

January 10, 2020

PPP Meeting Notes

Attendance:

Table 1: PPP Committee Members

Present	Name	Title	Organization
Yes	Glenn Scruggs	CEO/Executive Director	The Giocosa Foundation
Yes	Andy Homer	Director of Public Affairs	Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
Yes	Judge Rob Hofmann	Judge	452nd District Court
Yes	Tina Amberboy	Executive Director	Supreme Court Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families
Yes	Kristene Blackstone	Associate Commissioner for CPS/PPP Co-Chair	Department of Family and Protective Services
Yes	Wayne Carson	Executive Director	ACH Child and Family Services
No	Robert Ellis	CEO	Pegasus Schools Inc.
Yes	Christine Gendron	Executive Director	Texas Network of Youth Services
Yes	Kaysie Taccetta	CPS Director of Conservatorship Services	Department of Family and Protective Services
Yes	Katie Olse	Executive Director	Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services
Yes	Jenifer Jarriel	President/PPP Co-Chair	DePelchin Children's Center
Yes	Scott Lundy	CEO	Arrow Children and Family Ministries
Yes	Michael Redden	Executive Director	New Horizons Ranch and Center
No	LuAnne Southern (ex-officio)	Director of Texas Strategic Consulting	Casey Family Programs
Yes	Jean Shaw	Associate Commissioner for CCL	DFPS Child Care Licensing
Yes	Judge Melissa DeGerolami	Judge	Child Protection Court of South Central Texas
No	Dr. Kurt Senske	CEO	Upbring
Yes	Leslie Strauch	Supervising Attorney	Children's Rights Clinic at the University of Texas School of Law
Yes	Denise Blakney	President	Building Future Families
Yes	Allicia Frye	CEO	Jonathan's Place

Other Attendees:

Rep. James Frank (Texas House of Representatives), Jamie Masters (DFPS Commissioner), Trevor Woodruff (DFPS Deputy Commissioner), Holly Ramos (DFPS), Cyndi Reed (DFPS), Claire Hall (DFPS), Gina Kothe-Gibson (DFPS), Judy Pavone (DFPS), Beckie Flores (DFPS), Jared Davis (DFPS), Angie Lindemann (DFPS), Guy Hanson (DFPS), Hector Ortiz (DFPS), George Cannata (DFPS), Kris Naylor (OCOK), Linda Garcia (OCOK), Cristian Garcia (St. Francis Community Services), Diane Carver (Saint Francis Ministries), Michael Patrick (Texas Family Initiative), Raquel Garza-Martinez (Family Tapestry), Annette Rodriguez (Family Tapestry), Patrick Leung (University of Houston)

Announcements:

- Commissioner Masters will appoint replacements to the PPP:
 - Anne Heligenstein will replace LuAnn Southern as Director of Strategy for Casey Family Programs.
 - Dr. Kurt Senske has retired from Upbring.

Update from Region 3b (ACH/OCOK): Dr. Wayne Carson, George Cannata

- Stage I Performance
 - Meeting all performance benchmarks
 - Long term trends positive:
 - Ability to keep siblings together
 - Least restrictive
 - Stability
 - Success is attributed to the service providers. What CBC brings is coordination and attention. Tracking the numbers – how can we work harder to meet the outcomes?
 - When announcement was made, staff who have seen the stage I outcomes were able to be champions.
- Stage II Transition
 - Three guiding principles:
 - Take care of our teams and make sure they are part of the process.
 - Focus on youth and families – everything we do promotes stability through the process. Teams stay focused on the work now and through the transition.
 - Commitment to communicate. Took some risks to communicate early knowing things could change. Even with changes, staff felt they were part of the process.
 - DFPS and OCOK commitment to principles and work as a partnership. Joint transition activities:
 - Joint CPS-SSCC video.
 - In person meetings - 7 counties in 3 days.
 - Each OCOK staff presented specifics - org charts, plan for program, HR.
 - OCOK responsive to DFPS feedback, e.g. use of personal and work phones.
 - Opportunities for staff to meet individually with OCOK.

- Stage Hiring Activity:
 - Keeping units together, staff stay with supervisors.
 - Each employee in impacted position contacted.
 - Identified at the staff level #s accepting, #s looking for another position. Goal of retaining staff – either OCOK or DFPS.
 - Have not paused hiring. New hires committed to transition.
 - Working with attorneys and legal liaison on a summary page for every case. Identifies whether the worker and supervisor are transitioning to OCOK.
 - Continuity. For each case - My story, my schedule, my stuff, my space.
- Lessons learned:
 - Start with the why.
 - Remember these are personal decisions about getting into this work and how to continue in their careers.
 - Share information early. If it changes just go back quickly.
 - Keep everyone a part of the process. This is not easy.
 - Focus on the critical tasks. We will make sure the right people can help guide the rest.
- DFPS Joint transition work plan and workgroups: SSCC and DFPS lead
 - HR – Staff & Case transition
 - Training
 - Administrative
 - CQI and Performance
 - Financial/PCS & Community Resource Network
 - Communication
 - Technology
 - Protocols/Joint Operations
- Protocol sessions. Protocols establish how OCOK will interact with DFPS, resources to tap into. What the practice is going to look like for children and families.
 - Significant staff participation.
 - SME support – every part of DFPS with the exception of APS were engaged.
 - Region 2 Observed. Goal to increase expertise in process.
 - Product:
 - OCOK policy and procedure
 - Joint Operations Manual with DFPS
- Hiring
 - Staff hired.
 - Contracting with 4 retired CPS staff to review every case that will have a new worker and support the new workers. Experienced team to help us through the initial transition.
 - Director of Legal Permanency - James Teel (former associate Judge). Will ensure court report is well organized and ready to present in a court of law, staff prepared to present.
 - Community Relations Manager – Courtney Leverton. Will serve as single point of contact for court.
 - Additional legal preparation support from Tina Amberboy - Children’s Commission.

Stage II Preparation-Partnership successes

- Joint Communication
- DFPS brought the training academy to train new OCOK workers
- Got permission for initial resource sharing during transition (laptops)
- IMPACT access transfer

Update from Region 2 (2INgage): Michael Patrick, Michael Redden, Hector Ortiz

- Have begun Stage II readiness
- Similar to the work described by 3b but in the early stages:
 - Informational meetings
 - Hiring Program Positions – see 2INgage power point presentation.
 - 2INgage now setting up interviews with CPS staff
 - Hopeful 80% or more will come on board
 - DFPS posted Case Management Oversight (CMO) positions. Lessons learned – posted positions at the same time as 3b so staff could make that decision early leaving them free to commit to other positions.

Update from Region 8a (Family Tapestry): Annette Rodriguez, Guy Hanson

- 20 days away from Stage I one year anniversary - Still standing and energized
- Data on children served.
- Performance data drill down to identify areas for attention:
 - Large sibling groups placed in shelters, including young children - Working with providers and foster parents. Families on average take 2-3 children. Develop to take larger sibling groups.
 - Placement data– Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disability have the most placement moves. Moving 5-6 times. Need the right capacity to meet these kid's needs.
- Seeing positive performance, with enough children transferred to compare to baseline, for:
 - Siblings placed together
 - Placing kids close to home
 - Youth completing PAL
- Recent Community engagement efforts:
 - Telethon to generate foster homes
 - Holiday event over 200 children and youth foster care and kinni
 - Youth advisory council
 - Provider year in review site visits.
 - Training collaborative -
 - Trauma-informed courts.
- Stage I Stewards of Change (DFPS work group)

- Revised protocols, refresher training

Update from Region 1 (Diane Carver, Cristian Garcia)

- Stage I services began January 6.
- The staged Texas model has been the smoothest transition among experiences with other states– believe it is due to the partnership and experience in 3b and 2. St. Francis also brings to the table experience in initiating start-ups of this magnitude. Marry all of this with the excitement of local ownership.
- Activity to date:
 - 42 referrals – started working before go live
 - Prioritized more difficult to place - PMN, large sibling groups
 - 25 emergency referrals
 - 100% placed in Region and siblings placed together so far.
 - 1 child going back home.
- Moving forward will continue getting to know all of the children in care. 2 Permanency managers will begin case mining. Example a child in care for 9 years.
- Model:
 - Permanency is goal. Everyone supports that.
 - Customer service model – connect with the CPS worker, focus on what is best for the child
 - Adapting – example added additional staff to answer questions. Inform retraining so not so many questions.
- Hired staff attorney – meeting with judges, CASA, attorney ad litem. Important feedback – how to create a better system.
- DFPS perspective – region was well prepared: communication, preliminary work and technical support, lessons learned from other regions (e.g. start transitioning DFPS homes early), collaboration (example – DFFPS and 2INGage sharing the work of fielding questions)
- St. Francis work ahead:
 - Leadership development program for workforce
 - Contracting for new Supervised Independent Living programs
 - Capacity building – offering shared office space as incentive.

Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) and Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)

- SB355 – Requires DFPS to develop a strategic plan for the coordinated implementation of Community-Based Care and foster care prevention services associated with FFPSA
- FFPSA planning:
 - Texas has Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) network generously funded by the legislature. PEI includes services that target children at risk of imminently entering foster care.
 - Many in this population being served in FBSS today.

- DFPS & SSCCs discussion: Would we want to add this to the CBC Request for Application (RFA) or have a separate contract with these services but in the same model as CBC? Discussion of pros and cons:
 - Keep separate:
 - May open up to more people than would come to the table for the full CBC scope of services.
 - Keeps prevention funding separate to protect
 - Having too many community entities– fatigue in new partners and implementation.
 - FBSS has an investigative function. Would the contractor be able to support (same with CVS in CBC).
 - Join with CBC:
 - Efficiencies in admin cost
 - Efficiency in terms of higher expense of evidence-based services e.g. Nurturing Parent Program.
 - Concept of cross-trained staff – in terms of services to parents.
 - If added to CBC would pull things together under one umbrella for families. Where FBSS and family reunification are similar – family resource model.
 - SSCC will have done the needs assessment to know what services and can mine the data on current cases to see what families need for prevention. Have been recruiting providers, can continue to work with the same providers.
 - DFPS could keep prevention function separate in terms of leadership and funding
 - Stigma of services that are also CPS services
 - Adding to CBC staging and slowing momentum.
- If added to CBC, would it be another stage or part of stage II? Current SSCCs have different perspectives:
 - Could be part of building the services for parents in stage I.
 - Could be another step in expanding services with time to still focus on stage I and II separately.
- Drawing down funds means moving current providers toward evidence-based services.
 - Federal requirement was 50% well-supported programs, backed down to give states time to transition, time limited.
- There is a need to better define the specific services that will be purchased. Today community organizations are providing things like transportation, employment support. Is this just buying services?
- We don't know exactly the full range of services out there and being used entirely for FBSS and reunification. Differs by community.
- Looking at a family resource model. Notion of community based care concept.
- Alternative response would not change, but could refer for these services.
- Gaps in services for youth who end up in care – could this be a program to serve? Would have to be an appropriate match between that youth, the host family, and a service.

- Have more opportunity to purchase services in some areas than in others. May be different for different regions. Like CBC where SSCCs support building services
- If we want to reimagine family preservation then this could be of interest, if it just purchasing and providing services, then may not.
 - More than services - have to have something built in in the way of a safety model
 - Opportunity to deliver more quality services in a new way
- Maximize federal dollars. What are the services providers need to develop to do that?
- Also a state investment and a match. Reliant on legislature to fund.
- Judiciary trying to figure out what it will look like if it participates in prevention. Judge could order a lot more services than is offered.
- Allows for mental health, substance abuse services already covered by HHSC that our agency does not pay for. Could develop more services through DFPS.
- Next Steps:
 - Continue to meet with SSCCs
 - Continue to engage stakeholders and get feedback
 - Meet with parents and youth council
 - Continue to engage PPP

Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Survey

- DFPS has engaged with University of Houston about Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) portion of FFPSA for the SB 355 strategic plan – owe recommendations around how DFPS would proceed with implementation of QRTP around congregate care part of requirements.
- Survey Residential Treatment Centers (RTCs) to get information. Survey will center on accreditation portion of QRTP
 - Many are accredited or are in the process.
 - What is the cost for those going through it?
 - What would incentivize those who haven't started process?
- University will also host some focus groups.
- Utilizing the Alliance to gather more information.
- Rate will be part of the discussion.
- Efforts will have open-ended questions to gather feedback.
- Feedback: Remember to consider that cost can vary based on size and services of agency since entire agency has to be accredited.

Single Source Continuum Contract Shared Processes (Dr. Wayne Carson, Michael Patrick, Annette Rodriguez, Diane Carver)

- SSCCs working together to standardize the things we can. All SSCCs are involved. St. Francis is on board.
- What we've done so far:
 - Gateway –Common data entry platform for all providers. Compelling argument for continued use by new SSCCs

- Phase II of Gateway end of February with new features: critical incident reporting, discharge and disruption reports. Able to review prior to monitoring. Same process for all SSCC.
 - Monitoring – Committed to not making more work for monitoring to help providers take care of kids.
 - Developed a common tool, required compromise among SSCCs
 - Assigned CPAs and RTCs – list of all that operate in different areas. Have assigned one SSCC as lead. Already getting feedback does not feel streamlined or efficient so will need to continue to develop.
 - Alliance is helping to facilitate communication between providers and SSCCs – convene to get clear on what is not working and solutions. Collecting the same data but the processes are not working. May not be one solution that works for everyone.
- Issue not yet on the table is payment. That may be next conversation, but it is where some of the flexibility and innovation is more important.

Implementation Updates: Ellen Letts, Kaysie Taccetta

Region 8b

- Region 8b RFA was released on May 2, 2019 and closed on August 2, 2019.
- Evaluation bids still underway.
- Contract negotiations will follow the evaluation of bids
- Go live now projected for Q1 of FY21 after 6 months of start up

Implementation Plan

- Mandated to release a plan annually
- Released December 30th – serves as the FY2020 Implementation plan
- Realignment of catchment areas as related to Region 3 – will now follow DFPS regional structure. Change from 3A, 3B, 3C to 3W and 3E. Change will be made when we procure in the future. 3b contract will come up for rebid. (Ends August 2023). No current appropriation or plan for it to occur more immediately.
- Plan includes statewide rollout schedule by fiscal year and stage of implementation.
- Implementation plan is subject to legislative direction and funding consistent with current DFPS resources.
- Next plan will be released December FY2021.
 - Will adjust with Any changes based on:
 - Process evaluation
 - Current community collaborative efforts. Recommended DFPS not considering redrawing lines until their evaluations were finished
 - Will test and analyze the 500 new entries per recommendation.
 - Will announce 5 catchments for 2022-23 based on appropriation.

Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System, Angie Lindemann

- Data Standards and Governance was briefed and is kept up to date

- In July of 2018 DFPS opted not to opt into a CWIS model currently. Can revisit in the future.
- Factors that went in to that decision:
 - Where we were with system upgrades
 - Feedback from providers as they were adopting systems
 - Need to seek legislative authority and funding
 - Look to other states implementing to learn from them
- DFPS remains committed to building a model that is interoperable. Planning is well underway for that. Have some additional work to do to gather information and make adjustments.
- There is additional clarification and guidance coming down and DFPS will continue to ask at what point additional funding will no longer be available.
- DFPS continues to draw down some federal funding and support.
- Current rule is may not be able to draw down funds for those functions that are duplicative between DFPS and partners. Can't build in such a way that we would not be able to draw down funds. This is a barrier in plans for interoperability.
- Watching experience of other states: Arizona has been addressing as key point of contention. There is general information that anyone serving kids is going to be putting in an interoperable system and it is unrealistic to expect no duplication.
- Current expectation is have to absolutely comply with CCWIS rules or a state does not get funding. Until there is confidence that data shared in both systems is something we can draw federal funds for – that is a risk.

Closing/Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Next Meeting Agenda Items:

- Legislative Update

Next Meeting: April 17, 2020