

**Joint Citizens Review Panel
Meeting Minutes**

October 2, 2014
10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Locations: Albany – OCFS, 52 Washington Street, Rensselaer, Room 144 North
NYC – OCFS, 80 Maiden Lane, Room 2450, 24th Floor
Buffalo – OCFS, Ellicott Square, 295 Main Street, 5th Floor Conference Room

Attendees:

Eastern Panel:

Lance Jackson, Mary McCarthy, Hector Ramirez

Western Panel:

Ellen Kennedy, Paula Mazur, Sarlyn Tate, Caterina Plotnicki for Dennis Walczyk

NYC Panel:

Marion White, Joycelyn Brown (by phone), David Lanser, Mathea Rubin, Elba Montalvo

Guests: Amber Green from NYC Office of the Public Advocate, Two Interns (guests of David Lansner) and Sandra Killett and Joyce McMillan from the Child Welfare Organizing Project (CWOP)

OCFS Staff (by phone for part of the meeting): Lisa Gordon Renee Hallock

Handouts:

Agenda

Joint Panel Meeting Minutes June 13, 2014

Joint Panel Outline of the Discussion June 13, 2014

2013 New York State Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services Annual Report and
Recommendations Executive Summary

NYS Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services 2013 Annual Report and Recommendations
Review of NYS CRP Non-Budgetary Recommendations from the Past 7 years

Child Welfare and Children of Incarcerated Parents

A Public Health Approach to Child Welfare

Child Welfare Workforce

Panel Activities

List of Eastern New York Citizen Review Panel Members

List of New York City Citizen Review Panel Members

List of Western New York Citizen Review Panel Members

The meeting of the three New York State panels began with a welcome and introductions, with each of the Panels at a different location, as noted above, and connected by video conferencing.

OCFS Updates in Child Welfare

Lisa Gordon and Renee Hallock from OCFS provided updates of some of OCFS' child welfare initiatives, including the following:

- OCFS updated its model of child welfare practice and will share it with the Panels at the fall meetings.
- There is a renewed emphasis on child well-being; OCFS has developed a well-being White Paper and is focusing on the effects of trauma on children and trauma-informed care.
- OCFS intends to expand the use of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment tool and may incorporate it into the CONNECTIONS system.
- OCFS is working to collect better data about the use of kinship care statewide.
- They are also looking at the recent concerning development of “rehoming” of children by their parents, and children in adoptive families in particular.
- OCFS sets adoption targets for counties and monitors achievement; the goal this year is 1,728 adoptions.
- OCFS is working on a “normalcy initiative” to create more normative experiences for children in foster care (e.g. obtaining drivers' licenses, going on sleepovers and trips, etc.). They will be issuing a Local Commissioners' Memorandum and a foster care bill of rights as part of this work.
- OCFS is working with a consultant to determine how to best use continuous quality improvement approach to strengthening practice and using data to improve outcomes
- OCFS is working with the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) in regard to the impact of opiate use on child welfare. There is a webinar scheduled for October 16 and the Governor has signed 12 pieces of legislation; these are described on the website <http://www.combatheroin.ny.gov/>. OCFS also has a page on their website.
- FAR update: the number of reports in FAR has increased to 51,805. Twenty-three counties have implemented FAR; some are expanding the criteria to include more reports. There will be a 2-day FAR symposium with the Butler Institute in Albany.
- OCFS and the NYS Education Department have signed an MOU so OCFS can have access to school data including attendance and grades.

Panelists asked a number of questions about these initiatives and asked for additional data about the numbers of children involved with child welfare who have an incarcerated parent.

Discussion of Each Panel's Recommendations

Each Panel presented on the recommendations they recommend putting forward in the 2014 Annual Report. Following the presentations, there was a discussion among the Panels about the recommendations, including the option of issuing a “report card” reflecting the extent to which the

Panels' recommendations have been implemented during the past several years. There was discussion about legislation sponsored by NYS Senator Tim Kennedy limiting child welfare caseloads. *(New information since the meeting: this legislation did not pass both houses of the Legislature, and therefore was not sent to the Governor for signature).*

Following the discussion, there was a unanimous affirmative vote to include the following recommendations in the 2014 Annual Report:

- Public health framework for child welfare (based on 1-page summary)
- Workforce and strengthening supervision (based on 1-page summary)
- Increase preventive funding to 75%
- Child Welfare and Children of Incarcerated Parents (based on 1-page summary)

In addition, the report will offer continued support for these past recommendations:

- Home Visiting
- Racial Equity
- FAR
- KinGAP Caregiver Services and KinGAP

The report will also introduce that the Panels will be conducting an "Impact Assessment" during the upcoming year to assess the impact the Panels' recommendations have had to date. There was discussion about a workgroup across the Panels to begin this work. There was also discussion about the format this will take in the 2015 report.

Next Steps

WRI will draft the 2014 Annual Report, based on today's discussion and vote, and email the first draft to panelists by November 7th. Comments will be due to WRI by November 19th and, once comments are incorporated, WRI will issue the second draft on December 2nd with comments due by December 7th. At that time, SCAA will format the report and get it printed.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.