**State Advisory Board Meeting**

September 8, 2020

Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Board members present:** Chair Michelle Zeanah, Vice-Chair Belva Dorsey, Secretary DeLaine Hunter, Janice VanNess, Emily Cole, Judy Manning, Shondeana Morris, Susie Weller, Nancy White, Tina Bartleson, Emily Brantley, Octavia Ferguson, Delaine Hunter, Roger Bryant

**Board members absent:** Tommy Hill, Barbara Sims, Meredith Holt, Rodney Griffin

**Other attendees:** Rachel Castillo, Helen Sloat, Japera Johnson Flemming,

**DFCS staff:** Director Tom Rawlings, LaMarva Ivory, Jerrica Williams, Ramirez Evans, Kevin Harris, Chris Hempfling, Mary Havick, Carol Christopher, Jon Anderson, Denise Wells, Mary Beth Lukich, Ashley Parham, Chelsey Williams, Carla Fairley, Trevor Yanken, Salena Perry, Jeffery Brown, Shannon Fields, Danny Nuckolls, Chris Wright, Helen Sloat, Shay Thornton, Rhonda Wheeler

* Welcome, housekeeping, and roll call by Chair Dr. Zeanah and LaMarva Ivory. Meeting called to order at 10:02 a.m. Quorum met.
* Motion to approve today’s agenda. Moved by Shondeana Morris and seconded by Roger Bryant. All in favor. Approved.
* Motion for approval of July 14, 2020 minutes. Moved by Tina Bartleson and seconded by DeLaine Hunter. All in favor. Approved.
* Presentation by Director Rawlings
  + COVID-19 updates
    - Staff are continuing to telework to ensure safety of staff.
    - We are still encouraging staff to telework because is beneficial to staff and families. Work is still getting done and we are staying safe.
    - We have encouraged staff to take advantage of our Employee Assistance Program and encouraging self-care.
    - Virtual lobby (Jon will speak more on this)
* LaMarva Ivory is now the Deputy Division Director of Strategy, Innovation and Engagement.
* State of Hope round three sites announced.
* National Kinship Care Month – September
  + DFCS is hosting informative webinars every Thursday of this month for kinship caregivers.
  + These webinar topics are:
    - The Importance of Self-Care
    - Understanding Traumatic Stress
    - Navigating the Courts
    - Couponing and Coin Counting
  + Questions
    - Susie Weller: What is the name of the book on Kinship? **The Best Interest of the Child by Goldstein. Available on Amazon.**
    - When using the virtual lobby system how are we covering the digital divide? **We are of course scheduling appointments for those who need to come in and we are also working with our community partners for support.**
    - Are grandparents taking care of grandkids included in the kinship care program? **They are.**
    - Dr. Z: Are there any resources for kinship caregivers for children with RAD? **There should be, however, we will have to follow up on this.**
* Presentation by Chris Wright
  + Budget updates
    - Our relationship with OPB is wonderful
    - FY21 Amended budget
      * Adoption Services
      * Out of Home Care
* Questions
  + What is the relationship between 4E and Family First? **We will not immediately stop using group homes but when we do implement Family First in October of next year, we will not be able to pull 4E funds for group homes.**
* Presentation by Mary Havick
* Since we began virtual work, our communication has increased
* August 2020 Intake Assignments
* Training for virtual visits took place
* Assigned Priority Response Time
* Number of overdue cases
* Case worker recognition – Kesheena Washington in Bartow County was recognized for her outstanding work assessing safety during the pandemic. She says her portable office that she sets up when she goes out to a home during the COVID pandemic makes it easier to work and maintain social distancing.
* Family Support and CPS Investigation Timeliness
* Voluntary Kinship and Safety Resources
* There’s No Place Like Home update
* Operation Not Forgotten
  + 29 youth in foster care were rescued
* Questions
  + What is the huge drop in April 2020? **That represents the drop in the number of calls we received.**
  + Can the virtual training for virtual visits be available to providers?  **We can work on that.**
  + Non-profits in R3 are concerned about increased evictions and family homelessness. Any services available? **We don’t have any in Child Welfare but several of our new SOH sites are geared towards helping stop homelessness.**
* Presentation by Jon Anderson
  + High level COVID-19 Updates
    - SNAP applications
    - Agency Response
    - P-SNAP
    - P-EBT
  + SNAP SFY historical issuance trends
  + Virtual lobbies – call center phone lines are open. All services are offered over the phone and electronically. In person visits are scheduled.
  + Questions
    - How will P-SNAP or other pandemic monies impact other benefits? **P-SNAP does not impact any other benefits. It is not a direct cash benefit.**
* Board Officer Nominations
  + Reading of bylaws on nominations
  + Nomination for Secretary
    - Shondeana Morris
  + Nomination for Vice Chair
    - DeLaine Hunter
  + Nomination for Chair
    - Belva Dorsey
  + All those nominated accepted and will submit their qualifications to Board Chair.
* County DFCS Board Reports Discussion -Reports Due by Dec 15th and should be completed by County Board
* Board Member Regional Reports
  + R1 – Roadshow recap
    - Feedback was great
* R3 – The region continues to meet virtually
  + The Georgia Family Support Network is a great resource to have.
* R4 – We will be having a groundbreaking ceremony for our new building on 9/9/2020
* R5 – WIC Farmers Market was a success.
* R8 – We have a new Muscogee DFCS County director
  + In July and August there were eight adoptions!
  + Stewart County is almost at a point where they will have zero kids in care
  + There are currently 50 potential foster parents almost ready to graduate!
* R9 – We have been meeting virtually.
  + Still focusing on adoptions
* R12 – Virtual meetings are well attended
* R14 – Dekalb County has had over 25 adoptions
  + 9/9/2020 there will be a virtual adoption day in DeKalb. There are nine scheduled adoptions for this day.
* Closing remarks by Dr. Zeanah. Next meeting is November 10, 2020
* Motion to adjourn at 11:45 a.m. by S. Morris. Seconded by D. Hunter. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.