

Task Force on Strengthening the Child Welfare Workforce for Children and Families
WebEx/Conference Call

June 3, 2020 – 10:00-11:00a.m.
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT (in person)	MEMBERS PRESENT (via phone)	MEMBERS ABSENT
N/A - WebEx	Mark Stutrud	Sen. Robert Peters
	Sen. Julie Morrison	Rep. Steven Reick
	Rep. Mary Edly Allen	Jan Stepto-Millett
	Sen. Steve McClure	Sen. Craig Wilcox
	Rep. Karina Villa	Rep. Mike Marron
	Paola Baldo	
	Betsy Goulet	
	Royce Kirkpatrick	
	Anne Irving	
	Lisa Jones	
	Deb McCarrel	

I. Welcome and Call to Order

II. Review and Approval of Minutes

Betsy Goulet motioned for approval of the April minutes, Senator Morrison seconded. The minutes approved were approved by majority vote.

III. Review/Discussion – Research Article on Turnover

Michael Braun reviewed with the group an research article that described a meta-analysis of child welfare worker retention and turnover. Michael highlighted effect size and provided a definition.

Deb McCarrel asked about the study not utilizing private child welfare workers. Michael stated that the reason is because in comparing public and private there is a significant difference among predictors. Researchers should not use both groups, because they may not be comparable. The researchers noted a limitation of the study and cite IL from 2003, p221. Ultimately, the same predictors that predict turnover among public, there is reason to believe they would be similar for private workers. There was nothing specific in identified predictors that would be unique to public workers. If union support was a predictor, the groups would

possibly be different, but that was not identified. It is reasonable to believe that what would work as an intervention for public workers is similar to what would work for private workers.

Mark Stutrud asked for clarification and Michael explained that the same factors that predict for public would also predict for private, so if there was an intervention or program designed to address recruitment or retention, it would work for both populations.

Sen. Morrison asked if there are any studies that remark on compensation as factor and stated that should be looked at when comparing public and private. Michael stated there are two factors, one is “financial reward”, which speaks to overall global compensation. Salary may be lower with same type of work and same qualifications, but the benefits are better. When financial reward is better, workers are less likely to report intending to leave. Researchers also looked at salary because studies measure reward/salary differently.

Rep. Edly-Allen had submitted several questions prior to the meeting. There was a discussion of DCFS measuring organizational support. Royce Kirkpatrick reported that there are some measures currently, but maybe in the future there could be more measures

Rep. Edly-Allen stated that the concern is that if workers go on the front end and do the simulation lab, etc., what is being done for those who have been in the field for very long time but undo new training (supervision/inconsistency). Is there a way of measuring the value of supervision in changing or receiving new information?

Betsy stated that that was one of the issues they had with training, they had initially hoped to start with supervisors because that’s where change needs to occur. They are using this time away (due to COVID-19) to work with the Office of Learning and Professional Development to create training for supervisors to use what has made a big impact on the front line - problem based learning, which uses a concrete format for making decisions. Betsy shared some preliminary data on simulation lab retention.

Michael stated that to our knowledge this research on sim training has never been done before, so Illinois is on the cutting edge of expanding simulation training and doing rigorous eval of simulation training.

Rep. Edly Allen asked about the DCFS hiring process and whether DCFS is hiring people who are committed to agency, etc.

Royce reported that potential DCFS employees apply and are graded through the CMS-100, which is a standardized process for all state agencies. can provide job descriptions

Rep. Edly Allen asked if there is space for characteristics as referred to by the research article in the hiring process? DCFS offered to bring someone from the Office of Employee Services in to respond more specifically to hiring.

Resiliency and trauma were also asked about. Stefanie Polacheck reported that this is currently a priority of the DCFS Director.

The Union was identified as space for staff to participate in decision-making, there is a 16-person standing committee that meets quarterly. It is made up of frontline workers, meets with DCFS and is not a grievance process. There are discussions around developing issues and an opportunity to give workers a voice.

Monico Whittington-Eskridge (DCFS OLPD) reported there are evaluations and surveys after every learning event. OLPD takes that feedback and makes revisions to curriculum, partnering with the standing committee.

A council member asked what the difference in turnover between public and private sector is based on. Michael reported that he can't speak to what data collection methods used in private sector – the way to do that is surveys/focus groups. That could allow for results to line up with this study, using these major factors plus turnover and retention.

Betsy described offering the future of training for intact and placement services – two pilots were completed with two agencies who reached out. CFRC worked with OLPD to use materials and implement as soon as we have return to “normal training”, as well as creating virtual platforms. Monico stated that DCFS is also looking at POS through the CWEL office, to see if there is a way to track changes. The current system relies on POS report of movement when someone leaves, but those are not always accurate reports.

Rep. Edly-Allen expressed interest in exploring transfers and why workers are switching agencies - is it salary or another factor?

Paola Baldo asked if there was intention to survey workers? Michael stated that was not planned yet but described the literature review that is pending.

IV. Impact of COVID-19 on Child Welfare Practice

This topic was tabled due to time constraints.

V. Timeline for Deliverables

- Update on Employer Survey – to be distributed this week to POS agencies
- Update on Literature/Policy Review – still in progress

VI. Public Comment

None

VII. Adjournment

The group discussed frequency of meetings given the 10/2020 deadline for the task force's preliminary recommendations. The group agreed to increase to twice a month.

Senator Morrison motioned to adjourn, and Betsy Goulet seconded. Vote passed, meeting adjourned. Next meeting scheduled for 6/17/20.