

# State Advisory Council Meeting

## January 19, 2024

### Delta Colonial

#### **10:45am Welcome, Introductions**

Rochelle Beley, Chair, opened the meeting at 10:54am and had everyone introduce themselves.

Brandi Loch, Logan Ward, Julie Burk, Autumn Beattie, Sarah Liggett, Natalie Bahnmitter, Joy Jones, Mike Burk, Chanelle LaValley, Melissa Decamp, Maria Damaxen, Danny Erdahl, Kim Casey, Jennifer Hoerauf, Theresa Becker, Sarita Jones-Jessee, Laura McCullough, Christy Hendricks, Jill Burgan, Nikki Gardner, Kaci Gaub, Courtney Callaghan, Eric Barnosky, Deb Cole, Kate Larcom, Megan Bailey, Judge Ashley Harada, Jennifer Blodgett, Ben Davis, Adam Larson, and Nikki Grossberg. Lived Experience Panel Members: Ariel Cowsler, Dannie Erdahl, Chanelle LaValley, Alyssa VanCampen, Christina VanQuinn, Dillon Hayes.

#### **10:45am Approve Minutes**

Motion to approve October 21, 2023, minutes made by Megan Bailey and seconded by Christy Hendricks. All approved.

Brandi Loch mentioned the objectives of this meeting...

- Introduce SAC members to the Legislative Process, MT State Legislature's Interim Committee on Children, Families and Health and Human Services Subcommittee, CPS Work Group and to process observations.
- Provide participants with perspectives of individuals with lived experience within the child welfare system.
- Provide participants with data to tell the story of permanency outcomes in Montana and discuss ways to use this data with the State Advisory Council.
- Identify volunteers to develop a draft State Advisory Council Charter to be presented at April 24, 2024, meeting.

#### **11:00-11:30am Results of November 2023 Survey of State Advisory Council Members**

##### **State Level Policy Role of State Advisory Council – Observations from Legislative Subcommittee Meeting**

Mike Burk sent out survey at end of October 21, 2023, meeting. Results are:

- Most people would attend hybrid meeting.
- Most said they would actively participate in in-person meetings.
- The top two topics
  - Permanency enrolled in the council and having to improve in relation to tribes towards child welfare.
  - Elevating the voices in Lived experiences.
- Every year every state goes through a Federal review. Montana will be going through it in late 2025.

How can we participate more:

- Every region needs to have at least one council.

Shared observations from the CPS Task Force Meeting

- A few of those in attendance have attended Legislative Committee or hearings.

### **11:30-12:45 Voices of Lived Experience - The Road to Permanency Panel**

- Road to Permanency
- Feedback from those who have actual experience.
- Working on permanency (child has a permanent home or with family member or permanent connection)
- Key expectations: family stays together or returns to family setting as quickly as possible.

Laura McCullough asked the lived experienced panel attendees (Arial Cowsler, Dannie Erdahl, Chanelle LaValley, Alyssa VanCampen, Christina VanQuinn (Kairos), and Dillon Hayes) the following questions:

- Why are you involved?
- How long was your voice heard and how long did it take for you to be reunified?
- Did anyone tell you why you were in the foster care system and what was done to help you and your family?
- Were you able to maintain connections with biological parents?
- How did your foster parents meet you?
- How well were things arranged to prepare you for foster care?
- What would have made a difference to help you with the foster parent?
- What is one thing your CFSD worker or any other provider did that was most supportive? what would you want them to have done differently?
- Did you feel you had a voice while in foster care? Do you have anything additional you would like to share?
- Are there any questions or comments from audience?

### **12:45-1:25 Lunch**

### **1:20- 1:45 Understanding and Using Permanency Data to Improve Outcomes**

#### **Permanency Planning Team Preliminary Data**

- What impact did you hear on your roles?
- Believing Children – No one would ask if a child was happy or asked if they had issues.

### **1:45– 2:15 Breakout Groups on Permanency Data**

Charts were reviewed that showed:

- Timelines to Permanency in months by fiscal year
- Achievement of Permanency in 12 months for those children entering care
- Achievement of Permanency in 12 months for children already in care 12-23 months
- Achievement of Permanency in 12 months for children already in care 24+ months
- Round 3 PIP Goal Related to Permanency
  - Hold Pre-Hearing Conferences to engage parents and stakeholders early incases and identify needs and services to inform the case.
  - Develop Family Support Teams to improve timely safety and support services to ensure children remain in the home or are reunified in a timely manner.

- Improve permanency outcomes through the use of concurrent planning.
  - Created permanency planning Team (PPT) meetings.
  - Updated concurrent Permanency Planning procedures.
  - Created and shared Permanency Planning Quick Tips.
  - Provided Additional Training on concurrent Planning.
  - Working to add additional training to MCAN that will include additional training on permanency.
  - Reviewed PPT (Permanency Planning Teams) procedures and tracking and have updated it to collect better data.

Logan Ward reviewed the PPT report.

- Barriers to permanency outside of agency control
  - Court delays.
  - Frequently continued hearings.
  - Delays in filing TPR by attorneys.
  - Delays in receiving court orders.
- Permanency Planning Teams – Improving Outcomes

## **2:15 – 3:00 Breakout Groups Takeaways**

### **Next Steps – Solicit Charter Development Volunteers/Wrap-up**

- Think about the lived experience panel and the Data Story that was shared:
  - What story does the data tell? What do you see? Anything missing?
- Think of the role you play in the child welfare system.
  - What has been your experience with permanency?
  - Is there anything you see that you can do in your role to improve the outcomes?

There was discussion in the breakout groups about their concerns and thoughts on the lived experience stories that the panel reported. They also discussed their roles in the child welfare system and ideas on how the system could be improved.

Idea: Julie Burk suggested to get all 11 judges together at an informal meeting to discuss what can be improved for permanency for children's outcomes.

Charter Development Volunteer Opportunity: where are we going as a State Advisory Council?

- Mike Burk asked for volunteers to set up a charter of possibly 8 people who will help this group grow. This group will be a charter that will meet virtually for about an hour in length with dates to be scheduled.
- If anyone would like to join the Charter, email Brandi.

Next Meeting Date: April 19, 2024 (9 am – 12 Noon - Virtual) . There were no public comments.

Meeting adjourned by Rochelle Beley at 2:45pm