



**Minutes, DCFS Statewide Parent Advisory Council (SPAC)
August 23, 2022**

Present – Parents – Gregory Cox, Dorothy Jordan, Theresa Leggins, Jacqueline LeNoir, Cassandra Williams, Johnnie Williams, Leolani Posten

Non-Parent Members – Janelle Pulcher, Amy Chase, Javonna Smith, Norma Machay, Tahney Fletcher, Roslyn Simmons Lindsey

Support Staff – Michelle Grove, Kim Willis, Ray Gates

Introductions/Announcements – Co-Chair Cassandra welcomed all and presided over roll call and introductions. Then she announced that Co-Chair Shawna Peterman has had to resign her role as chair and SPAC member due to her new job preventing her from participating, but she wants to remain involved in a supportive role. Cassandra asked if anyone was opposed to Shawna staying affiliated with the SPAC in the role of “Parent Consultant”. All present agreed.

Electing a Co-Chair

Cassandra asked for nominations from the floor for a parent co-chair to fill Shawna’s vacated slot. She said parents may nominate themselves. One parent put in the private chat that they wish to be considered. Cassandra asked that members email their nominations of a parent member or their self if a parent, with nominations due by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 30. Members were directed to email their nominations to Cassandra, Kim & Ray. Cassandra will then email the nominees to members, who must vote by email to Cassandra, Kim Willis and Ray Gates by 5:00 pm on September 13, 2022. The winner will be announced at the SPAC meeting on September 27.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Cassandra noted that the minutes had been sent to members. She asked for discussion, questions or a motion for amending the draft minutes. Hearing none, Cassandra asked for a motion to approve. Motion made by Mr. Cox. There was no discussion. Second made by Ms. Leggins. All were in favor, and the draft minutes were approved as submitted.

Chapter Reports

Cook County Chapter – Javonna reported they meet monthly in person and via Webex. They recently had a speaker from the public defender’s office who gave very helpful information to the parents. They always try to have helpful information for parents at every chapter meeting.

Northern Chapter – Norma said they are now meeting at 4:00 pm on the 4th Thursday, hoping that the new time will allow more parents to attend. They are struggling to get more than one or two parents to attend. Norma is continuing to do outreach.

Springfield Chapter – Cassandra said they will meet in September. She has been doing outreach at moms and dads meetings at the Parent Place, and Amy Chase has been very helpful. Amy allows parents to make up a missed class by attending a PWP Chapter meeting. Cassandra has also met with parents at Sangamon County Juvenile Court. Javonna suggested Cassandra be reimbursed for her travel expenses as she does this work, and Ray said he would look into that.

E. St. Louis Chapter – Ray said they will join with the local family advocacy center, and the administrator over PWP is leaving for a new assignment, so Ray and Kim will be working with a different DCFS administrator to get things moving there. Mr. Cox asked if a member of SPAC can be part of the second Webex to discuss starting this chapter, and Ray replied yes.

Membership Update

Ray noted that Cassandra had called every member to remind them of this meeting. Nonetheless, there are many continued and chronic absences the SPAC will have to deal with after the bylaws have been formally accepted. Ray asked Norma to recruit a N. Region parent to Join SPAC. Cassandra will recruit one from C. Region, and Ray will work on adding at least one from S. Region, because we must have four parents from each DCFS region as members of SPAC. After the parent membership has been adjusted, the SPAC will start working to make sure the non-parent membership is in compliance with the bylaws.

Shared Parenting & Special Guest, Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council Chair Arrelda Hall

Cassandra introduced Ms. Hall and asked Ms. Hall to say a little bit about herself. After that, the discussion turned to how the SWFCAC and the SPAC can work in concert to promote the expansion and proper administration of shared parenting in foster care cases which are appropriate for this approach. There was much discussion and some ideas put forth.

Ray suggested a committee be formed to discuss this off- line and then report back at the next SPAC meeting. Cassandra asked for volunteers to serve on the Shared Parenting Committee, and Amy, Norma, Dorothy, Johnnie, Arrelda and Cassandra volunteered. Kim will set up a Webex meeting for this committee. The committee will discuss the ideas put forth during today's discussion, and Ray will provide them with that list.

Due to time having run out, Cassandra deferred the bylaws discussion and approval To the next SPAC meeting, and she asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Dorothy; no discussion; second made by Gregory; no discussion; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Next Meeting

The next SPAC meeting is set for Tuesday, September 27, from 4-5pm, with open discussion beginning at 3:30.

JB Pritzker
Governor



Marc D. Smith
Director



Office of Caregiver & Parent Support
406 E. Monroe Street • Station 225 Springfield, Illinois 62701
217-524-2422
www2.illinois.gov/DCFS