

Proposed Minutes
Child Services Oversight Committee

Tuesday, June 20th at 1:30pm
Indiana Statehouse, Room 156-B

Members Present:

Rep. Wendy McNamara, Chair; Senator Frank Mrvan; Mary Beth Bonaventura, Director, Department of Child Service, Sean McCrindle, Vice President of Program Operations, Bashor Children's Home; James Oliver, Prosecuting Attorney Council; Jolene Bracale, Program Coordinator for Student Health, Department of Education; Honorable Stephen Galvin, Monroe County Circuit Court, Larry Landis, Executive Director, Indiana Public Defender Council

Welcome and Approval of Minutes from January 11th Meeting – Rep. Wendy McNamara, Chair
– Unanimous approval of the previous minutes

General Agency Updates – Mary Beth Bonaventura, DCS Director

Since the last meeting the General Assembly has given DCS \$200 million for FY18 and FY 19. This will help with the increased caseload of the agency so that we can hire additional staff to cover the load and help ensure that staffers are less bogged down.

There has been a new commission to combat drug addiction that has been put in place as part of the Governor's Agenda this year. They have had two meetings thus far and have discussed addiction problems, treatment issues, and rehabilitation. Almost 53% of kids that are removed from homes are removed because of substance abuse and we would like to find a way to stop that.

The Department also opened its second office in Marion County in March of 2017. This will help with retention because turnover rates in Marion County are around 40%, while they're only around 25% in the rest of Indiana.

Dual Status Youth Update – Don Travis, DCS Deputy Director of Juvenile Justice Initiatives and Support

We are still working on figuring out how to identify the kids that will become dual status children. This is really a project that encourages probations officers in the counties and DCS to work hand in hand in order to ensure that kids that qualify as dual status will obtain the right placements and treatment if need be. Training for this program began in June 2015 for 5 pilot counties in Indiana and there will be a regional training in August of 2017.

This program allows DCS and the probation office to share certain information that will help both sides better care for the child. The parents/guardians will have to sign consents for this information to be shared, but it is helpful for kids who have Juvenile Delinquencies or other behavioral issues.

Quarterly Data Update – Mary Beth Bonaventura, DCS Director

IVD support rates have continued to improve. Indiana is now ranked #6 in the nation. We also got the highest rate of incentive money from the Federal government than we've received since 2009, which was over \$12 million.

The DCS Hotline volume of calls continues to increase. There were over 225,000 reports of abuse and neglect taken last year, compared to 117,000 calls in 2012.

Case growths for the department has also continued to grow. Now, there are specific programs for older children under DCS care. We now have a rate of over 50% of children that have been placed in the care of relatives, compared to a rate of about 30% in 2010.

DCS is also trying to lay the groundwork for a new program that will be for emergency foster care. This system will allow people to sign up as emergency foster parents and there would be little to no notice of a child coming to stay with them for emergency situations. The child could only be placed there on a 7 days basis, but this would help with situations where the children are forcibly taken out of the home with nowhere else to go.

Legislative Update – Parvonay Stover, DCS Legislative Director

There were many bills including HEA 1006, HEA 1079, SEA 355, SEA 366, and SEA 497 that DCS helped the legislature to pass this past session. These various bills include children that are wards of the state or deal with Medicaid for these children, as well as help them more easily become active and productive citizens of Indiana. SEA 447 was the DCS agency bill which simply cleaned up some technical corrections in code and allowed DCS to pay for criminal background check fees for future foster parents.

Possible Future Meeting Topics

We want to look at the residential bed numbers for juveniles in Indiana as well as the total number of Foster Homes available. If you have any other suggestions feel free to contact Rep. McNamara's office directly.

Possible Future Meeting Dates

We will try to either meet on November 20th or November 21st. We are going to shoot for the morning of November 21st, but it will depend on when Organization Day begins for the General Assembly.

Adjourn at 2:50.