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://ccf.lacounty.gov

Monday, February 13, 2017

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (17-0916)

Attachments: AUDIO

Present: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager, Vice Chair Wendy B. Smith and Chair Jacquelyn McCroskey

Absent: Commissioner Maria Brenes, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner John Kim and Vice Chair Liz Seipel

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order. (17-0727)

Chair McCroskey called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m., noting a lack of quorum. Commissioner Biondi joined the meeting after it was called to order, establishing a quorum of members in attendance.

2. Introduction of meeting attendees. (17-0728)

Members of the public were invited to introduce themselves.

3. Approval of the minutes from the December 5, 2016 meeting. (16-6308)

This item was tabled to allow a quorum of members to be present. After a quorum was established, on motion of Vice Chair Smith, seconded by Commissioner Kamlager (Commissioners Brenes, Cooper, Curry, Kim and Vice Chair Seipel being absent), this item was approved.

Attachments: SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

4. Approval of the minutes from the January 9, 2017 meeting. (17-0729)

This item was tabled to allow a quorum of members to be present. After quorum was established, on motion of Commissioner Garen, seconded by Commissioner Berger (Commissioners Brenes, Cooper, Curry, Kim and Vice Chair Seipel being absent), this item was approved.

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II. REPORTS

5. Chair's Report. (17-0730)

Chair McCroskey reported the following:

- **The Los Angeles County Homelessness Initiative launched their website, www.homeless.lacounty.gov; and**

- **Commissioners interested in planning Commission presentations on topics of interest that relate to the Commission's work should contact Tamara N. Hunter, Executive Director, to discuss the details.**

6. Report by Brandon Nichols, Acting Director, Department of Children and Family Services. (17-0731)

Brandon Nichols, Acting Director, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) reported the following:

- **The Board of Supervisors is using a search firm to conduct a nationwide search for the DCFS Director position;**

- **DCFS' budget proposal for the upcoming year has been submitted and includes a request to hire 300 additional social workers;**

- **Recently, two articles regarding DCFS were published in the L.A. Times newspaper. The first article was about Mohamed Bzeek, a foster parent who cares for terminally ill children; the second article was regarding missed foster care payments due to implementation of the new Leader Replacement System. DCFS is working to address the issues with the system. Currently, of the 700 payments identified in the article, only 53 remain outstanding;**

- **DCFS is working in collaboration with the Office of Child Protection (OCP) on several initiatives, one involves Structured Decision Making**

and another involves evaluation of the Up-Front Family Finding Pilot; a foundation has been identified to fund the study;

- **The recent DCFS report on visitation, written in response to a Board motion, will be modified to include feedback from Board deputies; the revised report will be presented at Cluster and then to the Board of Supervisors at the end of the month; and**

- **DCFS recruitment staff was present at the grand opening of Supervisor Hilda L. Solis's El Monte field office.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Mr. Nichols responded with the following:

- **The youth referenced in the LA Times article have been identified and their concerns have been addressed;**

- **Additional staff have been added to the foster care payments hotline and additional phone lines were also added; an email address was established, hours of operation were extended, and the hotline is available on the weekends; and**

- **Regarding a recent article that revisited the Gabriel F. case and his teacher's attempts to get help, Mr. Nichols stated that DCFS will explore strengthening the relationship between the Regional Offices and the local schools.**

Jennie Feria, DCFS, added that school staff has the ability to report to the Child Protection Hotline when they feel an incident was not properly addressed.

Commissioner Biondi added that the Rape Treatment Center regularly conducts public service campaigns at school campuses to inform and promote access.

III. PRESENTATIONS

7. Department of Mental Health (DMH) Children's System of Care Data Tracking

- Bryan Mershon, Deputy Director, Children's System of Care, DMH
- Kalene Gilbert, Mental Health Clinical Program Manager, Children's System of Care Administration, DMH
- Greg Lecklitner, Mental Health Program Manager, DMH (17-0733)

Greg Lecklitner, Mental Health Program Manager, Department of Mental Health (DMH), presented a PowerPoint presentation entitled, Mental Health Service Provision to Children in the Los Angeles County Child Welfare System in the context of the Katie A. litigation:

- **Litigation Driven Reform- Katie A. is one example of litigation driven reform in the child welfare system that has taken place in various states. There are 24 similar cases across the country;**

- **Settlement Agreements - The County settled quickly in 2003 and the State of California settled in 2011 with different terms;**

- **Identification of Class Members in Los Angeles County- DMH developed mental health screening tools and created teams in each DCFS regional office to coordinate referrals. DCFS has a Service Linkage Specialist (SLS) in each office. The SLS establishes benefits and provides important documents needed for DMH to begin services. DMH co-located almost 200 staff in 18 regional DCFS offices;**

- **Screenings - Do not require a trained DMH staff to perform mental health screenings. DCFS detains approximately 6,000 children a year and most will have a MAT assessment;**

- **Child Welfare/Mental Health Information Sharing - As a result of the Katie A. litigation, the Court ordered the departments to share information; information sharing is mechanized and routine. Department databases are shared on a weekly basis and the information is used in a number of ways:**

  - **To track DCFS children and youth that are receiving mental health services;**

  - **To identify records of payments between the DCFS and DMH;**

  - **To provide information to the Katie A. advisory panel and plaintiffs' attorneys;**

  - **To produce an annual report to the Board;**

  - **To provide a weekly alert to DCFS social workers and supervisors on children receiving mental health services; and**

- **To inform DMH providers of children receiving DCFS services.**

- **Katie A. Subclass Members are identified as children that need a more intensive level of services;**

- **Mental Health Services for DCFS Children - The percentage of children receiving mental health services was much lower prior to the Katie A. litigation;**

- **Katie A. Class and Subclass Fiscal Year 2015-16 - The total client count for DCFS is approximately 50,000. The Subclass represents a larger portion of service costs;**

- **The Service Areas aligns with the population of the County. A lot of services are being provided in Service Area 3;**

- **4,010 DCFS children are enrolled in the Wraparound Program.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission regarding Evidence Based Practices (EBP), Kalene Gilbert, Mental Health Program Manager, DMH, confirmed that evidenced based services are tracked in DMH's Prevention and Early Intervention programs. She added that it is usually a therapy modality.

Regarding outcome data tracking, Mr. Lecklitner confirmed that the system will track outcome data for children receiving Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funded services. Bryan Mershon, Deputy Director, DMH, added that EBP for children using Prevention and Early Intervention funds also have a specified set of outcomes measures department-wide.

Discussion regarding EBP and MSHA ensued. Commissioner Biondi requested a financial breakdown of current year and past years' MSHA spending on services provided to children 0 - 16 and TAY, including DCFS and Probation supervised children and youth. Mr. Mershon will provide the information.

Mr. Lecklitner added the following:

- **The Wraparound program is being transferred from DCFS to DMH. DMH is hiring new staff and clarifying contract language relating to DMH's expectations of Wraparound providers. DMH will be building in fidelity and outcome measures in Wraparound program contracts;**

Chair McCroskey expressed her appreciation to DMH for organizing and sharing data across departments.

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8. Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Child Protection Hotline

- Jennie Feria, Regional Administrator, Child Protection Hotline/Out of County Services, DCFS (17-0734)

Jennie Feria, Regional Administrator, Child Protection Hotline/Out of County Services, DCFS, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Child Protection Hotline (Hotline) data and reported the following:

- **The Hotline receives calls from the community or mandated reporters regarding "reasonable suspicion" of abuse and neglect under the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA)**

- **DCFS Data**

  - **In the last year the volume of calls has increased;**

  - **All calls must meet the "reasonable suspicion" standard for an investigation to occur. One third of all calls received reached the level for investigation;**

  - **70% of the calls received were from mandated reporters;**

  - **Calls regarding criminal investigations are cross reported to Law Enforcement agencies, Out-of-Home Care Division and Community Care Licensing;**

  - **A Community Based resource program is available to families who need other types of services aside from those related to child abuse and neglect;**

  - **The Hotline has 162 staff workers and is open 24-hours a day, seven days a week;**

  - **The most prevalent allegation type received is general neglect, followed by physical abuse; and**

- **Collected data indicates that most calls are for children between the ages of five to nine and both male and females are equally represented.**

- **Child Protection Hotline – Year in Review**

  - **A comparison of calls received from 2015 to 2016 was conducted and used to identify procedural strengths and weaknesses;**

  - **An in-house protocol was created to address calls that are not immediate but need a manager's review.**

- **Yearly Call Volume**

  - **Factors contributing to the increase in calls include newly established programs and media coverage.**

  - **Calls from Law Enforcement agencies have increased.**

- **LA County Child Protection Hotline Technology Systems**

  - **Manages data pertinent to children welfare services; and**

  - **Operates similar to law enforcement agencies.**

Krystal Boulden, DCFS, provided an overview on processing calls received from the Child Protection Hotline.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Feria responded with the following:

- **Staffing varies from experienced Children's Social Workers to novices, and all new hires participate in an in-house eight week training program;**

- **An in-house support system is in place for staff members who handle calls that may be traumatizing;**

- **Training on vicarious trauma is scheduled to take place soon.**

Ms. Feria added that the Hotline will be launching an on-line reporting system for non-emergent child abuse allegations. Los Angeles County is in support of Senate Bill 478, which allows California to participate in a pilot program to develop an internet-based child abuse reporting system;

the system will allow law enforcement, school personnel and DCFS to make child abuse and neglect reports via the internet; a demonstration project was well received.

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IV. MISCELLANEOUS

9. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (17-0735)

No member of the public addressed the Commission.

10. 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. (17-0736)

There were no matters presented.

11. Adjournment. (17-0737)

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.