1. **Call to Order, Introductions and Announcements**

Justice Raye and Secretary Dooley extended a personal welcome to members and others in attendance and called for introductions. Justice Raye then introduced three new members to the Council:

* + Judge Stacy Boulware Eurie – Sacramento Juvenile Court
	+ William (Bill) Grimm – National Center for Youth Law
	+ Vanessa Baird – Deputy Director for Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Services, California Department of Health Care Services

Secretary Dooleyreported back on responses to the letters sent out by the Co-Chairs to all 48 Council members as of June 30th asking that they reconfirm their desire to participate on the Council. The purpose was to ensure an active membership so that there is always a quorum and the Council remains true to the by-laws that require members who are not named in the statute to have no more than three unexcused absences out of the total four meetings per year.

To date, the responses have been:

* + 33 responded YES – they want to remain on the Council
	+ 2 responded NO – regretfully they will not be able to participate
	+ 13 responses pending; staff will follow up

Announcements included the following:

* Congratulations to Diane Nunn who recently received the First Annual Mark Hardin Award for Child Welfare Scholarship and System Change from the American Bar Association.
* Chantel Johnson announced the California Youth Connection Summer Leadership Conference: Policy Recommendations will take place in October 2012.
1. **Council Business (Action Items)**
	* **Launching the Council Ahead: Planning for 2012-13**

Secretary Dooley referred members to the “Council Roadmap” handout which lays out where the Council has been since its inception to set context for the discussion of planning for the year ahead. Chris Cleary and Sylvia Pizzini walked the Council through the Roadmap (attached).

***Discussion:***

* + - 1. The work of the Council, for the most part, takes place through the committees and task forces.
	+ Does this structure work effectively?
	+ How could it be improved?
	+ How do we or should we measure success?

Council members agreed that the current structure does support the statutory charge to the group. There was discussion regarding whether the current practice of the full Council meeting in the morning and the Committees meeting in the afternoon should be reversed. The question was left unanswered so that Committees could further explore the idea during their respective meetings and provide staff with a recommendation.

* + - 1. How can the Council best meet its mandate to “serve as an advisory body responsible for improving the collaboration and processes of the multiple agencies and the courts that serve the children and youth in the child welfare and foster care systems”? (WIC Section 16540)

Members discussed how they might better market the work of the Council. To date, communication with the public has been limited for the most part to the website. Members agreed that the website should be expanded to include links to their respective organizations so that the breadth of knowledge and information represented on the Council would be available to anyone accessing the website.

* + **Approval of the June 22, 2012 Discussion Highlights**The June 22, 2012 Child Welfare Council Discussion Highlights were approved as written.
	+ **2011-12 Annual Report**

Secretary Dooley asked Sylvia Pizzinito present the “Annual Report” that was distributed to everyone for review and comment on August 20th with changes made based on responses. The document was posted on September 5th. After Sylvia’s review of the document, Secretary Dooley asked for comments, suggested revisions. A motion to approve the document as written was moved and seconded, and unanimously agreed to by the Council.

1. **Update from Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)** **Workgroup (Informational Item)**

Judge Stacy Boulware Eurie, Sacramento Juvenile Court, and Kate Walker, National Center for Youth Law, reported to the Council on behalf of the workgroup. Kate Walker summarized the findings to date as follows:

* **Background**
* Highlights the national statistics – 100-300K kids exploited and at-risk each year
* 3 of the 13 high intensity prostitution areas are in California
* Connection to the child welfare system, large percentage of CSEC have child welfare backgrounds
* Forms of child sexual exploitation: sex trafficking, pornography, and sex tourism
	+ Defines each form, and cites prevalence in the U.S.
* **Identification**
* Underscores the importance of identification of both children who have been exploited and those who are at-risk for exploitation
* Outlines common characteristics among children who are at-risk and have been exploited
	+ Age; history of emotional, physical and sexual abuse; parental substance abuse; frequent runaway; history with child welfare agency
* Identification as a means for prevention and early intervention
* Warning signs – personal, educational, and legal
	+ Personal – inappropriate dress, older male/female friend, chronic runaway, signs of violence, homelessness, substance abuse, multiple STDs/STIs, and tattoos
	+ School- behind in grade level, chronically truant/absent, developmentally delayed, special education involvement, behavior problems
	+ Legal – frequent status offenses including running away, truancies, curfew violations, possession of drug and/or alcohol, prostitution arrests, fake identification
* Reasons why boys are identified less frequently
* Prevalence of commercial sexual exploitation in the LGBTQ community
* Challenges to Identification
	+ Lack of education and awareness among agencies/organizations that interface with youth-changing how society views these children
	+ Inability to view themselves as victims-limits disclosures, Stockholm syndrome, normalization and isolation
	+ Hidden nature of the crime
* **Intervention**
* General intervention needs
	+ Immediate needs: safe placement, physical health exam for acute medical problems, and mental health services
	+ Long-term needs: may include childcare, education assistance, life skills training, employment assistance, financial management, legal services, and long-term mental health services
	+ Importance of case management and culturally and linguistically appropriate services
* Promising intervention strategies
	+ Law Enforcement & Probation Systems
		- Los Angeles County – extensive training, neighborhood action councils, My Life My Choice curriculum, the first 48 response (enhanced screening, meeting with CSEC advocate), detention workshop for girls
		- Alameda County – On-site counseling provided by BAWAR, MISSSEY & WestCoast allowed in juvenile hall, Girls Group, and Young Women’s Saturday Program, Safety Net
		- Multnomah County (Oregon), never arrest minors for prostitution or prostitution-related offenses, works closely with local rape crisis center
	+ Child Welfare System
		- Connecticut – DCF screens every child who enters system for human trafficking, hotline staff trained to accept reports of human trafficking, short and long-term trafficking care plans, trained foster parents and caseworkers in congregate care facilities, open emergency beds
		- Florida – human trafficking is a form of maltreatment under child abuse reporting guidelines, abuse hotline staff trained to recognize, special placement precautions, developed a Human Trafficking Information Kit that guides investigators
		- Illinois – child abuse statute amended to include trafficking; policy outlining how to identify victims and procedures to follow during an investigation; innovative database tracking indicators of human trafficking; streamlined access to services and pre-identified service pathways
		- Alameda County – MISSSEY presence in the assessment center, internal policy being created, training group homes
	+ Judicial System
		- Alameda County – Girls’ Court, specialized for those at risk or those who have been exploited. Consistency in staffing – both attorneys and judges.
		- Los Angeles County – STAR Court, receives referrals from entire county, specifically for children who have been sexually exploited, has specialized probation officers that oversee all cases
		- Los Angeles County – diversion program is in the process of being created

The report will also include sections on **prevention, legislation, challenges and recommendations** which will be drafted over the next two months.

Judge Stacy Boulware Eurienoted that there are many who regard the CSEC issue as going beyond foster care (and therefore beyond the scope of this Council) since many of the victims are not foster children. However, several workgroup members have expressed the belief that CSEC meet criteria for Dependency status but are denied Child Welfare Services including foster care because of misunderstandings related to the victim status of CSEC and parental inability or failure to protect their children who are being commercially sexually exploited. She further pointed out that current statistical information indicates that between 60% and 80% of the children who are sexually exploited have a child welfare background. The magnitude of this data is also highlighted in pending federal legislation (HR 2730) which was written by Congresswoman Karen Bass (author of California legislation creating CWC)

As an advisory body that monitors and reports on child welfare, the Council has an opportunity to get ahead of this disturbing curve and build some promising practices. There is a clear need to identify these children, and those who are at risk of being exploited, as soon as possible and to the extent that the Council deems it appropriate to utilize its collaborative construct to learn and promote awareness of the CSEC issues it seems there is a real opportunity here to maximize our mission by:

* + Developing cross-system recommendations to effectively address the issues (drawing from national multiple systems models).
	+ Devising ways for Social Services, Probation, Mental Health, Schools, Public Health, Law Enforcement, Courts, Community Agencies and Families to work together to effectively create a system of care that is as strong as the system of harm that currently exploits young people in our communities.
	+ Seeking involvement from the Council’s Permanency Committee to promote informal supports and CASAs for CSEC victims.

**IV. Status Reports from Committees and Task Forces (Information Item)**

* **Prevention/Early Intervention Committee**

The Prevention/Early Implementation Committee has made significant progress in dissemination of the Differential Response Framework. Chair Kathy Icenhower thanked members of the Council who have partnered with the committee in this effort. The committee also conducted a brief survey of the 11 counties who assisted with the pilot implementation of Differential Response. Results of the survey will be discussed during the breakout session.

* **Permanency Committee**
Robin Allen reported that the Committee continues to focus on Reunification as the preferred form of permanency and is gathering data on counties regarding strategies for safe and successful reunification. At the meeting in the afternoon, the Committee will be hearing from court representatives to learn what courts can do to promote this permanency outcome, including examples of courts that specialize in reunification. In 2013, the Committee will gather and analyze data regarding foster care re-entry rates and learn about strategies that prevent re-entry.
* **Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee**
Gordon Jackson and Rochelle Trochtenberg reported that the Committee continues to be lots of fun …. and that members work hard too! The Committee has expanded areas of focus: In addition to Commercially Sexually Exploited Children project, members are looking at issues and best practices related to: young children in foster care, education, mental health, transition and quality of foster care services. In the afternoon, the meeting includes the Young Children in Foster Care group presenting a draft paper with recommendations regarding how to ensure that the needs this subpopulation are met at a time in their lives where brain development is at its most rapid pace and where meeting attachment and nurturing needs is crucial to long-term health and well-being. The Committee will also review papers on Education-related Mental Health Services and the case for accreditation of Group Homes.

As the Committee completes it studies in these areas, members will bring reports and recommendations to the full Council, including our recommendations regarding the role of the Council in improving services and the system of care for foster children.

* **Data Linkages and Information Sharing Committee**
Barbara Needell announced the co-chair appointment of Will Sanson, Senior Analyst with the Administrative Office of the Courts, to the committee. The committee continues to support the other CWC committees and taskforces, where appropriate. The committee is highlighting three presentations today: Sacramento County Office of Education’s information sharing system, Foster Focus; Inland Empire Health Plan’s personal electronic health record for children in foster care, Open Access; and Ventura County’s health information exchange initiative, Health Link.
* **Prioritization Task Force**

The Task Force has accomplished its charge to date and is on track for bringing initial recommendations to the Council at the December meeting. Inventories are nearly complete and the Council’s insight that the “question” would serve as “catalyst for change” was validated in the process.

* **Out of County Mental Health Task Force**

The Out-of-County Mental Health Task Force did not have an update at this meeting. **Secretary Dooley** reported that the members are meeting to finalize plans that address inter-county payment and implementation issues. The Task Force plans to present an update at the December meeting.

1. **Public Comment and Adjournment to Blue Ribbon Commission/Child Welfare Council Joint Meeting and Committees**

Public comments included a request that the Council focus more on including the expertise that parents bring to understanding the many complex issues presented by the child welfare system. In addition, a question was raised as to the purpose of “specialty” courts within the child welfare system since all dependency and juvenile courts should be prepared to address any issue that is presented by any child or youth during court hearings.

Justice Rayethanked everyone for participation, noting the meeting had provided a thorough update and had been productive. Additional public comment was invited, with one comment on the vital role of parent partnerships.

 ***ATTACHMENT*** **California Child Welfare Council Roadmap--2006-2012**