

West Virginia Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children

Meeting Notes

Group Meeting: Quarterly Full Commission Meeting

Meeting Date: September 1, 2011
Location: Charleston, WV

Members Present: Susan Perry (representing Dr. Michael Lewis); Nancy Atkins; Nikki Tennis (representing Steve Canterbury); Frank Andrews (representing Joreau Marple); Susan Fry; Pat Homberg; Denny Dodson (representing Dale Humphreys); Honorable Gary Johnson; Jackie Payne (representing Vickie Jones); Mike Lacy; Kate Luikart; Commissioner Jason Najmulski; Honorable O. C. Spaulding; and Fran Warsing.

Members Absent: Honorable Jack Alsop; Chris Curtis; Honorable John Hutchison; Honorable Mike Kelly; and Kimberlee Sharp.

Guests Present: Ghaski Browning (presenter); Andrea Darr;;Trudi Blaylack; Debi Gillespie; Tricia Kingery; Jacqueline Columbia; Crystal Criswell; Rhonda McCormick; Joanne Dobrzanski; Terrence Rusin; Laurah Currey (presenter); Nora McQuain; Linda Kennedy; Melissa Lazear; Tara Stevens; Cindy Largent-Hill; Janet Scarcelli; Sharon Vealey; Jane McCallister; Doug Robinson; and Lisa Kapin.

Administrative Assistance: Deputy Commissioner Sue Hage- BCF, Linda Dalyai- BCF, Carl Hadsell, CESD.

Key Discussions

Welcome and Introductions – Carl Hadsell

Commissioner Najmulski advised the Commission there are currently 55 less children in state custody care, and West Virginia is getting recognition nationwide. Recently at a national meeting, West Virginia was commended on their commitment for partnering with stakeholders, the buy-in of leadership toward positive outcomes for families and children, their decision making, and their use of data (Mountain Force).

The Meeting Notes of the July 23, 2011 meeting were approved.

Commenting on the June 23rd meeting in Martinsburg, WV, the Commission members expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to view a residential facility and the hospitality of the Board of Child Care. The community also appreciated the visit and the opportunity to share local initiatives and to learn first-hand what the Commission is doing

Comments from representatives from local education confirmed issues regarding funding of out-of-state placements with special education funds are being addressed by the Commission.

Out-of-State Placement Educational Costs Discussion

Ghaski Browning opened up the discussion regarding the state funds being redirected out-of-state. The agreement included the

Key Decisions

Post last meeting notes on website.

The Commission members are in favor of moving the meeting to a community at least once a year, and a timeframe in June 2012 was suggested. These meetings can be held at other venues in addition to a residential facility, including OIEP locations and DJS facilities.

The Commission would like follow-up on this topic as to progress in solving this issue.

<p>WVDE paying for special education students, and DHHR paying for regular education students. Future plans include: 1) putting out-of-state students back into the funding allocation, and 2) requiring that each child receive an MDT and transitional plan. Additionally, counties will be able to access money through funds available by the WV Legislature. For more details, please see the handout <i>West Virginia Commission to Study Residential Placement of Children, West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs Report, Out-of-State Placement Educational Costs Discussion</i>.</p>	
<p>Foster Care Placement Considerations</p> <p>Automated Placement Referral (APR) is an electronic tracking system for children in out-of-state facilities. Both DHHR and providers are responsible for placement recommendations, and need to have a clear understanding of this tool. For more details, please see the following handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The WV Automated Referral Process Review Summary</i> • <i>Demographics of Youth Reviewed</i> • <i>Key Findings and Recommendations</i> • <i>Draft of proposed questions for the APR</i> 	<p>This working group will be expanded and come back with specific recommendations for next Commission meeting.</p> <p>Work on getting a simple card with key questions into the court process.</p>
<p>Non-Custodial Children</p> <p>Discussion occurred regarding children, not in state custody, placed by parent. In-state providers cannot take children in parental custody. BMS will not pay for group residential care. The payment mechanism prevents parents from placing children in facilities lower than PRTF. A high number of these parental placements are children that have been adopted. BMS and BHHR are looking at this jointly because no one has oversight.</p> <p>BMS should not approve payment for children in facilities that the DHHR-BCF/BMS/WVDE will not use. It was also noted that once a facility is opened, anyone can place a child at that facility.</p> <p>Also of concern is how parents can learn about facilities that may not be approved by the State of have low review scores.</p>	<p>Determine the Commission's role in addressing issues centered on this topic.</p>
<p>Performance Benchmarks/Definitions & Data Analysis</p> <p>Numbers of out-of-state placements are the lowest in three years. Please refer to the <i>Performance Scorecard</i> handout for additional information.</p> <p>Noted continued work on finding the most important levers that can help continue to reduce the numbers of out-of-state placements.</p>	

<p>Trends and Winds</p> <p>Refer to the handout regarding the following three conferences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Branch Institute Adolescents in Foster Care: Increasing Permanency, Reducing Entries – July 11-13, 2011 • National Leadership Conference of Commission on Children – September 21-23, 2011 • Atlantic Coast Child Welfare Implementation Center (ACCWIC) – September 27-28, 2011 	
<p>Key Updates</p> <p>Members were provided with a copy of the Commission’s Operating Procedures & Guidelines.</p> <p><u>Out-of-Home Education Advisory Committee</u></p> <p>Four facilities and 18 county schools were reviewed by the Committee. The Committee will do more in connecting children in foster care with a pre-school program. There are plans to develop a job description for an educational liaison in shelter care for future grants (e.g. to include tutoring, etc.)</p> <p>Blueprint for Change – customize for WV. Goals to be set with DHHR that will fit in with Fostering Connections and WVDE to keep children in school of origin. Collaborate to get better educational outcomes for children. The next meeting of this Committee will be at Pressley Ridge</p> <p><u>Facilities Matrix</u></p> <p>Although the complete report was not provided, the Commission was given that portion of the Out-of-State Facilities and Programs matrix which shows when facilities meet minimum standards and when facilities have been suspended.</p> <p>Members were also provided a copy of a letter that is sent to OOS facilities detailing strengths as well as areas that need to be corrected.</p> <p>For more information, please refer to the handouts.</p> <p><u>Out-of-State Site Visits</u></p> <p>Negative action can occur when there is abuse and neglect. It should be noted, however, that it is rare that an agency gets through a review without a citation. Action will be taken, including removing children, when there is substantial or repeated non-compliance of the regulations. WVDE, DHHR, BHHF and BMS are</p>	<p>Need to develop standards that all can agree to as the way to review and report findings.</p>

<p>included in the decision-making process regarding the type of action to be taken.</p> <p>Educational information will be provided to members at a later date</p> <p><u>Best Practice – Community Forums</u></p> <p>The next forum will be held in December of this year in Cabell County. Commission members will be asked to help bring people out to these sessions.</p> <p><u>Permanency Roundtables</u></p> <p>Permanency Roundtables is a national initiative that is growing. It focuses on children that have been in care but permanency has not been achieved. Support will be provided for direct service workers to assist in removing barriers. Casey Family Programs has offered to help schedule Permanency Roundtables. There are approximately 100 children where parental rights have not been terminated. RCC will be the regional point person. We will be looking at different age groups and populations.</p> <p><u>Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission (CBHC)</u></p> <p>New legislation reconstituted the Comprehensive Behavioral Health Commission. They will look at the original report and determine what has and has not been done. Their focus will be on the behavioral health issues of children. This Commission also has an Advisory Board.</p> <p>The Joint Task force between this Commission and the CBHC is still looking to be active in some form to help focus on children's issues.</p> <p><u>Jacob's Law</u></p> <p>The next meeting is scheduled in September, at which time a decision will be made on the enhanced homes. Training has been completed for 2 of the 4 regions. A report will be provided by an independent agency to the Legislature in October.</p>	
<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2011.</p>	