

Western Citizen Review Panel
Minutes of the meeting, October 6, 2006

Attendees:

James Vazzana
Ellen Kennedy
Dennis Wittman

Paula Mazur
Augusta Walsh
Stephan Perkowski

Dennis Walczyk
Chris Schnars

OCFS Staff: Dick Nells

SCAA Staff: Karen Schimke, Diane Mastin

Handouts:

OCFS Response to Panels 2006 Annual Report and Recommendations

Letter from Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies

2006 Child Welfare Legislation Chart

S6703B/A10023

Veto Message S7660A/A11151A

2006 Recommendations Working Document

Assembly Executive Summary: Children Just Don't Die

Howard Davidson's PowerPoint presentation from the 2006 National CRP meeting

Announcements: OMH Researchers awarded \$2.25 million NIMH grant

OCFS Effective and Promising Practices Website

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:

New HHS Regulations Focus Medicaid Documentation Requirement on U.S. Citizen Families

Children in Foster Care May Have to Delay Health Care Because of Federal Regulations on Citizenship Requirement

Information on Child Welfare Information Gateway

Fact Sheet: The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006

Minutes from the meeting, May 15, 2006

Meeting began by welcoming new member Dennis Walczyk. The panel received Kathleen Crowley's resignation from the panel.

Panel members expressed their appreciation the OCFS response to the panels' annual report. OCFS staff and local departments of social services are extremely busy implementing the changes and releasing RFP's. Time will be needed to understand the impact of all the changes before assessing what else might be needed. SCAA staff provided an update on the work to revise the "rights letter". A revision has been drafted and is now being reviewed by OCFS legal staff.

Concern was expressed over several pieces of legislation proposed and/or passed in the legislature this past year. SCAA will provide information about legislation regarding school protocols and a zero tolerance campaign at the panel's next meeting. They expressed a need to understand how the new laws having to do with child fatality teams will be implemented and in obtaining the work load study report and recommendations due December 1st.

The panel reviewed the suggestions for possible recommendations made by the Eastern Panel, offering specific comments, concerns, and additions for consideration. Questions for which SCAA staff will provide further information at the next meeting of the panel had to do with migrant and immigrant populations and home visiting programs and the availability of Home and Community Based Waivers slots on reservations.

Panel members were informed of a communication the panel coordinator received from a parent in the Western Panel region expressing concerns about treatment received by CPS workers, lack of professionalism, lack of training, and lack of attention to parental rights. Panel members expressed their interest in addressing these concerns once they have specific details.

Updates were given by SCAA and OCFS staff. Panel members were directed to a copy of Howard Davidson's presentation given at the national Citizen Review Panel meeting in which he makes several recommendations for panels' exploration and evaluation. Panel members were offered the opportunity to represent the panel through attendance at a conference on child welfare. Panel members should contact SCAA staff if interested.

Information was given on the new Medicaid regulations, OCFS Foster Care Waiver application and the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006. If approved, the Foster Care Waiver will allow the state to serve up to 3,300 children after the three year roll out period. The roll out will begin the first year with those communities that are most ready: Rochester, Albany, and New York City. The plan will help more children remain in their communities with their foster care families.

Next Meeting: Friday, October 13 in Syracuse New York.