

**NYC Citizen Review Panel
Meeting Summary
September 20, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

Attendees:

Panel Members: Wayne Ho, Stanley Capela, Marion White, David J. Lansner, Esq.

Guests: Karyn Boutis, Administration for Children’s Services (ACS), Office of Education Support and Policy Planning

Cara Chambers, NYC Legal Aid Society

Steve Brown, Psy.D, Director, Traumatic Stress Institute of Klingberg Family Centers (by phone)

WRI Staff: Lee Lounsbury, Executive Director, WRI (by phone)
Judy Stanger, Program Specialist and CRP Coordinator
Cindy Alois, Administrative Support Specialist (by phone)

Handouts:

- Agenda
- OCFS: Family First Prevention Services Act of 2016: New York State’s Position
- Engaging Parents, Developing Leaders: A Self-Assessment and Planning Tool for Nonprofits and Schools
- Traumatic Stress Institute: Risking Connection: A Transformative Whole System Intervention that Lasts, Risking Connection Trauma Training, TSI: Overview, Whole System Transformation to Trauma Informed Care
- Development and Psychometric Evaluation of the Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) Scale
- Risking Connection Trauma Training: A Pathway Toward Trauma-Informed Care in Child Congregate Care Settings
- Trauma-Informed Care: Current State of the Field and Interventions to Change Whole Systems-of-Care
- 9/7/16 Summary of Citizen Review Panel (CRP) Chairs’ Meeting with NYS Division of the Budget (DOB)
- Home Visiting Need: NYS Infographic
- 8/15/16 Home Visiting Advocacy Meeting Agenda
- 4/13/16 HEARTS Leaders Meeting Draft Agenda
- 8/25/16 Summary of CRP Chairs’ meeting with OCFS
- 6/9/16 Summary of National CRP Conference
- 6/9/16 Joint CRP Minutes

Agenda Item: Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Ho opened the meeting and introductions took place.

The Panel then discussed the recent judge's decision to reject the proposed settlement of the foster care lawsuit between the State and Plaintiffs. Although ACS is a defendant in the lawsuit, it was not a party in the proposed settlement.

Mr. Ho asked Mr. Capela to discuss his concerns about closed foster care cases. Mr. Capela stated that once cases are closed, agencies that are interested in conducting case quality reviews have difficulty gaining access to records. In the interest of time, it was agreed that this topic would be addressed at a future meeting.

Agenda Item: ACS Work Group: Improving educational outcomes of youth in Foster Care

Mr. Ho provided some background about the presentations made to the NYC Panel at the February Panel meeting by ACS Commissioner Gladys Carrión and First Deputy Commissioner Eric Brettschneider. Their presentation included information about the many initiatives underway to strengthen child welfare services, including information about the 10 work groups formed by ACS in recent months. Each workgroup is specific to an area of child welfare improvement and is co-chaired by an ACS administrator and an external stakeholder.

Karyn Boutis, ACS, Office of Education Support and Policy Planning

Ms. Boutis began her presentation discussing educational outcomes for older youth in foster care. ACS is working with Queens College to provide older youth in foster care with year-round dorms along with a weekly stipend. This initiative began in May 2016 and has approximately 50 youth participating. There are plans for expansion to 100 youth during 2017.

Ms. Boutis then discussed the Stepping Up for Academic Success Event. This program involves taking 8th graders in foster care and their foster parents to a local High School fair where they will receive technical assistance with the college application process. Youth are provided with incentives to participate (i.e. raffle). In addition, annual college tours are conducted through CUNY and SUNY.

A panel member asked if the birth parents are notified about these events, but currently, only the foster parents are directly invited. Agencies are notified and it is up to the agency to determine who the most appropriate adults are to attend with the child. Panel members recommended that ACS invite, or at least notify, birth parents as well to promote their involvement with their children whenever possible.

Cara Chambers, NYC Legal Aid Society

Ms. Chambers discussed the importance of school stability for children in foster care. Changes in schools often cause significant gaps in knowledge which can result in a loss of credits, being

held back a grade, and decreased likelihood of graduating. In 2008, federal legislation mandated that child welfare agencies, in partnership with the education system, make every effort to prevent children in foster care from changing schools. The biggest barrier to this goal is providing/coordinating transportation.

In 2015, another federal law was passed that places the responsibility of transportation to promote school stability for children in foster care on state and local education systems. Each state and local education agency must have a plan in place to provide children in foster care with appropriate school transportation. Currently, ACS is working on a memorandum of understanding to provide local agencies with transportation guidelines, and is coordinating with the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) and the New York State Education Department (SED).

A panel member asked if there was a plan in place for transportation of children with disabilities. Ms. Boutis responded that ACS is currently training staff in this area and working with the Family Court to ensure that transportation arrangements are in place. ACS has an interim transportation policy memo that can be shared with the Panel.

Agenda Item: Building a Trauma Informed Child Welfare System *Steve Brown, Psy.D.*

Dr. Brown stated that Sarah Yanosy, Director of the Sanctuary Institute, was invited to co-present today but is not available. Dr. Brown discussed the current state of the field of Trauma Informed Care. Trauma Stress Institute (TSI) assists in transforming systems into Trauma-sensitive organizations. The practice model is based on two pillars, the Risking Connection Trauma Training Model and the Restorative Approach (for child residential care). Whole-system change to Trauma Informed Care through Risking Connection is an 18-24 month implementation process consisting of multiple components focused on organizational change. Presently, TSI is working with 40 organizations and two provinces in Canada.

Dr. Brown stated that TSI works in collaboration with Sarah Yanosy of the Sanctuary Institute in several states, including approximately 20 organizations in New York State. Implementation of the Sanctuary model is a 3-year process with a similar set of benchmarks, tracking and program evaluation processes. The overall focus of TIC models, including Sanctuary, is transforming whole systems of care. TIC takes the position that the signs of trauma existing within systems are very similar to signs of trauma present in individuals. The Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) study provided the framework for the TIC movement. The ACE study helped the TIC movement to become more well-known and now includes training of judges, lawyers, school personnel, and communities of care.

Agenda Item: WRI Updates *Judy Stanger, Lee Lounsbury*

Summary of Panel Chairs' meetings during the summer with OCFS and the NYS Division of the Budget (DOB):

- Ms. Lounsbury reported that Panel representatives and WRI staff met with OCFS Deputy Commissioner Laura Velez as a follow-up to the February 2016 meeting. Ms. Velez

provided updates on child welfare initiatives, including those related to the recommendations in the Panels' 2015 Annual Report. Ms. Velez agreed to attend the Panels' joint meeting in October to present updates and engage in a discussion with all Panel members.

- Ms. Lounsbury briefed the Panel on the meeting of Panel Chairs and WRI with DOB in August, including the discussion of the State's poor performance on the federal Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) federal child welfare data measures. DOB staff asked a number of questions and there was a discussion about the root causes and the Panels' recommendations for improvements.

Home visiting agenda: Ms. Stanger recently joined the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy's (SCAA) home visiting workgroup, and referred panel members to the workgroup agenda in the handouts. Ms. Stanger will continue to attend this workgroup regularly and inform Panel members about its work since home visiting is a priority area for the Panels.

Children with Incarcerated Parents: Ms. Stanger continues to attend the Osborne Association's initiative related to children with incarcerated parents and will continue to brief Panel members on these meetings and opportunities for collaboration with the Panels.

National Citizen Review Panel Conference: Ms. Stanger attended this national conference during the summer and referred Panel members to the handout providing a summary of the conference.

Mr. Ho adjourned the meeting.