

**Eastern Citizen Review Panel
Meeting Summary
March 8, 2018
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Attendees:

Panel Members: Nadia Allen, Ed Blatt, Sharon Chesna, Kathy Halas, Mary McCarthy, Carrie Smith

Guests: Amy Papandrea, OCFS
Paige Pierce, Families Together in NYS

WRI Staff: Darlene Ward, Executive Director
Jennifer Goldman, CRP Coordinator and Program Specialist
Ellen Unruh, Associate Executive Director

Handouts:

- Agenda
- Eastern CRP Minutes 12.8.17
- ACS letter to Governor Cuomo
- CRP Meeting Topic Survey Results
- Foster Care Unprepared for Drug Epidemic article
- Cliff notes on Family First Act
- Senator Pamela Helming letter
- SCAA First 1000 Days on Medicaid handout

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions

Ed Blatt, Panel Chair

Panel Chair Ed Blatt convened meeting and asked panel members and guests to introduce themselves.

Agenda Item: Advocacy Day Debrief

Ed Blatt, Panel Chair and Mary McCarthy, Panel Co-Chair

Mr. Ed Blatt and Ms. Mary McCarthy debriefed the other panel members on CRP Advocacy Day on February 13. Both Mr. Blatt and Ms. McCarthy thought the Panels received positive feedback for focusing on just one legislative priority – increase funding for home visiting. Providing district specific data was also well received by the legislative staff. Panel members agreed that the Panels should start advocacy efforts earlier on in the budget process to be more effective next year.

Agenda Item: Updates from OCFS

Amy Papandrea, OCFS

Amy Papandrea joined the meeting to provide the following updates from OCFS.

Child and Family Service Review

OCFS is working with the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to finalize approval of the New York State Program Improvement Plan. OCFS has added the Healthy Families New York efforts into the plan and will continue to work on the initiatives contained in the plan while awaiting final approval.

Family Assessment Response

One county recently suspended the FAR program due to staffing issues but will readdress using FAR once those issues have been resolved. Otherwise, OCFS has been applying FAR techniques to various training sessions and integrating FAR principles into other areas of training and practice.

Home Visiting

OCFS received the Panels' report including recommendations to increase funding for home visiting programs. The agency supports the recommendation and will increase funding whenever possible. An official response to the report is forthcoming.

CPS Caseload Roundtable

No update. Panel members asked if the report from the roundtable discussion went to the Executive Branch. Ms. Papandrea agreed to find out and follow up.

Raise the Age

OCFS issued a RFA to voluntary agencies for programs interested in adding beds to accommodate youth impacted by the Raise the Age legislation. Thirteen agencies submitted a response, and OCFS will be making a decision by April 1, 2018. OCFS also is currently making plans to distribute a planning guide for implementation.

Family First Act

OCFS recently offered a webinar to explain the major aspects of the new federal legislation and is awaiting further guidance on implementation from ACF.

CWIS

OCFS is moving forward with ongoing analysis to determine if New York will participate in the new case management system.

Wendy's Wonderful Kids

OCFS will be adding seven additional Wendy's Wonderful Kids foster home recruiters to upstate New York by the end of June. Ms. Papandrea agreed to provide a list of the participating counties.

Agenda Item: WRI Updates

Jennifer Goldman, WRI

CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman provided brief updates from Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI) as well as a summary of the recent Home Visiting Workgroup meeting. At the meeting, Kate Breslin, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy CEO, shared updates on the First 1000 Days on Medicaid initiative which include a proposal for a pilot program to examine the use of Medicaid money to fund home visiting program slots.

Agenda Item: Families Together in NYS (FTNYS)

Paige Pierce, Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Paige Pierce, Chief Executive Officer of Families Together in NYS, joined the meeting to discuss FTNYS initiatives as well as ways that FTNYS and the CRPs can work together to achieve common advocacy goals. FTNYS represents families of children with behavioral health needs and advocates for a more coordinated, family involved system.

Mr. Blatt then provided a brief overview of the purpose and work of the Panels for Ms. Pierce and then asked for feedback on how the CRPs could advocate more effectively. Ms. Pierce suggested that panel members begin to meet with legislators in the fall in preparation for the following budget cycle, partner with other like-minded advocacy groups, and utilize social media. The Panel and Ms. Pierce expressed mutual willingness to work together on future advocacy issues. Mr. Blatt thanked Ms. Pierce for her time.

Agenda Item: Advocacy Discussion/Planning

Panel members agreed that beginning preliminary advocacy work, prior to the report release, would be advantageous. As a result, the Eastern Panel members agreed to schedule meetings with legislators during the next Eastern CRP meeting in May, with the purpose of building relationships with legislators prior to report release and budget season.

Agenda Item: Closing Business

Mr. Blatt adjourned the meeting. Next Eastern CRP meeting is Thursday, May 3, 2018.