

**Maine Justice for Children Task Force**  
**June 14, 2022, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Via Zoom**

**Welcome** (10:00 a.m. – 10:05 a.m.) – Chief Justice Valerie Stanfill

**Review of March 2022 Minutes** (10:05 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.)

- March 2022 minutes unanimously approved.

**Interagency Data Assessment Project** (10:10 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.) (see attached PowerPoint)

Race and Equity Committee Update: Associate Justice Rick Lawrence and Public Consulting Group

- Karen Hallenbeck, PCG update (PowerPoint presentation):
  - PCG synthesizing findings into two reports:
    - The Data Mapping Inventory Report; and
    - The Final Report.
  - PCG will draft the Data Mapping Inventory Report by June 24, 2022
  - PCG will draft the Final Report by July 15, 2022
  - PCG will finalize the reports by September 30, 2022.

**Updates (10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.) Maine Supreme Judicial Court – Chief Justice Valerie Stanfill**

- Justice Lawrence has officially moved into his new position at the Supreme Judicial Court and will serve as the Family Division Liaison.
- Judge French has stepped down as Chief of the District Court, and Judge Davis is now Chief. Judge Sutton is now Deputy Chief.
- New judicial appointments:
  - Judge Terence Harrigan, Judge Peter Malia, Judge Meghan Szylvian, Judge Andrew Robinson, and Judge Amy Faircloth.
- Upcoming retirements mean there will be another five vacancies in the District Court.
- York Judicial Center is slated to open spring 2023.
  
- **An Organizational Update from the Judicial Branch – Betsy Boardman**
  - New PC filings: January 1, 2022- June 10, 2022- 432 new filings. Same time last year there were 422 new filings—2% increase.
  - The next new Maine CASA training will be in August via Zoom.
  - Betsy presented to the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature on the work of the Task Force.
- **An Organizational Update from the Office of Child and Family Services at DHHS – Dr. Todd Landry, Director & Bobbi Johnson, Associate Director**
  - Casey Family Programs update (see attached PowerPoint)
- **An Organizational Update from the Office of the Attorney General – Ariel Gannon, Assistant Attorney General, Chief of the Child Protective Division**
  - Division is fully staffed with AAGs and support staff. This is one of the biggest divisions at the Office of the Attorney General.

- 27 AAGs and one full time appellate attorney. They share 3 AAGs with the child support division.
- On average, AAGs have 100-120 cases at any given time.
- Appellate update: In March there were 12 briefs due. Currently they have 23 briefs due to the Law Court.
- AAGs are also representing the Office of the Attorney General in several stakeholder groups, committees, and workgroups.
- Also provide multiple trainings, including recently a training on children experiencing gender dysphoria, training on building an unassailable trial record, an appellate advocacy training, and training on the intersection of PFAs and PFHs with child welfare.
- June 2022: 2,421 cases pending.
- **An Organizational Update from the Maine Commission on Indigent Legal Services** – Ellie Maciag, Deputy Director
  - Down to about 100 attorneys statewide who are able to accept protective custody cases. 233 overall attorneys accepting all case types.
  - Legislature approved and funded the first rural defender unit. Currently, they are working through the HR process to post those positions. This will be a unit of 5 attorneys who will be dispatched to areas of the state where there is a critical need for counsel, including Aroostook and Washington Counties.
- **A Panel Update from the Maine Child Welfare Advisory Panel (MCWAP)** – Debra Dunlap, Co-Chair & Ahmen Cabral, Co-Chair (see attached PowerPoint)
  - March 2022—MCWAP reviewed when and how information is communicated to parents working with Child Protective Services about their rights and responsibilities during their case.
  - April 2022—MCWAP reviewed ways OCFS, AFFM, and YLAT are collecting information from citizens with lived experience and how this information informs continuous quality improvement.
  - May 2022-MCWAP hosted CDSIRP Chair and Child Welfare Ombudsman.
- **A Panel Update from the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Panel** – Mark Moran, Co-Chair (see attached PowerPoint)

**Strategic Plan Updates (11:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.)**

- **Parent Curriculum Workgroup Update:** Kellie Dell’Aquila, Jamie Brooks, & Karen Tompkins
  - Workgroup continues to meet on a monthly basis.
  - Approximately 15 participants. Feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Data is being collected via pre and post surveys.
  - Working with a national expert to do additional data analysis and measure metrics (court attendance, family team meeting participation etc.) and compare that data to parents who have not participated in program.
  - Program is facing two primary struggles: participation and continued funding.

- Participation: Efforts to increase participation include courts sending information to parents; The Opportunity Alliance (TOA) has added two sessions just for providers so they can spread the word to parents; TOA has also provided presentations regionally to OCFS staff.
- Funding: MJB is funding the program through the end of the calendar year. Possible options for sustainable funding include the legislature and community partners.
- **Continuing Education Subcommittee Update:** Betsy Boardman
  - Continuing to meet for the next training during fall admin week.
  - Potential keynote speaker will be Adrian McLemore. He has lived experience as a child who was involved in the child welfare system and as an adult who has been a kinship caregiver.
  - Other sessions: what has come out of pandemic that we want to retain in child welfare system, discussion of struggles; trauma-based responses to the pandemic and how we can best support families moving forward.

**Miscellaneous (11:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)**

- Next meeting September 13, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

**ADJOURNED at 11:16 a.m.**