

NYC CRP
Minutes of the Meeting, May 3, 2007

Attendees:

Yvonne H. Plummer	Jocelyn Brown	Mathea Rubin
Eric Brettschneider		

OCFS Staff: Renee Rider

<i>SCAA Staff:</i> Karen Schimke	Diane Mastin
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<i>ACS Staff:</i> Zeinab Chahine	Jennifer Rojas
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Guests:

NYC Dept. of Education:	Lillian Gerelick	Joshua Marquez
Deputy Mayor's Office:	Jennifer Jones Austin	Leslie Cornfeld
United Way of NYC:	Kathryn O'Neal-Dunham	
Other:	Vivian Farmery	Sharron Madden

Handouts:

Meeting Agenda
Report of The Interagency Task Force on Child Welfare and Safety
Summary materials from Case Reviews and the Accountability Review Panel
Ideas for Consideration for Panel Recommendations
Chart highlighting characteristics of child fatality reports
A6610/S4009 Legislation and Sponsor's Memo
Joint Panel Meeting Survey
Updated chart on the 2007-8 NYS Budget
Draft CRP Operating Guidelines
Information on "People First" Coordinated Listening Forums
Minutes of the April 3rd meeting
S3318 Sponsor's Memo: Civil Confinement Legislation
Article: *Axing the paper pushers*, Courier Life Publications, 4/29/07

The meeting began with the announcement that one Panel Co-chair had been called into court unexpectedly. Therefore, the panel did not have a quorum. Decisions to be made by the panel will be transmitted by email to panel members. There were no objections to the minutes from the last meeting. Panel members will receive a draft communication from the panel to Commissioner Mattingly by email for their review and approval. There was agreement that ACS staff and Commissioner Mattingly had not made any agreements with the panel at the last meeting other than ACS could provide case records in a more organized manner to the panel. ACS staff stated their willingness to consider any requests from the panel and to discuss their response with them. Panel members reiterated their concern about the condition, poor writing skills, lack of information and lack of organization in the case records.

Leslie Cornfeld, Director, Interagency Task Force, gave an overview of the task force's work. Additional comments were added by Jillian Gerelick and Joshua Marquez from NYC Department of Education. The Task Force was mandated to look at the interactions between ACS and Law Enforcement and ACS and the schools and to make recommendations for improvements. This report was released 3/31/06. As the Task Force conducted its work, members realized that they should also look at the interactions between hospitals and ACS. In December, a second report was released addressing recommendations for hospitals and ACS interactions and collaborations. Some of their recommendations include:

- ACS and Department of Education: Clearly define educational neglect and define strategies to identify and strengthen the schools response to students who are absent.

Actions: Clarified whether or not actual harm to a student had to be demonstrated in order for a report to be accepted. They differentiate between those students who are truant vs. those students who are excluded from school. They have been able to expedite investigations into school absences by instituting a school absence alert, or 407, which is triggered when absences reach 10 consecutive days or 20 intermittent days within a certain time frame. They now have school liaisons in every school in NYC who provide a link between the school and ACS. These liaisons are teachers in most schools. In addition, schools will link families to preventive services to provide support before they become involved with ACS and track their involvement. ACS is expanding preventive services in order to reach families at an earlier point. In addition, DOE and ACS are looking at helping students who are involved in ACS get their educational needs met. All these actions will lead to enhanced communications.

She reported that educational neglect cases are up by 16% since these recommendations were implemented and stated that most of these cases are cases with merit. At this time, they do not have breakdowns by age levels and have not tracked special education students separately. In addition, someone in the district office has been designated as a broker who can facilitate any concerns. Contact can always be made with school principals. More information is available on the school district's web site at <http://schools.nyc.gov> or by calling. The Task Force needs to do more to get the word out to the field. ACS can also be called when one is concerned that activity on a case is not happening the way it should.

- ACS and Law Enforcement:

Actions: NYPD has assigned a full time officer located at ACS. ACS has assigned Sue Morley, a former law enforcement officer, to its headquarters staff to supervise investigations. NYPD created a new command center that is available 24/7. They now have patrol supervisors and radio code designation for these calls, allowing police to track their response times. NYPD and ACS are now holding joint trainings. An information data base is almost ready for implementation which will serve to enhance investigations. Law Enforcement has developed better connections with CAC's. They also realized a need to reach out to the child care field because child care workers have made the fewest reports of all mandated reporters.

SCAA was asked to add Ms. Cornfeld to any emails go out with NYC panel announcing meetings. She was extended an invitation to attend any future meetings of the panel. Panel

members indicated an interest in learning how the 311 hotline fits into this work. The panel will extend an invitation to Jennifer Jones Austin to talk about her work across agencies and services at a future panel meeting.

Comments addressed the pace of change in such a short time period, the need to sustain these efforts over time, especially with any future change in administration, and how to make sure that the protocols and procedures are followed at all 1400 schools in the city. The Task Force has required some detailed reporting forms that must be submitted on a regular basis. They believe those forms will provide answers to some of those questions.

The panel then discussed the decision to hold the May 3rd meeting when a request had been made by at least one panel member to consolidate the March and May meetings. They reiterated that at the April meeting, panel members indicated their interest in holding a May meeting.

Panel members discussed the proposed differential response legislation. The legislation proposed this year is different than legislation proposed in the past in four ways: 1) it excludes cities with a population over two million, 2) track switching from the assessment to the investigation track can be done by an administrative notice instead of filing a new report, 3) has a new name, and 4) calls for an evaluation. The legislation has moved out of the Senate and Assembly Children and Family Committees. Panel members indicated their concern that NYC was excluded and the fact that no funding was included for start up costs. They needed additional information before coming to a decision whether or support or oppose S4009/A6610. When this additional information becomes available the panel will either have a phone conference call or discussion by email as to whether or not they want to support, oppose, or remain silent on this legislation. SCAA staff will contact the bill's sponsor with their questions. The panel co-chair will contact Commissioner Mattingly regarding his specific concerns about offering a differential response to families in NYC.

Packet materials contained information summarizing the discussions from the case reviews, child fatality reports, and some ideas for areas of recommendations to support the panel's work to reach recommendations from the review of cases. OCFS has produced child fatality reports for 2005 which may help with comparisons. That report should be released shortly.

Agenda items for panel's July meeting include: funding for DOE staff, discussion related to possible recommendations.

Panel's next meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2007 from 10 to 12 at the United Way of NYC.