

Joint Citizen Review Panels for Child Protective Services

Meeting Summary February 1, 2022 • 12:30p.m.-1:30p.m.

Attendees:

Eastern Panel Members

Mary McCarthy
Kathy Halas
Kellyann Kostyal-Larrier

Western Panel Members

Sarlyn Tate
Todd Sage
Ellen Kennedy

NYC Panel Members

Stanley Capela
David Lansner
Mathea Rubin
Jocelyn Brown
Karen Steinberg

Welfare Research, Inc.

Liz Roberts
Ellen Unruh

Welcome – Mary McCarthy

Eastern Panel Chair Mary McCarthy welcomed Panel members and introduced the new CRP coordinator from WRI, Liz Roberts.

Annual Report Distribution

Liz Roberts updated the Panels on the Annual Report distribution. Mailed copies have been sent to LDSS Commissioners, the New York State legislators, OCFS, and the Panel members. Emailed copies have been delivered to OCFS, LDSS Commissioners, voluntary agencies, accredited social work programs, and other stakeholders.

Executive Budget Updates

Liz Roberts summarized key points from the Executive Budget. While the majority of the Panels' priorities were not included in the budget, there was a proposed \$11 million increase for home visiting. Stanley Capela informed the group that he attended the Child Welfare Reimagined session at COFCCA, where the issue of anonymous reporting was discussed. He noted that Assemblymember Hevesi is a key advocate for child welfare in the legislature.

Advocacy Plans

The Panels discussed what they would like to do for their advocacy during budget season. Panel members raised concern for anonymous reporting continuing on, and Kellyann Kostyal-Larrier informed the group of two bills which remove anonymous reporting by replacing it with confidential reporting (A7879 Hevesi/S7326 Brisport). A consensus was reached to send a letter of support to Hevesi and for Panel members to join ongoing meetings with legislators with groups such as the New York State Child Welfare Coalition.

Racial Inequity Statement Discussion

Panel members raised questions about the history and need for the CRP's racial inequity statement during the review process for the 2021 Annual Report. Panel members agreed that having such a statement must go beyond words and be reflected in their Annual Report recommendations and ongoing work. A full discussion of the Panel's racial inequity statement was planned for the next Joint Panels meeting in June: WRI was asked to draft questions to guide the discussion.

Plan for March Meetings

Panel members would like to discuss the elimination of anonymous reporting with OCFS and would like to see the tool used to screen malicious calls to the State Central Registry (SCR). Panel members also requested OCFS updates on how new revised policies added to the manual for child protective services is communicated with caseworkers and supervisors. The NYC Panel would like to invite the new ACS Commissioner, Jess Dannhauser, to their March meeting to learn more from him about his vision and plans for NYC's children and families. The Western Panel would like to invite Erie County DSS Commissioner Marie Cannon to get an update on the county's Family First Implementation. The Eastern Panel would like to hear from multiple local DSS Commissioners to discuss the child welfare workforce, the impacts of COVID, and Family First implementation. Additionally, the Panels decided to request a meeting with OCFS before the next Joint Panels meeting to discuss their recommendations from the 2021 Annual Report.

Meeting Adjourned: 2:00p.m.

Next CRP Meetings:

- NYC: March 1, 10:00a.m.
- Eastern: March 3, 10:00a.m.
- Western: March 11, 9:00a.m.