**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**
**KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION**
**500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739**
**LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012**
**http://lachildrenscommission.org**

**Monday, March 16, 2015**

**10:00 AM**

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING (15-1287)

***Attachments:*** AUDIO

Call to Order. (15-1168)

Present: Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Sunny Kang, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin, Commissioner Jacquelyn McCroskey, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Wendy B. Smith, Commissioner Adelina Sorkin LCSW/ACSW and Vice Chair Carol O. Biondi

Excused: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Steven M. Olivas Esq. and Vice Chair Sydney Kamlager

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

**1.** Introductions of the March 16, 2015 meeting attendees. (15-1152)

**Self introductions were made.**

**2.** Approval of the March 16, 2015 Meeting Agenda. (15-1153)

**On motion of Commissioner Sorkin, seconded by Commissioner Smith (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Konigar-Macklin, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.**

**3.** Approval of the minutes from the meeting of March 2, 2015. (15-1154)

**On motion of Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Kang (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Konigar-Macklin, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.**

***Attachments:*** SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

## II. REPORTS

**4.** Vice Chair's report for March 16, 2015. (15-1155)

**Vice Chair Biondi reported on the following:**

- **The Statement of Economic Interests annual filing deadline is Wednesday, April 1, 2015.**
- **The next Transition Team for the Office of Child Protection Special Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Monday, March 16, 2015 at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Hearing Room of Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration (KHHOA).**
- **The next Children and Families' Well Being Cluster Meeting will be held March 18, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. at the KHHOA, Room 743.**
- **On March 9, 2015, Commissioners Kang, McCroskey, and Sorkin attended the Mission Statement Stakeholder Convening hosted by The Office of Child Protection at the Office of Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas Exposition Park Administrative Office in East Los Angeles.**
- **Kathy Malaske Samu's, of the County of Los Angeles Office of Child Care, retirement party will be held on March 26, 2015 from 5:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m. at the Blue Cow in Los Angeles. Commissioners interested may R.S.V.P. with payment by March 16, 2015.**

**5.** Department of Children and Family Services Director's Report for March 16, 2015 by Philip Browning, Director. (15-1156)

**Director Browning reported on the following:**

- **The Board of Supervisors (Board) introduced a motion for the County of Los Angeles to opt in and participate in the Approved Relative Caregiver (ARC) Funding Program. Currently, 30 of the 58 Counties in California have agreed to participate in the ARC program; the remaining 28 Counties remain reluctant due to a lack of automation.**
- **Through a series of meetings held between the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Public Social Services (DPSS), it was learned that the automation of ARC payments on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card will not occur in the near future. As a result, ARC payments will be distributed in the form of checks.**

**DCFS is currently conducting reviews of marketing material in an effort to identify where the relative caregivers reside and mailers with ARC information will be distributed by the end of March 2015. ARC payments must be made by June 1, 2015.**

- **Articles published by the Los Angeles Times and the Mercury News brought media attention to the number of foster youth taking psychotropic medication in California. DCFS observes a disconnect in the flow of information that prevents quantifying the number of children on psychotropic medication for Los Angeles County. DCFS has data on the types of psychotropic medications prescribed to a child and approved by a judge; however, the data is limited as it does not show which of the prescriptions have actually been filled. The California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) database includes the payment information on which prescriptions have been filled among the many prescribed which can help DCFS quantify the number of children on psychotropic medications.**

- **DCFS reported that 2,600 children in Los Angeles County are prescribed psychotropic medications. After a review of court records and interviewing social workers of the 2,600 children to determine that these children have orders for psychotropic medications, DCFS was unable to identify orders for only five of the 2,600 children. Despite this figure amounting to less than one percent of DCFS' cases, the issue of children taking psychotropic medication for unknown reasons and without orders is of great concern to DCFS. A company based in North Carolina that specializes in Psychotropic Medication Analytics and DCFS are researching options that may allow for a psychiatrist and a pharmacist to collaborate in determining whether a certain psychotropic medication is an appropriate prescription for a child. However, pursing this course of action also requires access to the prescription payment information from the State's DHCS database.**

- **The State sent Counties a 180-page Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which if signed, would allow Counties to access the prescription payment information from the State's DHCS database. County Counsel has expressed concerns about signing the MOU due to auditing and liability issues. To expedite access to the records, Director Browning proposed an alternative to the MOU that protects all parties, which is being drafted by County Counsel. DCFS is attributed with having some of the most sensitive data in the country and has kept a good track record of keeping their data confidential.**

- **The County Welfare Director's Association of California (CWDA) has requested $30 million to improve foster care recruitment and retention. The State Administration is holding an assembly hearing on March 25, 2015 and Director Browning has been asked to provide testimony regarding information on Los Angeles County.**

- **In 2007, Los Angeles County had 7,500 foster homes equipped with 18,000 beds. To date, Los Angeles County has 3,500 foster homes equipped with 8,800 beds. Over a seven year period, nearly half of DCFS' foster care options have been lost and on average, four percent of foster homes are lost within the first year.**

- **DCFS is working with the Department of Health Services (DHS) to obtain a treatment foster care option allowing for medical billing for a child who is placed in a foster home. Currently, DCFS has 90 cases under this category; however, DCFS should have 300 cases following the Katie A. Settlement Agreement Implementation. Current funding is not sufficient to increase this program.**

- **DCFS receives $10 million from the State Department of Education to help cover the cost of child care for foster parents. These funds are used in a discretionary manner because there is not enough funding to help cover child care for every foster parent. To supplement child care funding, DCFS contributes $4 million from its Title IV E Waiver funding. The State Department of Education placed DCFS in a non-compliance status due DCFS' child care spending exceeding the $10 million granted; and is being considered for a disallowance status. An estimated $17 million is needed to accommodate the relative caregiver population in need of child care services.**

- **DCFS is working with the State Department of Finance on cost neutrality for Assembly Bill 12 (AB 12). An initial proposal mandated that the Counties assume costs associated with AB 12. It is projected that $50 million is owed to the County of Los Angeles for the costs associated with AB 12 funds.**

**In response to questions posed by the Commission, Director Browning responded:**

- **The County of Los Angeles ranks 52 percent and is among the top government agencies placing children with a relative. DCFS depends heavily on grandparents for placement and is increasing its commitment to the relative population.**

## III. PRESENTATION

**6.** Panel presentation on the Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study.

· Denise C. Herz, Ph.D. California State University, Los Angeles
· Melissa Nalani Ross, MPP Senior Policy Analyst, Advancement Project
· Jacquelyn McCroskey, DSW University of Southern California & Commissioner, Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families
· Michelle Newell, MPP, Senior Policy Associate, Children's Defense Fund-California
· Constance L. Rice, Esq., Founding Co-Director, Advancement Project
· Reaver Bingham, Deputy Chief of Field Services, Los Angeles County Probation Department
· David Mitchell, Bureau Chief for Supervisorial District 1, Los Angeles County Probation Department
· Margarita Perez, Assistant Chief of Field Services, Los Angeles County Probation Department (15-1184)

**The Panel presented on the following:**

- **The Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study began when Constance Rice approached the Department of Probation and inquired about the recidivism rate for children who go through the Probation System. When an answer could not be easily obtained, a partnership was formed between the Advancement Project, California State University Los Angeles, University of Southern California, Children's Defense Fund California and the Los Angeles County Probation Department. After raising $400,000, and subsequent to authorization by the Board, the four year study commenced.**

- **The Panel expressed the limitations of the study and requested that the Commission endorse this study in an effort to enhance future data. The figures from this study were extracted from 2011 data and conducted in hindsight fashion rather than prospectively. 250 exit cases were randomly selected from Suitable Placement and 250 exit cases were randomly selected from Probation Camps. Among the Suitable Placement cases, the majority of the cases came from a group home as opposed to the limited number of cases placed with relatives. In order to create a manageable number for analysis, the cohort was further randomized to 100 cases.**

**Females were over sampled to compose 40 percent of the cases. Although females represent 20 percent in Suitable Placement settings and 10 percent in camps, the Panel found it important to over sample females in order to learn more about females within the Probation System.**

- **In conducting the study, the ability to interface data systems was key. DCFS was able to match and extract data for the 500 youth with ease due to the sophistication of their data system. Both the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) had to extract and match their data manually which greatly increased turnover time. The ability to interface data systems is important for data to be more readily accessible for analysis.**

- **Due to the complexity of their scenarios that were identified, it was determined that Probation alone cannot serve this youth population, nonetheless stop them from penetrating deeper into the Probation System. Most of the cases come to Probation as a result of unstable situations within the community and their families. On average, this youth population is being pulled in and out of schools six times before entering the Probation System. Fifty percent of the youth have a substance abuse related diagnosis, which is high when compared to an incidence rate of thirty to forty percent found in general delinquency populations. Furthermore, data on substance abuse, arrest incarceration and gang involvement was gathered through probation officer interviews and these figures more than likely represent under estimations. Mental health issues were also identified in the findings and of great concern as 66 percent of these youth have had contact or received treatment from the DMH before Probation is involved. Once in Probation, the Youth population is assessed and is receiving some level of mental health services treatment. After exiting the system, 70 percent of the youth receive treatment from DMH. The figures for DCFS contact in the youths' lives are 18 percent for Suitable Placement and 14 percent for Camp. Based on other studies, the Panel believes that these statistics are low and should amount to 25–30 percent of the population. To verify this discrepancy, the Panel is currently using probabilistic matching through the children's data network.**

- **Through observing crossover youth, the panel learned that substance abuse services are very minimal relative to the mental health services component for youth.**

- **Nationally, there has been a lag in bringing mental health programing up to speed for comorbid disorders that include substance abuse.**

- **Current practice models administer individual counseling and substance abuse counseling interventions separately; but for the comorbid youth who suffer from both issues, programs should cater their approach to address these issues comprehensively rather than separately.**

- **In Camp Placement, individual counseling and substance abuse counseling are administered separately. The Panel observed a higher rate of family counseling within the Suitable Placement group. Historically, family counseling is nonexistent within Camp Placement due to obstacles that prevent family connection to the youth placed in Camp. However connecting Camp Placement individuals with their families helps prepare youth for re-entry into the community.**

- **Although statistics show a high percentage of youth in both Camp Placement and Suitable Placement receiving individual counseling, a limitation of this study is found because there is no standardization of this individual counseling across both placements. Tracking needs to be conducted to see if these services are effective.**

- **The needs of the youth population within the delinquency system are multi layered and complex. Hence a response to the juvenile justice system must be multi-dimensional and triaged. Probation has a greater system of coordinated care in Camps as opposed to Suitable Placement. Providing coordinated care in the community is challenging because they are not connected to the DMH, LACOE or Health Services in the same manner that they are in the Juvenile Hall setting. Coordinated services are preferable at the front end, as all too often assessment information is not shared between the agencies until the time of incarceration.**

**The Panel highlighted the following report recommendation from the Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study:**

- **Hold a forum to begin discussion around a comprehensive continuum of care of services and coordinated responses that includes Probation, relevant County agencies, and key stakeholders (e.g., parents, youth, and advocacy agencies).**

- **Create a way to interface critical agency data systems so information relevant to case management and assessment are available across agencies.**

- **Reprogram the Probation Case Management System (PCMS) to facilitate case management (i.e., aligns with practice rather than making data entry a cumbersome process), internal use of data to drive practice and policy decisions, and report key outcomes regularly and consistently. To assist in this process, the report calls for the development of a research unit within Probation Department to assist with these processes.**

**In response to questions posed by the Commission, the Panel responded as follows:**

- **When youth exit Camp placement, some are enrolled in the "Camp Community" transition program. While in this program, a Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) mandates that the youth receive services from a mental health provider and a noncompliance of this mandate would result in a violation of the Probation Order.**

- **The data from this study does not identify a specific treatment prescribed to comorbid cases with mental health and substance abuse conditions. Typically, comorbid cases are referred to a provider who can provide the same services in their community as they received in camp.**

- **System data does not denote if the appropriate level of counseling was made available for the multitude of problems for each case, nor does it show the inventory of the services available. Rather, it is sufficient enough to lay the basis for moving forward. Such data should be considered and incorporated to systems so that this information can be made available for future research conducted.**

- **The information on recidivism does not include adult arrest because the study performed its tracking retrospectively. It is rare that the cases for youth that exited as 18 year olds or adults would be selected for the study; however the Probation Department is interested in looking at the adult data in the future. As a general rule, both the Probation Department and the State use sustained petition as the true measure for recidivism.**

**At the conclusion of the presentation, on motion of Commissioner Kang, seconded by Commissioner Smith (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved to write a letter to the Board endorsing the Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study and place the letter on the April 6, 2015 Commission for Children and Families' Regular Meeting Agenda.**

***Attachments:*** SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT
SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

## IV. DISCUSSION

**7.** Recommendation to nominate a Commission Representative and an Alternate to the Education Coordinating Council. (Continued from meeting of 3-2-15) (15-1007)

**On motion of Commissioner Kang, seconded by Commissioner Kim (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Olivas, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission nominated Commissioner Seipel and Commissioner Smith (as an alternate) as Commission Representatives to the Education Coordinating Council.**

## V. MISCELLANEOUS

### Matters Not Posted

**8.** Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-1157)

**There were none.**

### Announcements

**9.** Announcements for the meeting of March 16, 2015. (15-1159)

**There were none.**

### Public Comment

**10.** Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-1160)

**Ms. Jacqueline Caster, Esq., Commissioner for the County of Los Angeles Probation Commission and President and Founder of the Everychild Foundation addressed the Commission on the following items:**

- **The Everychild Foundation funded two diversion programs in collaboration with Centinela Youth Services. The first program focuses on diverting the youth that enter the court system. The second program thrives in the 77th and South East Police District diverting youth away from a life on the streets. Among the many services provided to the youth population, Everychild Foundation views "victim offender restitution" as the most effective service.**

- **The Everychild Foundation researched various programs around the United States, and determined that Miami Dade County has a model program that aligns with some of the aims of the Los Angeles County Juvenile Probation Outcomes Study. Miami Dade County is equipped a state of the art Juvenile Assessment Center also known as (JAC). Youth arrested In Miami Dade County are brought to JAC prior to any charges being made, and are given a complete assessment with emphasis on mental health and their family situations.**

- **Although Los Angeles County is too large to have a single location, like JAC capable of servicing the entire County satellite offices could possibly solve the size issue. The JAC program has played a tremendous role in the decline in recidivism rates.**

**Ms. Jan Levine, recently retired Superior Court Judge, addressed the Commission and indicated that she had the opportunity to serve in both delinquency and dependency assignments. During her time on the bench, Ms. Levine noted a disconnect between the Court, the Commission for Children and Families and the Probation Commission.**

**Ms. Levine recommended instituting periodic meetings between the Commissions and the Bench Officers to bring each other up to date regarding trends that the Bench Officers are observing and conversely, what work the Commissions are engaged in.**

**She also recommended implementation of a cross training program between Probation Officers and Social Workers as she has noticed barriers that prevent Social Workers from obtaining court orders from the delinquency court directly.**

**In response to the cross training recommendation by Ms. Levine, Mr. Mitchell stated that the concept of cross training Probation Officers and Social Workers was discussed at the last 241 meeting and that the need is currently being addressed.**

**Adjournment**

**11.** Adjournment for the meeting of March 16, 2015. (15-1161)

**The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.**