

**Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council
MINUTES
April 22, 2022 9:00 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.
WebEx videoconference**

SWFCAC MEMBERS PRESENT	SWFCAC MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS	STAFF
Gladys Boyd	Kathryn Adrian	Debbie Freke	Jamie Blakeman
Arrelida Hall	Kelly Elleman	Tina Haynes	Gwenn Eyer
Dr. Tiffany Johnson	Jesse Rodriguez-Hammond	Darla Knipe	Charlotte Gallagher
Harriet Kersh	Kate Monte	Maria Leavengood	Kim Willis
Samella Taylor-Lewis		Crystal Rekart	
Susan McConnell		Bev Rightnowar	
Audrey Reynolds		Elizabeth Richmond	
Mary Savage		Carol Sheley	
Phyllis Summers		Arelene Woods	
Rebecca Thomas			

Welcome/Introduction

Arrelida Hall, SWFCAC chairperson, called the meeting to order at She welcomed everyone and noted that this meeting is being recorded. Susan McConnell, vice- chair, conducted the IAAC voice roll call.

Approval of March 18 , 2022, Meeting Minutes

Motion: Arrelida Hall made the motion to accept the 3/18/22 meeting minutes at 9:08 am. Samella Taylor-Lewis seconded. The motion carried via voice vote.

Regional Administrators Update

RA Jamie Blakeman

Jamie Blakemen just started on April 1st, 2022, as the regional administrator of the central region. Jamie acknowledged that May is foster parent appreciation month. There are weekly FPSS Leads meetings to address ongoing issues and develop solutions within the region. There is a new pilot program using a pre-paid debit cards for clothing vouchers and this is going extremely well. The pre-paid debit card will also be used for the infant cares grant. Jamie Blakemen is also working with FPSS to streamline calls to foster parents and to stop multiple phone calls to foster parents for placements. They are aware of the daycare opening shortages and the importance of getting payments completed promptly. There are new positions being filled and adding much needed positions. New PSA positions being added to help field staff which is based on caseloads. There are new FPSS positions and family enhancement positions that are being posted that will help the field. Shelter beds are being added in the area. Foster Parent Support Specialists are involved in the day to day activities in the field. Foster parent law implantation has a quick reference which have been provided to the field staff and supervisors.

Approve Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans **Arrelda Hall**

All Foster Parent Law Implementation Plans were scored by the council. Association House was rated somewhat acceptable and all the other implementation plans were deemed acceptable. Motion: Arrelda Hall made a motion to approve and Gladys Boyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Day Care Workgroup Recommendation **Rebecca Thomas**

The daycare committee continues to meet, and the last meeting was on 4/21/22. The committee is still waiting to hear back from SPICE committee about the change management form with the solutions to daycare issues. Stacey Mixon joined on the work group on 4/21/22 and explained how the exceptional payment approval process works with the teens for after school or summer care. There are five levels (worker, supervisor, regional daycare person, area contractor and then it goes to Stacey Mixon, and Doug Washington) to get the exceptional payment to be approved. Stacey needs concrete documentation of these issues. Stacey Mixon is willing to address these situations but needs documentation of these issues. The workgroup needs examples of not being able to even get the daycare application or not being offered daycare due to the youth being 13 or older. Please send these examples to the Statewide mailbox. Daycare is very time sensitive and needs to be done in a timely manner. A letter from a doctor or mental health professional stating that the youth can not be home alone or unsupervised can be very beneficial in the process. There is no time frame attached to get this approved and this is a possible issue that the council needs to address. Foster parents will not be reimbursed if they pay for daycare themselves.

Reports from Other Councils/Committees/Workgroups:

Council Reports:

CWAC Harriet Kersh/Mary Savage/Phyllis Summers

There has not been a meeting and the next meeting in June.

IFAPA Gladys Boyd/ Arrelda Hall

Gladys has sent questions for the director to Terry and Michelle. There is interest from foster parents to meet with the director.

Regional Reports:

Northern Region Rebecca Thomas

Nothing new, with the same concerns. Support groups are a going very well. There are foster parents being threatened and retaliated against. Foster parents continue to report being disrespected and not being treated as a team member. The issues are getting worse and not better. It now impacting the youth

and foster parents will not answer the phone due to being treated so poorly. A letter being addressed the ongoing issues regarding foster parents not being respected.

Central

The support groups meet in person soon, they will hold their first appreciation dinner since COVID in May 2022. Like the rest of the state, they have a shortage of homes, and homes that will do respite. There is a huge transporter shortage in the Central Region. As an example, there is a sibling group that has been in care since early February, and they still don't have visitation set up. This is not a unique situation. Adoptions are taking a very long time, because paperwork isn't getting done in a timely manner. Therapy for youth in care is hard to find, and waiting lists are too long. The same for psychiatrists.

Cook

Cook held their monthly foster parent meeting on 2/19/22. A former youth Antonio Grate spoke about how to be a better guardian and his life experiences. Foster parent appreciation events are being planned and the region is providing ongoing trainings focused on de-escalation techniques.

Southern

There are new foster homes in the area. There are ongoing issues with SASS and once SASS leaves there are no available services. When there is damage to the home caused by a foster child, the foster parent is being told to put it on their insurance and claims are not being taken care of by the department. These foster parents are willing to take children with behavioral issues but need these damages covered. It was confirmed that CFS 851 Foster Child Damage Reimbursement Program Claim Form is what is needed to file claims. Foster parents are voicing frustrations that DCP will come out quickly when there are allegations of abuse or neglect, but placement refuses to come out when asked by foster parents. There was a situation where a foster parent asked for a child to be removed due to concerns about concerning behaviors with another foster child. Placement refused to address this issue and the child is question made another child run away with them and were missing for two months. Foster parents are not being given all the medical information pertaining to the child placed in their home. One child had a previous diagnosis of Autism, but the foster parent had no idea of this diagnosis. The region has two key questions How do foster parents get the medical history and giving the foster parents the daycare forms prior to any placement.

Committee Reports

Training- Harriet Kersh

Improvements to the home of relative training and Harriet will be a part of that to give feedback. This appears to be a completely new program.

Foster Parent Support Specialist- Arrelda Hall

There are still some openings in different areas and there are current contracts being processed. Core teen is currently being provided to Foster Parent Support Specialists.

Hospitality and Public Relations – Arrelda Hall

In person meetings in June. Please send your response to the mailbox.

Permanency Committee Report – Susan McConnell-

The Permanency Committee from the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council meets monthly in a combined effort with the Permanency Committee from the Adoption Advisory Council, and we are in a discovery phase. We are conducting interviews and gathering data.

Respite- Gladys Boyd

Still ongoing issues with getting respite, payments for respite and available respite homes. These are not new issues.

Membership Committee- Charlotte Gallagher

Gave update on current vacancies and the positions on the council that have been filled.

Adolescent issues Tina Haynes and Dr. Tiffany Johnson

Meeting every Tuesday virtually, developed an action plan and working with the emerging adults with CWAC. Working with the department on developing recommendations for department.

Nominations committee- Tiffany Johnson was nominated as the nomination chair.

Public Comment

None

Stakeholder Comment

None

MOTION: Arrelda Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rebecca Thomas seconded, and the motion carried by roll call vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:43 am

Next Meeting: June 10th, 2022 9:00-noon, via WebEx for the health and safety of our members.