

The mission of MCWAP is to assure that the state system is meeting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families through assessment, research, case reviews, advocacy, and greater citizen involvement. Our goal is to promote child safety and quality services for children, youth, and families.

DRAFT Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel Minutes

January 2, 2020 / 9am-11am

DHHS, OCFS / 2 Anthony Avenue, Anchor Room / Augusta, Me

Co-Chair: Bobbi Johnson

Co-Chair: Deb Dunlap

Panel Coordinator: Steph Barrett

Attendance: Jim Jacobs, Betsy Boardman, Deb Dunlap, Jean Youde, Elizabeth Ward-Saxl, Annette MacAlesio, Deb Mc Sweeney, Jamie Brooks, Kelly Del Aquilla, Chris Bicknell, Erin Witham, Debbie Dembski, Todd Landry, Alana Jones, Brie Gutierrez, Bobbi Johnson

On the phone: Cindy Seekins, Lyn Carter, Christine Hufnagel, Alivia Moore, Adrienne Carmack, Travis Bryant, Esther Anne

Minutes Approval

Minutes have been accepted June to September. December will be an online vote.

Panel Updates

CDSIRP (Child Death Serious Injury Review Panel): Currently updating bylaws and process. Examining youth suicide over the last year.

CJTF (Children's Justice Task Force): Organizing annual Judicial Conference 4/2 and 4/3 with focus on shift from child protection to child welfare system for whole family. Will be exploring evolving roles of stakeholders AAGs, judges, CPS workers, how stakeholders can do better with multi-system involvement- holistic service. Attendance is limited by the room size, venue is Sunday River. Community organizations are invited to the tabling event on day two of the conference when the judges are there- share interest with Betsy. Workgroup exploring court navigator program who can help with families at court to help them move through the system.

Subcommittee and Workgroup Reports

Membership workgroup: tabled at last meeting due to no volunteers. Seeking volunteers at this time. Process for onboarding new Panel members would be initial focus. Volunteers: Alana Jones, Deb McSweeney. Panel agreed the executive committee will take workgroup as all volunteers are part of executive committee.

Legislative subcommittee: Panel established this subcommittee at retreat with the purpose of *monitoring all relevant legislation and keeping the panel informed*. Subcommittee members should be folks in the group who follow legislation and will keep MCWAP informed of relevant legislative items between meetings. Volunteer subcommittee members: Betsy Boardman, Bobbi Johnson, Jim Jacobs (mental health), Jean Youde (developmental disabilities), Elizabeth Ward-Saxl (victims services). Chris B noted Melissa Hackett from Maine Children's Alliance

maintains a tracking list for legislation related to children, Deb and Chris will reach out to her about sharing with legislative subcommittee.

Citizen Engagement Subcommittee: Focus is making sure all voices are heard and represented. First call is later today 1/3.

Parent survey workgroup: Currently reviewing information and completing reporting form; will report out to panel next month.

Second opinion workgroup: (Sarah, Jean, Debbie Dembski). Workgroup was on hold during process work, will be meeting again soon. Steph will put workgroup report on Share File account. Panel members asked to provide input to workgroup. Members should email Jean, Debbie, or Sarah with feedback. Elizabeth volunteered to assume Meg's place on the workgroup. Executive committee will schedule time for workgroup presentation on next meeting agenda.

Website workgroup: Mockup of site is established, Steph will share, content is being developed.

OCFS Updates

Bobbi shared following updates:

- PIP was submitted 12/6, waiting for response
- Currently building a draft work plan for strategic priorities, targeting end of January for plan completion. Will share with MCWAP in February. Executive Committee will decide most efficient way to share/review.
- Staffing changes: hiring new Program Administrator for D4 Rockland. D2 Portland Program Administrator Julie McShane has moved to Muskie; Denise Merrill is new PA in Portland and will be hiring for APA.
 - Statewide, longest serving Program Administrator has been in position just five years. Focusing supports and training on professional leadership development.
- DHHS is prioritizing cross-office work focusing on substance affected and substance exposed newborns. Also working on hiring public health nurse to do related work; Bobbi will share posting with panel
- Clinical consultation contract with Spurwink in process of being implemented, with training next week and work to ensure alignment with workforce wellness teams.

Todd shared following updates:

- FFPSA staff lead position still at posting stage. In the meantime, Elissa will be leading two of the workgroups that overlap with Children's Behavioral Health Services
- OCFS is hiring a full-time medical director. Current contracted medical director works for Mass General out of Boston. Goal is to have in-house medical director provide more hours and ongoing consultation to CBHS, Early Childhood, and Child Welfare. Will allow for coordination with other areas such as the child health leadership group. A candidate has been selected, completing hiring process, anticipate announcement this month.

- Preschool Development planning grant completed. 46 states applied the implementation grant (\$30M). Maine applied but was not selected. However, federal budget passed last month included CDBG increase in funds. Children's Cabinet will be building on PDG planning grant work and needs assessment to roll out plan for spending on additional funds in priority areas (access, workforce and quality). Cabinet will meet at end of month and will finalize plans for early childhood and youth, as well as funding allocations for those focus areas. Specifics should be available for February meeting.

Legislative Updates:

Legislative session starts next week. Brie Gutierrez coordinates all legislative activity at OCFS. Todd and Bobbi shared the following updates:

- The children's caucus will meet on 1/14. Todd will be presenting at that meeting.
- Thursday 1/16 2PM is a joint meeting of HHS and Judiciary Committees. Todd will be presenting.
- LD 192 was passed last session, regarding MCWAP report to legislature, prior to end of session. In the future, the plan will be to submit to legislature by end of January.
- OCFS has submitted caseload standards report to the legislature and will submit annually through 2030. Continue to work with PCG on strengthening the workload analytic tool and mediating factors. That work will continue beyond the submission of this report.
- LD 1378 passed last session, re: provision of medical assessments to youth in care. PCHC Key Clinic, McGeneral Prep, Spurwink Center for Safe and Healthy Families are the current three providers in the state. OCFS is working to build medical assessments as a MaineCare service and have through rulemaking by 10/1. The goal will be to be available statewide, to close service gaps in northern and western Maine. It could mean additional providers participating. OCFS will monitor to assure quality is maintained. Panel members encouraged engagement with providers during this development phase to ensure consistency and quality, such as the implications of changed psychologist billing codes and written reports during the judicial process. Bobbi will take questions back to MaineCare.
- DOE, FAME, and OCFS have been working on expanding access to post-secondary education.
- LD1185: legislature interested in child welfare response and support for families affected by substance use; OCFS will be providing information to legislature this month.
- Family Recovery courts in Bangor, Augusta and Lewiston are exploring how to open up eligibility for families when kids aren't already in custody.

Workplan Approval:

Panel voted unanimously to accept MCWAP 2020 Work Plan.

Committee Business:

TOPICS STUDIED/REVIEWED:

- OCFS Strategic Priorities/Child Family Services Review-Performance Improvement Plan updates
- Child Investigations Policy
- Second opinions
- Safety standards for licensure of adoptive and foster families

PROCESS RECOMMENDATION: (Survey Subcommittee) In the future we should try to work with an educational institution in order to have more support and capacity for the evaluation portion – this should be an institution that has a focus on data processing, social work, and child welfare. We might consider a more robust approach with funding, and a specific contract, alternately.

CPS RECOMMENDATION: (Child Investigations Policy) The Panel recommends that CPS continue their current efforts to explore options to meet 24-hour response timelines, which may include more staff, different staff structures (such as a weekend team), and appropriate supervision and support.

PROCESS RECOMMENDATION: If the other two committees have reports, can we request that they submit those to us so we can review; and/or can we have overlapping members report out on the work of the other groups?

Small Group Work:

Panel members broke into two small groups to begin discussing workplan topics in-depth, then reported back to the full panel at end of meeting. Members recommended scheduling second room if possible, for discussions at next meeting, and commitments to one group or another for continuity of dialogue. Bobbi encouraged panel to consider what supports are needed from OCFS for the small group work.

Small Group notes:

1. Study *education and support services to foster parents, caseworkers and providers regarding children with developmental and behavioral health issues*, and develop recommendations

Jim Jacobs, Jean Youde, Deb McSweeney, Alana Jones, Elizabeth Ward, Adrienne Carmack, Travis Bryant, Christine Hufnagel

What do we know already? It would be helpful to know what exists currently regarding training for foster parents, kinship caregivers, caseworkers, and providers. What is initial and ongoing training. Frequency, content, obligations? Quality of training and information available, course materials. Who are the providers that need to be involved? (CACs) What are current forces influence the system? Who has the power to drive the issue? Include work of Muskie through Cooperative Agreement (*initial focus on preservice training to caseworkers and foster parents)

Next steps:

- Crosswalk assessment findings to existing and recommended Department policies and make recommendations regarding funding to address areas of need. Define how we know if a child has a disability, how are they identified and then are they getting right services?
- Gather trainings requirements for caseworkers, kin providers, resource parents
- Considerations:
 - o Identification
 - o Developmental trauma
 - o SEN/ DABS/ NAS
 - o CDS connection
 - o FAS identification
 - o Statewide PREP
 - o Continuity of care for TCM/ BHH

- o Spuwink Contract
- o Humility and practice model, emphasize.

2. Study *family quality engagement policy and practice related to fathers and other legally recognized family structures*, and develop recommendations

Bobbi Johnson, Debbie Dembski, Erin Witham, Chris Bicknell, Kelly Del Aquila, Jamie Brooks, Deb Dunlap, Betsy Boardman

Brainstormed areas of focus:

- Assessment
- Legal Requirement Maine Parentage Act
- Best Practices om Engaging Fathers/Other caregivers
- Policies/Procedures
- Training – values
- Resources exist/gaps and history of father-specific programming (i.e.Strong Fathers @ TOA)
- Data
- CCWIS

Next Steps:

Action	Lead
Conduct online vote to approve December minutes. Send mockup of new website to Panel.	Steph
-Email Betsy if interested in tabling at Judicial Conference - Review Second Opinion workgroup document and send feedback to workgroup - Decide on small group participation commitment	All members
Schedule Membership Workgroup dialogue	Alana, Deb M
Share relevant legislation information with MCWAP members. Check with Melissa Hackett re: child-focused legislation tracker.	Legislative Committee (Betsy Boardman, Bobbi Johnson, Jim Jacobs, Jean Youde, Elizabeth Ward-Saxl Deb D, Chris
Include on February Agenda: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Second Opinion and Parent Survey workgroup reports ● OCFS Strategic priority work plans ● Children’s Cabinet plans ● MCWAP Annual report update 	Executive Committee

Next meeting: 2 Anthony Ave, February 7th, 2020, Augusta

Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel Work Plan- Calendar Year 2020

Approved 1.3.2020

MCWAP is a federally mandated group of professional and private citizens who are responsible for determining whether state and local agencies are effectively discharging child protective and child welfare responsibilities; pursuant to the Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and the Children's Justice Act (CJA). The mission of MCWAP is to assure that the state system is meeting the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and families through assessment, research, case reviews, advocacy, and greater citizen involvement. Our goal is to promote child safety and quality services for children, youth, and families.

Panel Purpose	Action(s)	Lead(s)	Target Date
<p>A. Examine the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protection agencies, and evaluate the extent to which the agencies are effectively discharging their child protection responsibilities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include child welfare data as a standing monthly agenda item 2. Study <i>education and support services to foster parents, caseworkers and providers regarding children with developmental and behavioral health issues,</i> and develop recommendations 3. Study <i>family quality engagement policy and practice related to fathers and other legally recognized family structures,</i> and develop recommendations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive Committee 2. Panel/Workgroup 	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>B. Review and evaluate State investigative, administrative, civil and criminal judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor investigative/ administrative/judicial process 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Panel/Workgroup 	<p>8/30/2020</p>
<p>C. Provide for public outreach and comment to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in the community</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update website 2. Identify ways to bring citizen voice to the table 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Website Update Subcommittee 2. Citizen Engagement Subcommittee 	<p>6/30/2020 6/30/2020</p>

<p>D. Make policy and training recommendations and other comments/recommendations as are considered relevant and useful, regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - investigative, administrative, and judicial handling of cases of child abuse and neglect - experimental, model, and demonstration programs for testing innovative approaches and techniques - reform of State laws, ordinances, regulations, protocols, and procedures to provide comprehensive protection for children 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor model/demonstration programs 2. Monitor law/regulation/protocol 3. Make recommendations for spending Children’s Justice Act funds that align with goals in 3-year CJA report and meet federal standards 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Panel/Workgroup 2. Panel/Legislative Subcommittee 3. Panel 	<p>8/30/2020</p> <p>8/30/2020</p> <p>8/30/2020</p>
<p>E. Prepare an annual report containing a summary of the activities of the panel and recommendations to improve the child protective services system, and make the report available to the public</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop new format for annual reports, complete and publish 2019 Annual Report 2. Finalize 2020 recommendations at Annual Retreat 3. Develop and publish 2020 Annual Report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report Subcommittee 2. Panel 3. Report Subcommittee 	<p>1/30/2020</p> <p>9/30/2020</p> <p>1/30/2021</p>
<p>F. Ensure and improve efficacy of Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend annual National CRP conference 2. Increase alignment and coordination with other two CAPTA panels’ activities and recommendations 3. Develop orientation materials and onboard new members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive Committee, Panel Delegates 2. Executive Committee 3. Membership Subcommittee 	<p>6/30/2020</p> <p>12/31/2020</p> <p>12/31/2020</p>

	4. Hold Annual MCWAP retreat	4. Executive Committee	9/30/2020
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