

**Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council  
MEETING Minutes  
January 15th, 2021  
WebEx videoconference  
9:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

<b>SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	<b>SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT</b>	<b>GUESTS</b>	<b>STAFF</b>
Kathryn Adrian	Jimmie Golden	Sarah Balza	Janet Ahern
Gladys Boyd	Samella Taylor-Lewis	Diana Blackburn	Barb Crandall
Jessica Bullard		Julie Cebulski	Jason Cummins
Kimberly Coniglio		Debbie Freke	Gwenn Eyer
Kelly Elleman		Laura Oresky	Michelle Grove
Arrelida Hall		Roxanna Ortiz	
Tiffany Jones		Patricia Pride	
Ken Keefe		Elizabeth Richmond	
Harriet Kersh		Arlene Woods	
Maya Maclin			
Susan McConnell			
Kate Monte			
Kellye Norris			
Audrey Reynolds			
Jesse Rodriguez-Hammond			
Mary Savage			
Carol Sheley			
Phyllis Summers			
Stephanie Tesreau			
Rebecca Thomas			

**Welcome and Introductions (Getting to Know You)**

**Ken Keefe/Council**

Meeting was called to order by Chair Keefe. Roll was taken. All council members provided a brief introduction and their roles. Chair Keefe also mentioned there is vacant council position in Cook North

**Approval of November 6, 2020, Meeting Minutes****Ken Keefe**

Minutes were presented with no discussion or recommended changes. *Kate Monte made the motion to approve the November 6th, 2020, minutes. Stephanie Tesreau seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**Professional Responsibility of Members****Gwenn Eyer**

Gwenn Eyer conducted her professional responsibility presentation. Reviewed the council's goals and objectives. Reviewed responsibilities of serving on the council and committees. Reviewed appropriate report of committee

**Foster Parent Law Update****Gwenn Eyer**

Gwenn Eyer reviewed the timeline for scoring of implementation plans. Gwenn Eyer is providing individual time to new members training to score the implementation plans. Gwenn can also provide times for established members to review the scoring of implementation plans.

**SWFCAC Committee work****Ken Keefe**

Ken Keefe reviewed the established committees and their functions. Stressed the importance of becoming a member of a Committee. Council members were encouraged contact the chairs and OCPS support to notify them of your desire to serve on the Committee.

**Foster Parent Handbook****Council**

Michelle Grove indicated the Foster Parent Handbook has not be updated for several years. The OCPS suggested that the SWFCAC should take the opportunity to provide their input and recommendations in updating the foster parent handbook. This will allow input from foster parents statewide. Co-chair Arrelda Hall indicated she agrees that SWFCAC should take this opportunity. The Foster Parent Handbook will be sent out to the council. There was a suggestion that each committee take a section pertinent to each committee and then come together and present their recommendations for the entire SWFCAC.

**Guardian Office Update****Janet Ahern**

Youth in care over the age of 18 can provide their own consent for the COVID vaccine unless the office has specific consent approval under special circumstances for youth in care over the age of 18. Youth-in-care aged 16 or 17 years old can have the Pfizer vaccine under routine and ordinary consent. Office will also be sending out information regarding the vaccine and will be posted for review. Those ages 65 and older will be eligible for vaccines soon.

Received many requests statewide for home schooling. Her office approved 16 requests for home schooling. There also have been questions about managed care. It appears that the rollout has went well. There have been some opt outs in area for coverage reasons but overall, the coverage area is fairly extensive.

J.A indicated at this time the COVID vaccine will not be mandatory for foster parents. However, it is highly encouraged. Janet indicated that as of now there has been no plan or regarding the placement of the foster parents or youth-in-care into Tiers to be eligible for the vaccines. Janet indicated that foster parents 65 and older would mostly be placed into 1B or 1C tier but nothing has been determined yet.

Visitations are still occurring and changes outside the in-person visits is a case by case basis.

### **Daycare Issue/Follow up**

### **Arrelda Hall**

Arrelda Hall indicated that during the last SWFCAC meeting in November council members brought up issues regarding daycare payment, access/availability of daycare, and remote learning requirements not being meet while at daycare. These issues are statewide and Arrelda Hall recommended this should take up these issues and come up with recommendations regarding these issues. There was a recognition that the council made recommendations in July 2020. There continues to be issues and the resolution to these concerns continue not to be addressed. Due to these issues, the council must consider how to present these issues again or revamp recommendations to the Department. There was a suggestion that questions be sent daycare providers soliciting their concerns. Arrelda Hall indicated she would like to see the council to make a firm commitment address this concern and have a plan on how to address this issue. There was a question as to who addressed the concerns/recommendations that were sent. Michelle Grove indicated that the recommendations were sent to the Director. The Director then relies on his Deputies and Chief of Staff to help address these issue/concerns/recommendations. Michelle Grove indicated obtaining more information on how other States or Agencies are addressing these issues. There was a question regarding if there is a specific person that continue to address this issue. Janet Ahern indicated that there was \$156 million in supplements to daycare by the Governor. Reimbursement to daycare is low as compared, the time from payment, and daycare availability throughout the state. These issues might need to be separated out or specifically addressed that will outlast COVID. Arrelda indicated that a special meeting should be called to address the daycare issue specifically.

## **Office of Caregiver and Family Support Update**

**Michelle Grove**

Michelle Grove provided a brief overview of what the Office of Caregiver and Parent Support covers. Indicated that there were recently 9 new Foster Parent Support Specialist. Southern region now has coverage. The FPSS program is looking to grow and expand and cover/service the private sector to a greater degree. FPSS staff are a well-trained group and provide support groups for foster parents statewide. The Office also now reports to the new deputy, Tim Snowden. Michelle indicated that Tim Snowden plans to have regular regional meetings with a wide range of permanency staff to keep up to date with information, practices, and concerns. Tim Snowden has placed an emphasis on field supervisor providing supervision to

CWAC respite workgroup. Second meeting. Formal vs informal. Paid vs. unpaid. Michelle indicated it might be helpful for a council member to be a representative at the CWAC respite workgroup. Mary Savage indicated she is on the workgroup but was not able to attend the meeting. The council will ensure Mary Savage is receiving the meeting invite.

## **Reports from Other Councils/Committees/Workgroups**

### **CWAC**

**Harriet Kersh/Mary Savage  
Jessica Bullard/Phyliss Summers**

There was no report provide to the council at this time.

### **IFAPA**

**Gladys Boyd/Arrelda Hall**

IFAPA continues to meet Tuesday and Wednesday for prayer. There have been numerous questions and discussion from foster parents regarding the struggles due to COVID concerns regarding visitations and keeping children safe. Gladys indicated that IFAPA is requesting training or meeting to address these questions.

The Communication Division sent an email that was forwarded to Council members regarding the scholarship application process.

## **Regional Reports:**

### **\*Northern Region Report**

**Kimberly Coniglio/Rebecca Thomas**

1. Daycare issues continue to be the primary issue.
2. Foster parents being FORCED to take children on visits and supervise.
  - o In one situation, the caseworker removed the child because the foster parent was not able to take child to visits due to work and even filed a hotline complaint on the foster parent.

<b>*Central Region Report</b>	<b>Ken Keefe/Kelly Elleman/Kathyrn Adrian</b>
<b>*Cook North</b>	<b>Kate Monte</b>
<b>*Southern Region</b>	<b>Stephanie Tesreau/Audrey Reynolds</b>
<b>*Cook South</b>	<b>Maya Maclin/Kellye Norris</b>
<b>*Cook Central</b>	<b>Arrelida Hall/Jimmie Golden</b>

These reports will be emailed to council

### **Public Comment**

none

### **Stakeholder Comments**

none

### **Closing Council Discussion**

Homeowners claim due to property damage from foster children. It was recommended that foster parents should make a claim to their insurance first. Foster parents are then to file with the Department. There is a question if there are numerous claims made by the foster parent that insurance coverage might be dropped or greatly affected. There is a question as to who or what division needs to address this.

Arrelida Hall indicated there will be communications sent out to council members and to the council regarding the issues and actions that need to be addressed.

### **Adjournment**

*Ken Keefe made amotion to adjourn the meeting. Kellye Norris seconded. There were no objections and the motion carried.*

**Next Meeting:** March 19th, 2021, 9:00 a.m., Webex