

Eastern Citizen Review Panel
Minutes of the Meeting
December 7, 2007

Attendees:

Julia Smead Bielawski	Stacy Alvord	Mary McCarthy	
Lance Jackson	Anita Welborn	JoAnn Merriman	
<i>OCFS staff:</i>	Jennifer Goldman	Teresa Palumbo	
<i>SCAA staff:</i>	Karen Schimke	Robin Christenson	Diane Mastin
<i>Guests:</i>	Ed Blatt	Joanne Trinkle	Erika Leveillee
	Zhai White	Laken Smith	Donna Gillgallon

Handouts:

Agenda

Information about the CFSR Review

Proposed 2008 meeting dates and topics

Budget Hearing Testimony by Gladys Carrion

Youth In Progress materials

Latest draft of the *CRP 2007 Annual Report and Recommendations*

Publication: *Universal Prenatal/Postpartum Care and Home Visitation*

PowerPoint Presentations: *Differential Response* and *From Trials to Practice*

Minutes of the meeting, September 14, 2007

Minutes of the joint panel meeting, October 18, 2007

Panel members received an overview from two Youth in Progress members and their adult mentors. Youth in Progress' (YIP) mission is to enhance and advance the lives of foster care youth by giving them a sense of self and responsibility. YIP youth do many speaking engagements and work to use their personal experience in foster care to improve the system for other youth. They hold speak-outs, make videos, attend retreats, and other activities to dispel stereotypes and work towards increased funding and improved practices in foster care. They are specifically interested in increased funding for statewide youth voice activities, improved policies and practices regarding family and sibling contacts and increased involvement in selecting, assessing, and retraining youth service workers. They are interested in having all counties in the state plan trial discharges for youth as they prepare to exit foster care. Often plans fall apart within six months when a youth leaves foster care. Counties need a mechanism to track these youth. They often do not hear from those who have achieved success. The Chaffee Act outlines specific outcomes.

YIP youth can offer a unique perspective and can relay important information for quality improvements, assessments and staff performance reviews. They emphasized how important it is to them to be a part of decisions having to do with their future. They have worked to help youth understand their rights, give input to judges regarding permanency hearings, and to establish paid internships.

YIP offers Getting Solid, special training for foster care youth to help them achieve permanency and establish relationships with supportive adults in their lives. When they are living

independently, youth need to know that they are not out there on their own. They have people they can turn to. Each youth needs to know how to advocate for him/herself and be able to recognize when (s)he needs assistance before an emergency arises. Examples include navigating access to higher education and the financial aid office, getting a Medicaid card, and finding housing.

YIP was founded by OCFS after the last Children and Family Services Review conducted by the federal government and has become a standing youth advisory committee. They operate without a budget and with adults who provide support to the program in addition to their full-time jobs. They are working with Assemblyman Scarborough to draft language for inclusion of YIP in statute as a step towards a line item in the state budget. Information about YIP can be accessed at www.youthinprogress.org.

OCFS staff responsible for receiving input from outside sources into OCFS' self-assessment in preparation for the Child and Family Services Review in May gave an overview of the process and the review. The onsite review is scheduled for May 5th to May 9th. Ms. Goldman led a discussion with panel members to receive their comments and input. OCFS staff took a draft copy of the Panels' 2007 Annual Report and Recommendations to add to the input.

Panel members received information about the upcoming state budget and projected \$4 billion deficit. Preventive funding and TANF funding are of particular concern to the child welfare system. Panel members agreed to send a letter of support for preventive funding noting the long term costs if these funds are reduced.

Panel members received updates on the Children's Cabinet, the Children's Cabinet Advisory Board and a Voices Child Welfare Advisory Committee meeting which SCAA staff attended. They received updated information regarding follow-up activities from Khatib Waheed's and Sania Metzger's presentations in October on Ethnic and Racial Disproportionality and Disparities.

Panel members reviewed the latest versions of documents for inclusion into the panels' annual report. They offered alternative language to the Accountability recommendation.

They discussed the proposed meeting schedule for 2008 and asked that the proposed date in March be changed. They would like to focus a portion of each of their meetings in 2008 to workforce issues. They asked panel member Mary McCarthy to review literature on workforce issues at their next meeting.

The panel's next meeting is scheduled for April 4th.