

Joint Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services

Meeting Summary February 8, 2023 • 10:00 AM

Attendees:

Eastern Panel Members

Mary McCarthy
Sharon Chesna
JoAnn Merriman
Kathy Halas
Kellyann Kostyal-Larrier

NYC Panel Members

David Lansner
Mathea Rubin

Western Panel Members

Ellen Kennedy
John Treahy

Welfare Research, Inc.

Darlene Ward
Liz Roberts
Felicia LaClair
Kerri Barglof

Welcome – Mary McCarthy

The meeting commenced at 10:05 AM.

SCR Meeting Review

The Panel members began with a review of their meeting with OCFS/SCR personnel, noting that the overall meeting was positive, and while there are many things wrong with the system, the approach they presented was good. Other reactions included a focus on receiving data that has not yet been provided by OCFS related to SCR reports. Panel members would still like to meet with the acting Commissioner this year.

Comptroller's Audit Feedback

As the panels moved to the OSC report, it was requested that panels read it more in-depth as it provided a review of the child fatality process by OCFS and recommendations for enhancement. The members were tasked with carefully reviewing it by the next regional meetings and deciding on the response comments to OCFS.

Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC)

Shifting to the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC), updates were provided on their most recent January meeting. It was reported that the CPRAC is utilizing data from the Urban Policy Institute and Columbia University's Poverty Center to provide the four leading poverty indicators. The two main indicators are money and housing. The data presented shows direct aid to families and the Empire State Child Tax Credit has the highest impact and benefit on child poverty reduction. The CPRAC is continuing its efforts in finding what will have the fastest and most widely dispersed impact on child poverty in NY state. It was noted that the next meeting would be upcoming in March, and anyone is free to listen in.

Advocacy Meetings

In a review of potential and current advocacy meetings, feedback was given for the most recent panel meeting with Senator Brisport's staff, highlighting that the meeting was overall positive and that Brisport's staff were in alignment with all of the Panels' 2022 Annual Report recommendations. As a follow-up, Mr. David Lansner is working on some legislative language to provide them. Looking forward the panel looks to meet with chairman Hevesi in the near future.

As the panel is shifting into more advocacy efforts, they worked on defining what the guidelines should be, in order to ensure the necessary time could be put forth for their own recommendations. The members present agreed, the scope of all advocacy efforts needs to remain in the purview of their recommendations or state and local child welfare social service laws.

WRI Updates

WRI updated the panel that the annual report has been submitted to OCFS on time and dispersed to everyone including, their recommendation supporters, legislators, accredited social work programs in New York, LDSS Commissioners, and voluntary agencies. WRI brought up a previous request regarding more information on Families Together in New York State, an organization that signed on to the NYCRP recommendations, and was recently called upon by OCFS. Some members were aware of their notoriety and thought it would be worthwhile to invite them to the upcoming regional meetings to develop a further relationship. An update was given on the Western panel's efforts on meeting with local counties. It was reported they have been successful and informative meetings. NYC Panel members are interested in meeting with ACS. Other members requested that the New York Public Welfare Association's Executive Director Paul Brady be invited to the June Joint Panels meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:35 AM

Next CRP Meetings:

- Western Panel: Wednesday, March 1 | 10:00 AM
- NYC Panel: Thursday, March 9 | 4:00 PM
- Eastern Panel: Thursday, March 16 | 1:00 PM
 - o Featuring a presentation from FTNYS
- Joint Panel: Thursday, June 15 | 2:00 PM