was asked to bring an org chart for Child Welfare Services to the meeting. Kim let the members of the Board know that they each received an org chart and that she would be bringing an updated version to the January meeting since the new Chiefs are in place.

10) Adjournment

- Supervisor Cox reminded everyone about the data presentation on December 9th.
- Supervisor Cox stated that the Polinsky Children's Center will be added to the agenda for the December 19 Child and Family Services subcommittee meeting.
- Supervisor Cox reiterated that Sandra McBrayer and Patricia Bevelyn would work together on recommendations on disproportionality and that the Board would look at adding disproportionality to a future meeting agenda.
- Supervisor Cox acknowledged that the Advisory Board roster was out of order and an updated version would be distributed.
- Supervisor Cox adjourned the meeting at 5:05 PM.

Future Agenda Items:

Next Meeting:

- January 10th, 2019

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Distributed:

- Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of September 13, 2019 meeting
- Summary of October 24, 2019 Subcommittee Meetings
- Child Welfare Services Data Dashboards
- Child Welfare Services Recommendation Progress
- First 5 San Diego FY 17/18 Snapshot and FY 17/18 Annual Report
- Board Letter – Juvenile Justice Comprehensive Strategy Task Force
- CA Welfare and Institutions Code Sec. 749.22
- CAPCC Summary
- Flyer for Child Welfare Data Presentation by Dr. Daniel Webster

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.