

January 12, 2018

Dear Collaborative Council Members,

Thank you for attending our Collaborative Council meeting on Monday, November 13th, 2017 at Lost Pines. We valued and enjoyed your participation throughout the day, and we were glad for the opportunity to say thank you for everything you've done for the Children's Commission over the past ten years! We would like to host a similar event at next year's Child Welfare Judges Conference, so please stay tuned for those details.

Your input on how the Collaborative Council functions, what is positive and negative about your experiences as a Collaborative Council member, and how we can improve that experience was much appreciated. In light of your feedback, we are proposing the following for 2018:

1. Collaborative Call: Beginning in January, 2018, all Collaborative Council members will be invited to join our CIP-DFPS collaborative call, which is scheduled for every other Wednesday at noon. Up until now, the call has been fairly informal. We don't usually have an agenda and it has traditionally been an opportunity for the Department and other callers to share updates on a variety of issues such as the Child and Family Services Review, the Program Improvement Plan, various conferences that organizations are sponsoring, training opportunities, or information participants would like to convey to our judges. The call is always scheduled for one hour, and it typically takes less than that amount of time. Priority is given to DFPS staff, CASA, and other state agencies to share their updates. Going forward with a larger amount of callers may mean we cannot accommodate everyone who would like to speak at length in order to keep the Collaborative Call to an hour. Please look for an outlook invitation from the Children's Commission mailbox in January. The invitation will include more details about how we will organize and handle the calls once they start up again. If you do not wish to participate in the calls, simply decline the outlook invitation and we will remove you from the group invitation so you will not receive reminders every other week.
2. Presentations at Commission Meetings: We would like to invite 2-3 Collaborative Council members to make a brief presentation to the Children's Commission about their agency or organization, or about a particular interest or concern at each meeting. We will allocate up to 30 minutes in the agenda of each Commission meeting to hear from our Collaborative Council. You will receive notice of these meetings about one month in advance inviting you to submit the written materials which you would like to share with the Commission and/or your request for time on the agenda for a brief presentation. To start, we will take the first two people who respond to that email invitation. While we may need to change this process going forward, that seems the fairest way to do it at this time. Of course, other members will still be given the

opportunity to speak for 2-3 minutes during the meeting, as we have traditionally done. Also, once you have made a longer presentation to the Children's Commission, other Collaborative Council members will be given an opportunity to make presentations even if you are the first to respond to a later announcement. Commission meetings for 2018 are scheduled for February 9, May 4, and September 21, 2018.

3. Issues of Interest to Members: Included below is a compilation of the priorities which were articulated by the Collaborative Council members who attended the November 13, 2017 meeting. The great news is that we are already highly aligned in many of these areas. For example, the priorities mentioned most frequently by members were Trauma Informed Care, Child's Voice/Children's Rights, Community Based Care, and Parents' Rights, all of which are priorities for the Commission. Although your priorities may shift over time, our ears are always open and we want to stay in touch with you and be informed about your areas of focus. We also encourage you to review our new website to see what progress is being made in the areas which most concern you, and to look for opportunities where you might be able to contribute to our efforts or to connect us with yours. Here is a link to our website: <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/>. We would direct you in particular to the drop-downs entitled "Our Work," which lists our Committees, and "Reports & Resources," where you can search for publications on topics of interest to you. The best place to read about our ongoing work is in our most current Report to the Commission which we send out about one week in advance of our Commission meetings. These reports are also on our website under the "Commission Meetings" drop down menu.
4. Collaborative Council Directory: We will create a Collaborative Council Directory to include descriptions of your organization and mission so you all will have better information about your fellow Collaborative Council members and what role they play in the child welfare community. Please link here to access the form for us to have the information needed to create your entry in this Directory: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZXS9TSS>. We hope to finalize the Directory in time for the February 9th Children's Commission meeting.
5. Collaborative Council Role & Expectations: We will also develop a Collaborative Council one-pager that will state the purpose of the Collaborative Council, terms of service, reimbursement for travel, workgroup participation, and how to submit issues to the Children's Commission staff for elevation to the Commission or to one of our ongoing workgroups. We will post this one-pager to our website as well as provide it to each Collaborative Council member as soon as it is final.

We very much respect each Collaborative Council member and we value your participation and input into the work we take on, as well as how we operate and communicate.

Sincerely,



Tina Amberboy, Executive Director
Supreme Court Children's Commission

COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL MEMBER PRIORITIES
NOVEMBER 13, 2017 MEETING

Trust Based Relational Intervention / Trauma Informed Care (including race -related trauma and the LGBTQ population, along with ACES and social determinates of health)

Mike Foster
Knox Kimberly
Leah Davies
Sarah Crockett
Tanya Rollins
Jon Olson
Barbara Elias-Perciful

Child's Voice/ Children's Rights (including how judges can assure that rights won't be undermined at the Legislature or in placements [like congregate care], and new approaches to children's rights that include government and private providers' collaboration. Additionally, strategic use of this voice at the Legislature and right to an attorney at every stage of the case and discussions regarding normalcy)

Ashley Harris
Debra Emerson
Knox Kimberly
Sarah Crockett
Christine Gendron
Carolyne Rodriguez
Barbara Elias-Perciful

Community Based Care (including guides for judges, concerns about privatization, the need for judicial oversight, and how judges and providers can work together to provide high-quality services for kids and families)

Katie Olse
Kate Murphy
Sarah Crockett
Christine Gendron
Barbara Elias-Perciful

Parents' Rights (including the rights of parents' rights who are non-violent or low-level offenders)

DeShaun Ealoms
Judy Powell
Gloria Terry

DFPS (including the need for accurate, updated, complete info from DFPS and that reasonable efforts are being met)

Mary Christine Reed
Judy Powell

Substance Abuse (including how to monitor and support services for youth and the intersection of substance abuse, mental health, and IDD)

Ashley Harris
Leah Davies

Medical Consent (including clarification of who has authority to authorize which procedures)

Kate Murphy
Judy Powell

Family Engagement (to help increase placement options and permanency for children in care)

Sarah Crockett
Debra Emerson

Disproportionality and Disparities (including race-based trauma and need for training on same)

Jon Olson
Carolyne Rodriguez

Congregate Care Studies (including recent legislative changes to the definition of least restrictive setting)

Tym Belseth

Residential Treatment Centers (including oversight, concerns about kids younger than 12 being placed in RTCs, and lack of public information about RTCs)

Teal De La Garza

Reproductive Rights for Kids in Care (including pregnancy prevention and better support for foster youth who are parents)

Kate Murphy

Child Sexual Aggression (including changing DFPS policies and investigations)

Sarah Crockett

CACs (including concerns about CACs capacity issues, investigations being in a separate department, coordination with law enforcement to facilitate investigations and charges as appropriate)

Christina Green

Crossover Youth (including concern about youth not being represented by counsel in criminal cases)

Debra Emerson

Federal Legislation (including concern that the federal government wants to tell states how to do child welfare law)

Debra Emerson

ICWA (including compliance post-Bureau of Indian Affairs guidance)

Tanya Rollins

Runaways (including re-examining placement options in a realistic way)

Christine Gendron

Unaccompanied Youth (homeless youth becoming involved with CPS and increasing judicial involvement in the prevention of runaways)

Christine Gendron

Education (including improving outcomes for kids in care, making sure that they are ready to age out, and whether judges know who to send kids to for their aging out needs)

Jeanne Stamp