

Western Citizen Review Panel for Child Protective Services

Meeting Summary

March 15, 2019 • 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

United Way of Buffalo, 742 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo

Attendees

Panel Members

Ellen Kennedy

Linda Brown

Karl Wiggins

Melissa Cavagnaro

Sarlyn Tate

Welfare Research, Inc. (WRI)

Jennifer Goldman

Ariela Perez-Wallach

Office of Children and Family Services

(OCFS) by phone

Lisa Gordon

Jennifer Maurici

Guests

Marie Cannon, Erie County Department of Social Services (DSS) Commissioner

Chris Gottlieb, SCR Coalition by phone

Alicia Peet, Social Media Consultant by phone

Handouts

Agenda

NYS CRP Social Media overview

Assemblymember Fahy Home Visiting

Western CRP Meeting Summary 9.28.18

Article – Fostering Change

Welcome – *Panel Chair Ellen Kennedy*

Legislative Debrief – *CRP Coordinator Jennifer Goldman*

- The panel members discussed the upcoming legislative budget and plans moving forward to better engage NYS Assemblymembers and Senators.

Proposed SCR Legislation – *Chris Gottlieb, NYU School of Law Family Defense Clinic*

- Chris Gottlieb, a member of the SCR Coalition, reported on proposed legislation to reform the State Central Register. The proposed legislation would:
 - 1) Remove unnecessary and unfair employment barriers for parents by automatically sealing indicated reports of neglect after 5 years.
 - 2) Ensure that SCR reports are amended and sealed when a Family Court Judge determines there is not sufficient evidence of abuse or neglect.

3) Allow Fair Hearing judges to consider evidence of a parent's rehabilitation whenever considering whether to seal an indicated report.

The panel members agreed to sign onto a letter of support for the new proposed legislation.

Social Media Update – *Alicia Peet, Social Media Consultant*

- Ms. Peet reported on the status of the CRP Facebook and Twitter pages. She also discussed how the panel members can interact with the pages and share the content to increase awareness of the work of the CRP.

Erie County Updates – *Commissioner Marie Cannon, Erie County DSS*

- Commissioner Cannon introduced herself to the panel members and presented on the current initiatives and issues that Erie County is working on. This includes better engaging the community, current staffing challenges, and increasing caseloads. Commissioner Cannon also reported that Erie County was just chosen as a recipient of the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute funding to explore innovations in child welfare workforce recruitment and retention in Erie County.

OCFS Updates – *Lisa Gordon and Jennifer Maurici, OCFS*

- Ms. Gordon and Ms. Maurici updated the panels on the OCFS Training Center, which will be officially opening shortly.
- On Raise the Age implementation, 13 voluntary agencies submitted requests to provide programming. The voluntary agencies have been asked to bring in local law enforcement in order to collaborate better on this issue. OCFS continues to offer learning collaboratives for agencies to improve implementation.
- OCFS continues to provide monthly webinars and update the Family First readiness page on the OCFS website, which provides checklists to agencies to prepare for implementation.
- In addition, OCFS is re-focusing on safe sleep initiatives as well as expanding the use of the Blind Removal Strategy.

Debrief

- Panel members discussed plans for panel member recruitment and engagement.
- Panel members decided that future meetings will focus on workforce issues and home visiting.
- Next meeting:
 - Friday, May 17, 9:00am – 10:00am, Zoom Conference
 - Panel chair and co-chair elections to be held at this meeting