**State Advisory Board Meeting**

March 10, 2020

2 Peachtree Street NW 19th floor, Atlanta, GA 30303

**Board members present:** Chair Michelle Zeanah, Vice Chair Belva Dorsey, Secretary DeLaine Hunter, Tommy Hill (phone), Barbara Sims (phone), Meredith Holt, Rodney Griffin, Cathy Atkins, Emily Cole, Judy Manning, Octavia Fugerson (phone), Judge Shondeana Morris, Susie Weller, Nancy White, JaNice VanNess (phone), Tina Bartleson (phone),

**Board members absent:** Roger Bryant, Judge Emily Bryant

**Other attendees:** Dan Thrailkill, Foster/Adoptive Parent, Fran Chastain, R2 Board Member, Lauren Waits, Atlanta Community Food Bank, Andreka Ewing, Student, Kenneth Braswell, Fathers Inc., Lawrence Welborn, Fathers Inc.

**DFCS staff:** Director Tom Rawlings, LaMarva Ivory, Jerrica Williams, Patrice Meadows, Ramirez Evans, Kevin Harris, Chris Hempfling, Mary Havick, Carol Christopher, Dahlia Bell-Brown, Lee Biggar, Cliff O’Connor, Glenene Lanier, Dajari Patterson, Steven Turner, Darrell Braswell, Tammy Reed, Jon Anderson, Mary Beth Lukich, Melinda Meadows

* Welcome and housekeeping by Chair Zeanah. Meeting called to order at 10:06 a.m. Quorum met.
* Motion to approve today’s agenda. Moved by S. Weller and seconded by J. Manning. All in favor. Approved.
* Introductions by board members and attendees.
* Motion for approval of Jan 12, 2020 minutes. Moved by J. Manning and seconded by R. Griffin. All in favor. Approved.
* Presentation by Director Rawlings
  + National Social Work Month Update
    - Social Workers: Generations Strong
    - NCWWI
* AFPAG Conference 2020
  + Brief legislative update
    - PAUSE pilot
  + Receiving Hope Center
    - Human Trafficking
* Census 2020
  + Every person counts
* COVID-19
* Working with other agencies on response
* So many unknowns
* Want to be sensitive to concerns but also have to balance the work
* OFI
  + Online SNAP and Medicaid
  + BOTS
* CW
  + Simplification
  + We are still hiring
  + Questions
    - S. Weller: Are there specific needs for foster parents? **They are concerned about policy. Placement stability/changes.**
    - T. Bartleson: With RSM nurses transferring to DFCS but not the budget, did that affect DFCS? **We didn’t get the nurses but the eligibility staff were transferred to us. The House restored positions, so it eased the budget cut. The staff came from DCH.**
* Presentation by Kevin Harris
  + Foster Care and Adoption Reform Proposals
  + Foster Care Religious Liberty Exemption Bill
  + Improved Participation in Foster Care
  + Raise the Age Bill
  + Public Welfare Case Managers Proposal
  + Eligibility for Newly Enrolled Foster Care Students
  + Juvenile Code
  + Vital Record Reports
  + Georgia Loves Our Adolescents Act
  + Questions:
    - Judge Morris: Do you think the majority will pass? **Usually the passing will be done and passed before crossover day. There may be several amendments.**
    - Judge Morris: Enhanced penalty question.
* Presentation by Darrell Braswell
  + HR Onboarding numbers
    - 56 days to onboard new staff
    - 25 budgeted vacant positions for CW
* 140 budgeted vacant positions for OFI
* Strategic hiring
* Staff Resource Management
  + Piloting in Regions 5 and 13; Statewide by May
* Mitigation Strategies
* Accountability/Engagement
* Presentation by Dajari Patterson
  + CRUU Data
    - Children in care demographics
    - Teens in care
    - Children in care with mental health/health needs
* Caregiver support
* Foster Parent Recruitment
  + Questions:
    - S. Weller: Where are the remaining kids placed? Some of those youth may be placed in **CPA foster homes, CCI group homes, runaway status, or placed with relatives.**
    - Judge Morris**:** Is the decrease of youth in care from adoption or youth aging out of care? **We had 1400 adoptions last year and more youth exiting care than entering.**
    - Judge Morris: What does a group home look like? How do they attend school? **The majority of them are single family houses with a small number of children in them. They are staffed. The children attend public school in the county where they are placed.**
    - Dajari will share presentation with LaMarva to share with the board.
* Presentation by Jon Anderson:
  + COVID-19
  + Current OFI Timeliness- All programs
  + SNAP Online
  + Ease of use for CP and WP and Dashboards
  + Family CAP
    - Question:

C. Atkins- Is the federal government going to give us a break-timeliness? **Food stamps are the biggest concern as it relates to timeliness.** **They have been cooperative with us when it comes to timeliness.**

* Working lunch and committee meetings until 12:30 p.m.
* Presentation by Dahlia-Bell Brown
  + Office of Strategy, Innovation, and Engagement overview
  + State of HOPE updates
    - The journey from 2017-2020
    - SOH and mental health
    - Round 3 application period is open
    - SOH toolkit overview
* Questions:
  + How connected is SOH with education? **We have had applications from higher-ed. GSU works with our team. UGA has connected with us.**
* Presentation by Kenneth Braswell, CEO of Fathers Inc.
  + Mission Statement
    - Building strong partnerships
* Questions:
  + LaMarva: Can you talk more about the Clayton County DFCS office? How are you impacting our agency? **We have 9 barbershop and 3 libraries in Clayton County. Conducting ‘fostering family leaders. Service projects within schools that their children attend. Next level life school’s curriculum.**
  + Glenene: Is there an age group you focus on? **Right now, we focus on elementary schools. Middle school and high school transforms into a mentoring space. We do not mentor.**
  + What is your primary service area? **Westside of Atlanta, Riverdale, East Point, Forest Park, Rockdale, Columbus, etc. We move at the speed of resources.**
  + Judge Morris: How can we connect? **We can find funders who want to fund great partnerships.**
* Board member regional reports
  + R1-
    - HR Pass
    - Hiring process concerns
    - Petty cash issues that need to be addressed
    - Travel policy concerns (faster reimbursement)
    - Social Work appreciation month
    - SOH meetings are taking place
* R3-
* RAB is active and working through committees
* Foster care recruitment has been going well in the region
* Some concern about OFI staffing levels and potential negative impact on error rates.
* R4-
* Regional Board Training
* R5-
* Working with expectant and parenting youth in care
* Nat’l Association of Social Work Partnership on Brain Development
* Annie Casey partnership
* R6-
  + - No regional board yet
* R7-
  + Washington County meeting was successful
  + Richmond County has moved to a better location, still waiting on permanent home
* R8-
  + Regional board meetings have reconvened. We do have a regional director.
  + Still waiting on a Muscogee County director
  + Chatham and Troup County DFCS office service concerns
  + Foster and birth parent concerns with case managers responsiveness
* R11-
  + HR Pass
  + Hiring concerns
  + Concerns about case workers and DFCS offices
  + Leadership academy will begin with staff from all 18 counties- both CW and OFI staff selected to attend
  + No corrective action plan written for OFI (the only region) Yay!
* R12-
  + Church that has reached out to assist with the county closets to fill them and maintain them.
  + Board members meet quarterly with the county director for casual lunch to get to know one another better.
  + We are looking forward to Region 12 roadshow. We hope the regional board members will attend because attendance has been low.
  + Chatham County concerns
* R13-
  + Largest reduction of children in care for 2019
  + Staff resource management pilot is moving forward
  + Microsoft teams’ pilot has been stalled
* R14-
* Feb 3rd Dekalb County DFCS has moved to a new facility
* New building looks great but there are no sidewalks
* Difficult to get calls returned
* Closing remarks by Dr. Zeanah
* Working on alternate plan for May Board meeting -virtual meeting if needed
* Inform Board Chair and LaMarva if you wish to not renew your term upon expiration this year
* Motion to adjourn at 2:03 p.m. by B. Dorsey. Seconded by D. Hunter. All in favor.