

**Missouri State Foster Care & Adoption Board
Governor's Office Building, Room #315
Jefferson City, MO 65103**

March 3, 2020

MINUTES

Introductions/Meeting Information – Jennifer Foster

Board Members in attendance: Kristina Branch, Jennifer Foster, Judge Tom Frawley, Chrissy Mayberry, Melanie McDole, Nickie Steinhoff, Craig Stevenson & Jennifer Townsend

December Meeting Minutes – Melanie McDole made a motion, Craig second – minutes approved.

CD: Sally Gaines, Reggie McElhannon, Sherry Moller, Vickie Stoneberger, Elizabeth Tattershall

Guests: Cayla Davis, Bob Larimore, Julie Murray, Tobey Wilkerson, Lisa Tegart

Updates and Vision from the Interim Director's Desk – Reggie McElhannon

Mr. McElhannon greeted the board; he has been in the interim director role for approximately two months. He shared that he has been very drawn to get to the field as quickly as possible in order to understand some of the pain points and really connect to the field/front line staff and letting them know his awareness of the challenges.

Mr. McElhannon identified 3 drivers as obvious:

- Psychotropic Medication Settlement
- Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA): Preparing for and implementation
- Safety Task Force: Moving forward with task force recommendations; Reggie has been reviewing critical incidents, specifically to see how many times the perpetrator was in foster care.

Mr. McElhannon explained his vision as "STP":

- Staffing: Employee retention; specifically looking at the first six months of employment as an opportune time.
- Training: Ensure employee training is complimented with OJT (on the job training) and onboarding. There has been some fragmentation in training. Each region will have "core training", then, electives or additional training to address foundational knowledge and/or regional issues. Reggie shared the example of LinkedIn, which offers a variety of training options applicable to staff (example: having difficult conversations, improving your listening skills, etc.)
- Practice Model: Reggie mentioned Signs of Safety – not eliminating the practice, adding safety/risk assessment tools to it (tools were lost when not mandated to use).

His goal is to get to all 46 circuits in the state. Reggie describes his process as "cubing" – stopping by and talking to staff that are present during his visits. Mr. McElhannon shared the following takeaways from "cubing":

Bloomfield, MO: To understand where CD employees were coming from, Reggie asked staff where they went to college; one might assume that many attended Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO), and, how long their commute was. The majority of staff went to Hannibal LaGrange and Central Methodist. As a result, he asked management to meet with social work departments at these two schools and start building relationships.

St. Louis, MO: Mr. McElhannon visited the Wainwright building in St. Louis. He asked if there was a relationship between CD and Harris Stowe State University, there currently is not.

A Leadership Retreat is scheduled for next week, March 10-12th. There will be a forum on staffing at the retreat; looking at where staff come from – potentially recruiting at the community college level, rather than four year universities. Another part of this discussion will be making sure new staff are on the right trajectory based on their knowledge and experience (ex. Hotlines, vs. Alternative Care). Mr. McElhannon has challenged the training staff to find an assessment

for new hires to test their individual aptitude and skill set, with the intention of providing additional, foundational training to those who need it. He has also asked staff to take a closer look at what CD actually does with new staff – can't have new staff standing around until another training is offered; what are some things they could be doing? "Roadshows" will continue after the leadership retreat.

Another focus will be looking at what tools staff need, and what does CD need to bring back. There are many initiatives happening around the state. Mr. McElhannon would like a process to be developed to track projects to ensure a plan is in place. An example:

"LifeSet" older youth pilot. What's the plan if internal candidates apply for these positions? Taking away staff to give them a smaller case load, only to redistribute remaining cases to workers already overwhelmed.

Mr. McElhannon discussed compression issues related to job classifications and staff salaries. PDS and supervisors received pay increases, however, those at higher levels did not. 163 of 2100, making equal or less than their supervisee (compression issues). Currently, salary follows CD staff when they take another position within the Division, even if the new position is at a lower salary. The Division will be working on a hiring tool to work on these practical issues; before you post a position, what is the starting salary, who will they report to? Where will they be located? Flexible work schedule? Having these conversations before the hire is made. Geographically, where does the potential staff member reside (what is pavement quotient)? An example: There are many residential facilities in the St. Louis area, yet staff that monitor this program do not live near St. Louis.

Monthly leadership meetings: Regional and Deputy Directors for a couple of hours; then will bring in unit managers individually for updates on particular topics. The format will be 3 x 3; identify 3 things accomplished that month, 3 of the challenges they are facing and what the next steps are – this information will be collected and distributed to their teams.

Joan Rogers has been hired to handle administrative/operations side of things. Joan was previously a liaison between the child welfare agency and military in North Carolina; worked on CA/N as it pertained to the military.

Terry Armistead has been appointed Deputy Director.

Questions for Mr. McElhannon:

- The focus is on staff retention; Reggie is the third CD director in a short period of time.
 - Reggie shared that he has no control over how much time he will be in this position, as it is governor appointed. He shared that he is not going to act like an interim director, rather he recognizes this as a time frame to get a job done. He shared that while at FSD, he implemented the "one-team" concept; at CD, the mission is "we make life better for a child" – the "we" is all of us; the internal team has to have appropriate onboarding to make the best decisions in a subjective environment; we have to work as a team.
- Establishing paternity – (FSD and judicial system) waiting on paternity results delays permanency. Mr. McElhannon requested additional details and will work with FSD for a solution.

Mr. McElhannon requested board members to send him an email with a few sentences of our thoughts on what we heard (and a reminder of how we connected). Reginald.e.mcelhannon@dss.mo.gov

Memorandum Update – Elizabeth Tattershall

Elizabeth provided a full list of memo's passed since the last meeting. All memos can be found at this link: <https://dssmanuals.mo.gov/2020-cd-memos/>

CD20-03: Resource Parent Inquiry Questionnaire (Resource added to FACES in 2010) – Needed a way to track how many inquiries are made and outcome of inquiry. Memo to staff reminding them to complete the questionnaire as timely response to the inquirer is essential and key to increasing foster care services.

CD20-05: Children's Treatment Services Contract: 3 new service descriptions were added:

- Specialized Clinical Assessment/Psycho-Sexual Assessment

- Transportation
- Transportation (Behavioral)

Additional changes include parent aid maximum unit decreased from 40 units to 20 and drug testing 5 Panel Urine code changed from DRUG to DU05.

CD20-07: ICPC Policy and Procedure Changes regarding submission of referrals (now electronic).

RM20-01: (Director Memo) Child Care Provider IRS 1099-MISC Forms (CD 184).

CD20-08: 2019 Legislation Affecting Children's Division which took effect on August 28, 2019.

CD20-11: Independent Living Arrangements (see notes under Sally Gaines)

2020 Census: "Moment in Time" – who is living in the home on April 1, 2020, including foster placements

NTDC Pilot TTT Update – Sherry Moller

Sherry Moller - Relative Program Development Specialist & Kinship Navigator Program

NTDC – National Training and Development Curriculum for Foster and Adoptive Parents: This is a new curriculum that is based on research and input from experts, families who have experience with fostering or adopting children and former foster and adoptive youth. The NTDC is a total of 27.5 hours of classroom instruction as well as 15 "right time training" through the portal for in-service training. Many video's and podcasts incorporated into pre-work; the videos showcase the real life of foster parenting. Missouri was chosen as a pilot site to implement this curriculum. The NW Region and Jackson County will pilot the NTDC curriculum (STL area and NE Region will be control group). The SE and SW regions will continue with the STRONG Training Pilot, which started in September of 2019. Last week, train the trainer held in KC, MO; 39 individuals attended.

There is a self-assessment component to the NTDC; this will help participants get to know their individual characteristics and strengths as a parent, as well as identify areas for improvement. Themes of the curriculum include: Trauma informed parenting, child development, attachment, self-regulation, brain development, maintaining connections, separation, grief and loss, reunification, racially and ethnically diverse parenting. A lot of logistics to coordinate for the 18 month pilot. We can make adjustments after the pilot.

"LifeSet" through Youth Villages Grant – Sally Gaines

Sally Gaines – Program Development Specialist for Older Youth

LifeSet by Youth Villages: <https://www.youthvillages.org/services/lifaset/>

The Children's Division has preliminary approval, have not signed the contract yet. This is program is a "Promising Practice" of case management and independent living skills. It is a 3 year grant; MACF will implement as well as CD. The program is for youth in foster care age 17 and older and lasts 7-9 months. SE MO, 40 youth served by CD; SW MO, 32 youth served. Potentially adding one more team in year three. Caseload size will be 8-10 youth per staff.

Training is scheduled in April; program implementation will begin in May 2020.

CD20-11: Independent Living Arrangements – Clarified qualifications of an ILA as a placement type, new requirements and introduced a new review process.

CQI Process and Board Representation – Elizabeth Tattershall

Opening on state level CQI team – need board member representation; can rotate attendance if needed. The next meeting is March 19, 2019 – conference room B, Children's Division, Jefferson City; Jennifer Foster will attend the March meeting. The board will decide who will represent the June CQI meeting at the June board meeting. Elizabeth shared a handout of the CQI 4 Levels and process.

Open Forum

Reviewed current board vacancies. Nickie will reach out to Katie Brown, St. Charles, MO; listed as NE Region representative.

SB 623 – <https://legiscan.com/MO/bill/SB623/2020>

Appointed GAL's in a child abuse/neglect case shall be required to establish a relationship with the child and meet face-to-face in a private setting to observe and ascertain the child's wishes and needs within 7 days following receipt of appointment.

SB 826 - https://www.senate.mo.gov/20info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=28833823

Modifies several provisions relating to child protection including a minor's ability to contract, a minor's access to vital records and MO HealthNet benefits for certain youth.

SB 888 – https://www.senate.mo.gov/20info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=29532162

TPR – modifies the definition of an abandoned infant or abandoned child, in cases of TPR, to mean a child 3 years of age or under instead of one year or under in current law. Grounds for determining abandonment have been modified Authority granted to CD to make adoption regulations, taken from HHS. Changes definition of “abandoned” child.

HB 1414 – Protection of Children: <https://house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills201/sumpdf/HB1414C.pdf>

Requires CD to complete a standard risk assessment within 72 hours of a report of abuse or neglect as part of its structured decision making protocols; also requires CD and OSCA to develop a joint safety assessment tool; prohibits CD from requiring resource parents to conduct or be present for supervised visits with a child in their care; court shall only require a child to appear in court if necessary.

HB 2216 – Preservation of the Family - <https://www.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills201/sumpdf/HB2216C.pdf>

Summary includes safety reporting, adoption, school reporting policies, physician-patient privilege, fees for vital records, MO HealthNet, child protection system goals and priorities, child protection reporting and case management, electronic report sharing, central registry, comprehensive child welfare information system, birth match program, well-child checks, child abandonment, alignment of court practices, safe baby court, community-based sentencing, minor access to mental health care, visitation and adoption.

Immunization and Flu shots: Must follow the federal law – all household members must be current on immunizations.

Day care subsidy & tablets; only day care subsidy has to use tablets. Jennifer Foster will facilitate communication between daycare provider and Cindy Burke.

Suggestion to think of agenda topics earlier than two weeks prior to the meeting to get appropriate guests to respond to suggested items.

Meeting adjourned at 2:50 pm by Jennifer Foster.

Next meeting date: June 2, 2020, Governor's Office Building, Room 315

2020 Meeting Dates

September 1, 2020

December 1, 2020