

**Meeting of the
Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council
Sheraton Lisle Naperville, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle
February 16, 2018
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
APPROVED MINUTES**

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF	GUESTS
Gladys Boyd	Cheri Dreska	Ellen Cabrera	Sarah Biehl
Katy Cotts	Arrelda Hall-Johnson	Claudia Dancy-Davis	Julie Cebulski
Donna Gregory	Darrin Holt	Gwenn Eyer	Glenn Eyer
Gordon Hannon	Kassie Johnson	Debbie Freke	Nick Sauer, State Rep.
Rachel Hoyt	Stephanie Jones	Katie Friend	Krista Techenbrock
Ken Keefe	Maya Maclin	Michelle Grove	Rebecca Thomas
Harriet Kersh	Mary Savage	Vanessa James	
Susan McConnell	Carol Sheley	Kristina Pagel	
Mark McDaniel	Samella Taylor-Lewis	Norman Suire	
Kate Monte			
Kellye Norris			
Trina Rizzo			
Denise Spires			

Welcome and Introductions - Mark McDaniel

Mark welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:08 a.m. asking the visitors to introduce themselves. He outlined basic meeting management, asking everyone to put phones on mute, step outside to take calls, close computers, and use issue forms to address specific issues.

Approve Minutes from 01/19/18 SWFCAC Meeting

Gladys Boyd pointed out that due to time constraints, the council did not ask for an IFAPA report at the January meeting. *Denise Spires made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected. Gladys Boyd seconded. Motion carried.*

Final Report to the Director

Mark McDaniel

The monthly Director’s Report was submitted as required by the Foster Parent Law. The report included a summary of the council WIGs.

Assessing Progress and Measuring Success

Mark reviewed Stephen Covey’s *4 Disciplines of Execution*, noting how they should be utilized within the SWFCAC and by council committees. He reminded council members that they are all leaders and people count on them to affect change. It’s very important to focus our attention on specific things. He stressed the council’s commitment to Wildly Important Goals (WIG's), noting that there will always be more good ideas than there is the capacity to execute them. He shared the following Stephen Covey quote, " “You have to decide what your highest priorities are and have the courage—pleasantly, smilingly, nonapologetically, to say “no” to other things. And the way

you do that is by having a bigger “yes” burning inside.” Mark went on to discuss the basic criteria, including the following: 1) Follow the Rules, 2) Act on Lead Measures, 3) Keep a Compelling Scorecard, and 4) Create a Cadence of Accountability.

Mark used the Respite Committee as an example. WIG: To have a standardized policy for respite that is the same for DCFS and POS within six months. Lag: Have policy in place and working. Lead measure 1: Invite one respite professional from DCFS and one respite professional from a purchase of services agency to each meeting of SWFCAC for the next six months to hear concerns and explain problems. Lead measure 2: Make two contacts with policy makers for DCFS regarding respite. Request information on how respite is administered. Request that responses are put in writing and sent to SWFCAC for review. Do this for the next six months. Lead measure 3: Send information to the Director each month regarding recommendations for respite until Director responds either in writing or in person. Scoreboard: Create a scorecard that is simple and reflects the results of the three lead measures. Accountability: Meet by phone or in person at least once per month. E-mail once a week to account, review and plan. Report results at each regular SWFCAC meeting.

Representative Nick Sauer

Representative Sauer is serving his first year as a State Representative and is working on foster care legislation. His interactive presentation to the council covered issues that included the following questions: What areas are we doing right? What areas are we not doing as well? He noted that this council can push policy up to legislation. He referenced his starfish pin, noting that he and his brother worked in Royal Kids Camp where one of the symbols is the starfish. He used an illustration about a boy being challenged by an adult for throwing starfish back into the ocean when he knew he couldn’t save them all. The lesson is that the young boy recognized that he made a difference for each one he touched. Rep. Sauer stated that children are our starfish.

Rep. Sauer ran for office because he assumed he could do a lot of things. He noted that what he’s doing is bipartisan. He’s had more bills passed than any other freshman legislator. One of the bills pending is about a dedicated check-off part of the tax refund to fund DCFS. Another part of the bill says that there’s a rebate if you have an adoption from State care that occurred during the tax year. He said he is truly focused on foster care and he’s willing to listen to foster parents. He noted that we have to do a better job caring for the most vulnerable and that we need to focus on “Kid Time.” Council members may Email him through www.RepNickSauer.com with the subject line “Starfish” or “Foster Care.”

Council Comments/Responses:

- Tax credits have fluctuated over time, coming and going. It would be great to know what’s already established and have that benefit promoted. Rep. Sauer: \$2500 is the ask currently. He will check to see what’s already in place.
- Is there, in the State Legislature, a child welfare commission or committee? Rep. Sauer: “I serve on the Human Services Committee. There are a vast number of committees, and many times adoption and foster care issues funnel through Human Services.”
- What is our approach to a cadence of accountability re: DCFS and foster care issues? Rep. Sauer: Checks and balances are there, but little kids really don’t have their own lobbyists. Leadership is more receptive to this than ever before.

- When someone comes in with an issue, is it viewed as a large issue? Rep. Sauer: 10 people speaking up would have a huge impact. Get a coalition to come together, get lobbyists to come together, and get legislators to come together. People must keep calling in.
- Rep. Sauer: May is a busy month. It's a month that contains Lobby Day. There's a lobbying day for foster youth, and it would be a great time to have foster parents represented.
- Rep. Sauer is willing to keep the council connected to pending foster care issues.
- Will you be our connection to talking to your peers to invite legislators to our meetings to be heard? Rep. Sauer: "You must get the right people in the room." He will try to attend our next meeting. He stated that we've got to be able to move the ball.
- Council members noted that we are thankful for Rep Sauer's willingness to speak to the group. Rep. Sauer: SWFCAC needs to feed information to the Representatives.
- This presentation dovetails nicely with our determined approach to stay on top of issues through our committees. One of the committee goals was to focus somehow on contacting our local representatives. Rep. Sauer: Last year they did a foster care press conference in May. If there's an initiative we want accomplished in 2019, invite all the legislators to come, and share the wildly important goal.
- Try to schedule a meeting with local representatives.
- Susan has a wildly important goal for her adoption program, The Heart Gallery, on which she can follow up with Rep. Sauer. Rep. Sauer: Let's identify the hurdles and try to overcome them so we can promote permanency for our children and youth.
- Our adoption process is very slow, especially since some private agencies don't have adoption-specific workers. Why isn't there a straight across the board process for private agencies and DCFS?
- Find a way to streamline adoption paperwork.
- There's a "workforce crisis" in private agencies, and it contributes to increased workload and lack of institutional knowledge. Budgeting is not there for contractual COLA increases. Case managers change very frequently, often due to burnout, sometimes due to a move to DCFS for better pay and benefits.
- Caseloads are too high for workers.
- There is no "across-the-board" for foster care. There are vast differences in services like spec care, respite, etc. between agencies. It's a contract issue.
- The council will send Rep. Sauer copies of the Illinois Foster Parent Law and the SWFCAC Law.
- There are organizational breakdowns with DCFS Day Care reimbursement. One council member has had to have the day care form signed multiple times because the time expires. Rep: The council should look at what other states are doing for appropriate timelines.

Committee Breakouts

Noon Working Lunch

Health Care Committee

Mark McDaniel, the Council chairperson, requested the council's approval for the establishment of a SWFCAC Healthcare Committee. ***Ken Keefe made a motion to form the SWFCC Healthcare Committee to look at the transition to Managed Care, psychotropic drugs, etc. Kellye Norris seconded. Motion carried.*** Rachel Hoyt was appointed to chair this committee and will drop off

the training committee. Susan McConnell will move from Policy/Legislation to the Health Care Committee.

Mark asked the council to consider disbanding the Adolescent Committee. **Motion: Ken Keefe made the motion to remove the Adolescent Committee. It was seconded by Kate Monte. The motion carried.**

Gladys Boyd suggested combining the Respite and Policy/Legislation committees, but after discussion her request was withdrawn.

Committee Reports

Mark noted that if council members would like to have reports added to the agenda the council needs to have a summary of the report submitted in advance.

*Adolescent Issues – Kassie Johnson

No report.

*Policy and Legislation – Darrin Holt/ Ken Keefe

Ken reminded council members of the bylaw committee recommendations that were shared at the last meeting.

- Remove agency reviews
- Remove redundant text re: members being active on a committee.
- Proposed bylaws restore items that were removed from prior bylaw revisions.
- It makes clear that the first nine articles come directly from the foster parent Law. Added new article 10, Addenda, which organizes things that are not in the law.
- Changed requirements for officer candidates, saying that they cannot miss more than two meetings in the current fiscal year.
- Article 10 members that are appointment to a remainder of a predecessor's term, may fulfill two personal terms, by appointment.

Motion: Ken Keefe made the motion to accept the changes as endorsed by the policy legislation committee. Donna Gregory seconded, and the motion carried. The Policy committee will meet at 7pm Thursday prior to the joint meeting in March.

*FPSS – Denise Spires reported her concern re: the WIG established at the last meeting. It was suggested that she wait until other committee members are present to make any committee decisions re: changing the goal.

*Training – The training committee will identify a point person to work with Michelle to get foster parents involved from the ground up in creating new trainings. They're going to reach out other agencies to get their buy-in. They will meet in a month.

*Respite – They would like to gain clarity on respite. They've sent recommendations to multiple directors but haven't really gotten anything resolved. **Motion: Gladys made the motion that the committee form a workgroup to include Erica Cabrera. Seconded by Kellye Norris. Motion carried.**

*Public Relations/ Hospitality – Donna the committee will continue to follow their goals.

Reports from Other Councils/ Committees/ Workgroups

*CWAC Rachel, Darrin, Mary, Gordon
There hasn't been another meeting. Council members have prepared a presentation for the next CWAC meeting.

*IFAPA Gladys Boyd
No report. Gladys asked to add Arrelida to reporting at each SWFCAC meeting.

Regional Reports

Northern – Donna reported that they still hold phone meetings monthly and will hold in-person meetings twice annually. Normally, they have the local support group leaders report in re: issues and concerns that are region-wide.

Southern – No meeting to report.

Central – Central region has a phone conference coming up February 20th at 10:30. A local foster council meeting was held on February 7th in Urbana. They discussed normalcy and licensing policy problems.

Cook North – No report.

Cook South – No report. Their January 23rd meeting included a 2-hour in-service training called, "The Life of the Case." New foster parents were sent targeted invitations and nine attended. They will do part II on Feb 27th.

Motion: Ken Keefe made the motion to adjourn. Harriet Kersch seconded. Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: March 9, 2018 – Springfield Crowne Plaza

Potential Agenda Items: Adoption timeline