

Eastern New York Citizen Review Panel

Meeting Notes
June 3, 2005

Attendance

Stacy Alvord

JoAnn Merriman

Mary Felasko

Dianne Meckler

Julia Bielawski

Guest speaker: Bill McLaughlin, OCFS Director of Regional Operations and Practice

OCFS Staff: Richard Nells, OCFS Associate Commissioner

Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA) Staff: Diane Mastin, Panel Coordinator
Karen Schimke

Location: Wolferts Roost Country Club, 10:00 – 2:00

Handouts:

- Draft work plan
- March 17th Meeting Minutes
- Citizen Review Panel Resources
- Articles: Treasure the Children, Letter to Editor by Mary McCarthy, Researchers Tested Drugs on Foster Kids
- Four pamphlets on Prevention of Child Sex Abuse
- A313 proposed legislation
- 1st year report from Westchester County CPS Services on their service based approach
- Article from Child Welfare League of America publication: The New York City Neighborhood-Based Services Strategy
- Eastern Region data: Recurrence of Abuse/Neglect, MAPS CPS Trend Data for 6 counties, draft format for data request

Meeting opened at 10:05 am. Meeting began with a welcome and updates on a variety of ongoing panel interests. The panel chair person asked if any panel member would be interested in following the discussions on the national CRP website and reporting back to the panel. (Follow up will be done with panel members not in attendance.) An update was given on the pending appointments to the panel:

Lori Currier Woods is going through a background check through the governor's appointments office.

Carrie Smith's name has been forwarded to the Assembly appointments office. SCAA staff will follow progress on this potential appointee.

The activities of the other two New York panels were reviewed including the Western panel's request to conduct a case review, the Western panel's Commissioners' meeting, and the upcoming Dual Track Public Hearing by the New York City panel. A suggestion was made to have protocols for case reviews drafted and discussed at a joint panel meeting. OCFS staff reported on upcoming funding opportunities including: RFPs for multidisciplinary teams, TANF funding for alcohol/prevention, co-location of services, domestic violence, and post adoption, and Kinship Caretaker Relative programs or initiatives.

Discussion followed on various legislation that has been proposed including a Permanency Bill (A3515 and S4383) to bring NYS into compliance with federal requirements, Prompt Contracting

(S1893 and A3454), Dual Track (A313A and S1574A), and A6334, a bill that proposes to establish an Office of Child Advocate and a Commission on Children. SCAA staff will send out a two-page summary on Chautauqua's SAFE program for CPS.

OCFS agreed to have staff at the next panel meeting to add to our speakers experience in Oswego County. SCAA staff will invite Fran Lanigan to attend.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to a discussion about the panel's data requests to OCFS and a presentation by Bill McLaughlin, Director of Regional Operations and Practice. Bill was given a copy of a possible format for presentation of data for the CRP's to use and was asked to review it. He passed out two packets of materials: Desired Elements of New York State's Child Welfare System and MAPS information. His comments touched on the following:

- MAPS was introduced in 1985 and is outdated. It is not automated but they still use it for monitoring local districts.
- Build 18, the Case Planning component, is up and running in many of the counties west of Albany. The software is harder than anticipated for workers at the local level to use and will need an additional training component. Most of the capacity to do NCAND reports resides in the policy division of OCFS. They are just now beginning to talk about web-based applications.
- Build 19 is the fiscal component. When implemented he expects to see a bump up in reliability. Users will have to have case plans that are current and accurate. The system requires a single case manager. Case notes will be available to outside agencies.
- The system will take some time to get up and running in counties. Counties must build internal capacity and move from process indicators to outcomes.
- The system will allow them to track specific kids from a particular point in time and follow them forward. Work has now progressed to the question of how data drives practice and the unique contribution the regional offices can bring to locals who have limited resources and staff time. This work has been used with Family Engagement, one of 12 OCFS Performance Improvement Plan strategies. OCFS staff are hearing positive comments back from counties about this tool. Now OCFS wants to move towards using this in CPS.
- The new system will have a capacity to map in the future: an example- can map foster care placements and their distance from the child's home.

Bill then reviewed the handout, Desired Elements of New York State's Child Welfare System, and stated that the strategies on page 3 will be reviewed for deletion, enhancement, or expansion. Specifically they will be looking at whether or not to weave disproportionality throughout all the strategies or to develop a specific strategy on the topic. They want to do better at engaging birth families and at encouraging investment for after-care services. In terms of national comparisons, Bill stated that New York State will need to pay attention to recurrence and reentry into foster care.

Panel chair asked that data for the region be made available to members sometime over the summer so that they have time to review it well before their September meeting.

Panel members expressed interest in holding two commissioner's meetings for their 40 county region. SCAA staff will move forward on planning for such meetings to occur at the panel's scheduled meetings for the year.

Next meeting: Friday, Sept. 16th. Currently the meeting is scheduled to be held at Wolferts Roost in Albany but may change to accommodate a meeting with commissioners.