



**DCFS Statewide Parent Advisory Council (SPAC)  
October 25, 2022**

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

**Guest Parents** – Chris Little and Shawnise Newton, both from the PWP Springfield Chapter

**Non-Parent Members** – Janelle Pulcher, Amy Chase, Rod Remolina, Javonna Smith, Norma Machay

**Support Staff** – Ray Gates

**Roll Call** – Cassandra called the roll, and the results are set out above.

**Minutes** – Greg asked if all had received and read the draft minutes of the previous meeting. He encouraged members to reach out to Ray if they ever do not receive the minutes before an upcoming meeting. All had received the draft minutes. Then he asked for discussion, changes, or a motion to approve. There was no discussion. Motion to approve was made by Greg, and the second was given by Cassandra. All were in favor. None opposed. The motion passed, and the minutes of 9/27/22 were approved as submitted.

**Membership** – Ray described three approaches taken since the last meeting, designed to fill the empty parent membership slots on SPAC. Ray connected Greg with DCFS RA Pedro Mendoza, and Greg will speak with Pedro’s team about ways to recruit parents to rebuild the DCFS Lake County PWP Chapter. Ray worked with the DCFS Southern Region Administrative team to arrange for re-starting the E. St. Louis PWP Chapter by joining with the parent support group at their local Family Advocacy Center. Kim Willis will attend their next meeting to take the PWP component to that parent group, at noon on November 9. Cassandra has recruited two members of the Springfield PWP Chapter to be considered for membership on SPAC. (They are present today, as guests.) SPAC can draw SPAC members from the Lake County and E. St. Louis chapters. This approach should lead to filling the region-specific parent membership openings on SPAC. After the parent slots have been filled, SPAC should turn its attention to securing active child welfare staff to fill the positions of current staff members who have never attended a SPAC meeting.

**SPAC Annual Meeting Schedule** – Ray announced that he sent it to the Director’s Advisory Board Coordinator Kara Hamilton, who posted it on the DCFS web site along with past SPAC approved minutes.

### **Chapter Reports**

**Springfield** – Cassandra reported on their first in-person meeting 10/18, with 7 of 10 new parents present. She did an extensive educational presentation on note taking, and DCFS Area Administrator Stephanie Herink attended and joined the chapter. They will meet virtually by the month, with in-person meetings once per quarter.

**Cook County** – Javonna reported on their virtual meeting of 10/13/22, saying it was informative and engaging as two ACR managers described the Administrative Case Review process. They hope to go back to in-person meetings in November, with the virtual option remaining for those who cannot attend in person. She encouraged the Department to invest in parents and hire staff full time to support parents. She asked what staff will go to meetings where parents go after hours? Greg said this should be reported at the next federal review. Javonna also said we should ask the courts go back to in person and to let PWP come in and speak with parents.

**Lake County** – Norma said their October meeting will be this Thursday. She has only been having 1-2 parents attend, and she is unable to get out and recruit more parents due to many other job responsibilities. It takes feet on the ground to recruit parents. Greg said this needs to be a paid position.

Greg added that we need to develop a professional Powerpoint presentation that can be used by SPAC members and other selected parents to address various groups of people about SPAC and what SPAC does. Greg will prepare it if the council so approves. Greg said SPAC must be given time when asked to do things; that others must “plan for me”, not just have “thought of me”.

**Shared Parenting Committee** – Cassandra reported that the Statewide Foster Care Advisory Council accepted her offer to join with SPAC and form a committee to develop a proposal for DCFS to actively promote and support shared parenting in almost every substitute care situation.

### **Discussion**

Greg reported on his attendance at the recent Prevent Child Abuse Illinois Conference, adding that it was a very worthwhile experience, with lots of good speakers and information. He said parents need to attend these types of conferences and become much more educated about child welfare.

Dorothy said parents are on YouTube, and maybe we should be on it. Greg said we must be very careful with social media presence. Norma added that DCFS Communications will have to approve any social media that SPAC is considering.

Norma said the large Parent Handbook should be pared down and made more useable. She offered to help with that. Then it will have to be vetted through DCFS Communications.

Janelle thanked Cassandra for all the work she is doing in the Springfield area. Then she noted that she had sent sample survey instruments (to survey parents for quality assurance purposes) to the SPAC Mailbox, hoping the mailbox would distribute it to SPAC members for review and comment. Ray said the mailbox does not do that. SPAC agreed to review and comment, so Ray will have Tiffany Norton immediately send the survey instruments to SPAC members, and SPAC members can email their suggestions for change to Janelle Pulcher.

**Next Meeting** – All agreed to table the agenda item about changing the “chapter” nomenclature to “council”, until the next meeting.

Due to the late hour, Greg moved to adjourn; Dorothy gave the second; and the meeting adjourned at 5:12pm.

JB Pritzker  
Governor



Marc D. Smith  
Director

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