

CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

September 7, 2022

Meeting Discussion Highlights

Present: Justice Laurie Earl, Co-Chair; Mark Ghaly, Co-Chair; Michelle Baass; Dana Blackwell; Sheila Boxley; Sanja Bugay; Daniel Calabretta; Roger DeLeon; Leonard Edwards; Janay Eustace; Larry Fluharty; Bob Friend; Patrick Gardner; Gail Gronert; Denine Guy; Leslie Heimov; Melissa Hurtado; Kathryn Icenhower; Kimberley Johnson; Jim Kooler; Sharon Lawrence; Katherine Lucero; Tilisha Martin; Michael Olenick; Amy Price; Cheryl Rave; Trent Rohrer; Cherie Schroeder; Shawna Schwarz; Cathy Senderling; Kristen Weber; Daniel Webster; Jevon Wilkes; Steve Zimmer

Absent: Nancy Bargmann; Isaac Bryan, Ebony Chambers; Leticia Galyean; Martin Hoshino; Diane Iglesias; Brian Maienschein; Dan Prince; Susan Rubio; Chris Stoner-Mertz;

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order by Secretary Mark Ghaly, Co-Chair of the Child Welfare Council. He was joined by Co-chair Laurie Earl, Associate Justice, Third District Court of Appeal. Justice Earl introduced and welcomed new members to the Council: Judge Denine Guy, Superior Court of Santa Cruz County; Judge Tilisha Martin, Superior Court of San Diego County; Kristen Weber, National Center for Youth Law; Diane Iglesias, Interim Director, California Department of Education.

Justice Earl acknowledged Judge Boulware Eurie for her dedication to the Council and congratulated her on her new appointment as an Associate Justice of the Third District Court of Appeals.

I. Secretary Ghaly Priority Focus Discussion (Informational Item)

Secretary Ghaly wanted to revisit the discussion from the previous meeting on recentering the attention of the Council to both the overarching vision and mission and the topic of family finding. He reminded everyone of the Council's vision and mission:

VISION – Every California child lives in a safe, stable, permanent home, nurtured by healthy families with the capacity to meet the child's needs and support the child's well-being, and is prepared for the transition into adulthood and becoming a contributing member of society.

MISSION – We provide an effective, collaborative forum for the three branches of

government, foster youth and their families, and key stakeholders to advocate for effective and promising strategies and adequate resources to improve outcomes for children, youth and families involved with or at risk of involvement with the child welfare system.

Secretary Ghaly stated that the idea was to focus on the inequities and disparities that are at the heart of many of the systems that impact the families and the young people that are served and supported. That the disproportionality of who is involved in the child welfare system can be traced to the disproportionality of other social drivers that exist among our Black, American Indian, Latino and Hispanic youth within or on the verge of entering child welfare. The focus will soon be on family finding and the efforts of the administration led by Director Johnson and her team working closely with others like Cathy and CWDA and to really emphasize a focus and an investment in family finding as one of the key tools to assure that we meet the vision and mission that has been laid out. He mentioned that as these meetings are used to discuss the direction of where the Council moves that it will always come back to the formative vision and mission and ensure that the subcommittees and working groups are all rowing in the same direction so that it is a valuable use of the members' time and that the throughline is followed.

Justice Earl provided additional framing and perspective on committee involvement by explaining that the format of the committee updates will be changed. Each quarterly meeting will be focused on one committee which will provide a more detailed update to get a thorough understanding of their efforts, work and the impacts on the missions. There were no objections for Council staff to recommend a schedule for committees to cycle through. Justice Earl mentioned that Council staff will consult with the Steering Committee to recommend the order for committees to present on respective works and the order for presenting will be announced during our next meeting on December 7th. Also, new Council members will be asked to join committees upon joining the Council and committee Co-Chairs will announce new members during our next meeting on December 7th.

Secretary Ghaly introduced Kathryn Icenhower to provide a detailed update on the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee. Kathy provided a brief history of the committee since its formation in 2007. She provided the vision and mission, the beliefs, the objectives, the membership, and the products of the committee. Kathy handed the update over to David Swanson Hollinger to discuss the current focus of the committee on Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and the agenda moving forward.

II. Voting on various Action Items

Justice Earl reminded everyone that only the Council members in person in the CalHHS conference room (Sacramento location) or at SHIELDS (LA Location) would be able to vote. She then directed Council members to the Discussion Highlights documents for the March and June 2022 meetings that had been posted and sent to them prior to the meeting. She asked for comments, and/or suggested revisions from the Council and the public. There

being none, she called for a consensus vote. In the absence of any revisions or comments, the highlights were approved.

Justice Earl announced the next action item to approved proposed amendments to the operations manual and called on Sarah Saria, Attorney for the Judicial Council and CWC staff member, to provide a more detailed overview on the amendments to change the number of Steering Committee members from 7 to no more than 11, to change the number of years to serve on the Steering Committee from two to three consecutive years (staggering the start and end sates to preserve Steering Committee knowledge transfer and, and lastly to change the Steering Committee duties. As not all members of the Council were attending the meeting in-person and able to vote on the proposed changes, it was proposed and agreed on to vote on these changes at the December meeting.

Justice Earl called on Nick Picinich to announce the final action item of changes to the location of the Council meetings, formerly alternating between Sacramento and San Francisco. The Council proposed a formal change that determines the locations of Sacramento and Los Angeles (SHEILDS office) for each subsequent meeting. Both locations will be offered in tandem so that members and public have the option to determine best travel arrangements depending on their geographic region. This will also allow the council to better capture quorum in the event a hybrid forum is permitted. It was suggested that a third location of San Francisco be added. She asked for comments, and/or objections from the Council and the public. There being none, she called for a consensus vote. In the absence of any objections, the location changes were approved.

III. Excellence in Family Finding, Engagement, and Support Program (Informational Item)

Secretary Ghaly invited Angie Schwartz from the CA Department of Social Services to give a presentation/update on the family finding initiative. He reminded all that \$150M one-time General Fund funds will be made available over five years for a county-optional program to supplement foster caregiver recruitment and retention. The resources will support statewide training and technical assistance on evidence-based best practices for intensive family finding, engagement, and support services. The goal for the discussion was to allow Council members to provide meaningful input to be considered during the implementation phase of this work and to share their expertise, perspectives, and opinions.

View the [full presentation](#).

IV. Reimagining Prevention: Community Engagement and Equity as the Foundation (Information Item)

Justice Earl calls on Junious Williams, of Junious Williams Consulting, Inc. to provide a presentation on Collaboration, Equity and Community Engagement.

This presentation focused on integrating 3 foundational elements of community change into prevention plans, collaboration and collective impact, equity, and community engagement.

View the [full presentation](#).

V. Committee and Task Force Updates

Justice Earl called on the co-chairs of the committees and task forces for updates, which primarily focused on what would be discussed at the afternoon meetings:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention – Kathy Icenhower and David Swanson Hollinger:** Junious will be joining this committee and focusing on recommendations for building the talked about infrastructure as well as reviewing a new report about the paradigm shift from mandated reporting to community supporting.
- **Permanency – Bob Friend and Hon. Leonard Edwards (Ret.):** During the meeting this afternoon there will be a presentation from Santa Clara County, Director of Family and Children Services to talk about how he and his team have reduced the number of children removed and sent to court dramatically over the past year. The committee will also be discussing the ideas to provide input for the Center for Excellence.
- **Data Linkages and Information Sharing –Daniel Webster and Alicia Sandoval:** The meeting this afternoon will be focused on updates to the developments to the state’s statewide automated data information system, updates to the CARES system, updates on the work of the substance use disorder data workgroup, and partners from the CA Department of Education will be sharing a report on school stability that they have developed for a web-based system for school reporting.
- **CSEC Action Team – Leslie Heimov:** Leslie officially announced Kate Walker Brown as the new co-chair for the committee. The meeting this afternoon is the final in the series focused on Native youth impacted by exploitation and along with a great panel will include small group work focused on solutions for common barriers experienced by providers who may interact with Native youth and their families.
- **Behavioral Health Committee – Chris Stoner-Mertz and Karen Larsen:** This committee will be having a presentation from Children Now and from Melissa Stafford Jones specific to outcomes for the youth.
- **Office of Youth & Community Restoration—Hon. Katherine Lucero:** This committee will meet on September 14th from 10am -12 pm because many members were not able to meet this afternoon. The committee has selected three deliverables to work on in terms of policy work. The first is higher education vocational training for youth

in secure treatment facilities. The second will be presentations on building CBO capacity from in custody to out of custody and the third deliverable is step down models and alternatives to youth custody from a secure track youth facility.

- **Child Development and Successful Youth Transitions Committee- Jevon Wilkes and Janay Eustace:** No meeting will take place this afternoon.

VII. Public Comment and Adjournment to Committee Meetings

Justice Earl and Nick asked for any comments from the members of the public.

Laurie Kappe, mentioned that there is a new issue brief being released that day that was co-created by many Council members on how the paradigm can be shifted from mandated reporting to community support. The issue brief will be discussed further in the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee that afternoon.

Wesley Lui, from the San Mateo County Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Commission, the Youth Commission and the Board of the California Association of Youth Corp wanted to express his gratitude for the work being done by the Council. For his comment he wanted to mention three issues, the first being youth having a seat at the table and the need for having youth voices on this Council. Second is greater outreach and advertisement about this Council and the more publicity that this Council should have and finally to speak on the California Association of Youth Corp and to shine a light on this association and what it's about.

Nick made an announcement and reminder that all the information for the Council, the committee meetings, and the agenda can be found on the CalHHS website.

Secretary Ghaly thanked everyone who joined today and announced the next meetings will take place on December 7, 2022 and March 1, 2023.

Justice Earl thanked everyone for their participation in today's meeting and adjourned the meeting.