



Department of Commerce

Office of Homeless Youth Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2016

10:00 AM- 1:30 PM

SeaTac Airport Conference Center, Seoul Room

Attendees:

Casey Trupin, Raikes Foundation (chair)
 Melinda Giovengo, YouthCare (vice-chair)
 Kim Justice, Office of Homeless Youth (staff)
 Sierra Phillips, Mockingbird Society
 Bridget Cannon, Volunteers of America
 Jon Rudicil, Office of Senator Frockt
 Kris Hermanns, Pride Foundation

Jake Fey, State Representative
 Vincente Acosta, Othello School District
 Linda Kochmar, State Representative
 Katara Jordan, Columbia Legal Services
 Cheryl Bayle, Office of Homeless Youth (staff)
 Cole Ketcherside, Office of Homeless Youth (staff)

Goals:

- Identify policy and funding strategies/ recommendations

TIME	ITEM	PRESENTER/ FACILITATOR	MATERIALS	ACTION
10:00- 10:15	Welcome & Introductions	Casey Trupin		
Casey welcomed and asked everyone to introduce themselves. Casey reviewed the goals and agenda for the meeting.				
10:15- 10:20	Approve 5/10 meeting minutes	Melinda Giovengo	Meeting minutes	Vote on meeting minutes
Casey motioned to approve the May meeting minutes. Kris Hermanns asked for an amendment to the minutes to correct the misspelling of her name. Representative Fey moved to approve the minutes as amended. All approved.				

10:20-10:30	OHY update	Kim Justice	One-pager	
<p>Kim went over a one pager that provides an update on policy changes and implementation of FY 2017 funding. The highlights include OHY taking full oversight over of HOPE/CRC programs as of July 1st and OHY making various policy changes in response to things learned in the six month period of sharing oversight with CA. OHY is about to implement funding for FY 2017. Today was the due date for applicants interested in the new funding, and new services start September 1st.</p> <p>Kim went over how the advisory group is developing the strategic plan which will be delivered to the Governor and Legislature by December 1st. Kim discussed the role of each stakeholder group in shaping the OHY strategic plan including the Mockingbird Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YEAH), Washington Coalition of Homeless Youth Advocates (WACHYA), and state agencies including Children’s Administration (CA), Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA), OSPI, and Employment Security.</p> <p>Kim asked if there were stakeholder groups missing. Kris recommended other funders. Casey asked if there were associations that don’t fit into current stakeholder groups (i.e. association of counties, judges association, association of cities, clerks, prosecutors, Washington Education Association, etc.), and suggested it might be useful before session to think about how to engage those groups. Kim asked if they were integral to the shaping of the plan or just sharing information. Casey said it should be early enough they can weigh in on the plan. Rep. Fey suggested stakeholders at the local level might want to be engaged.</p> <p>Kim reminded everyone of the upcoming Mockingbird Youth Leadership Summit on August 3rd, and provided a rundown of what happens at the summit. This is the first year recommendations from youth will be shared with the new Office of Homeless Youth.</p>				
10:30-10:40	Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH) update	Sierra Phillips		
<p>Sierra shared YEAH has narrowed down the key topics they want to focus on at the summit, which includes education and homelessness, and helping homeless students get the support they need. YEAH has met with OSPI, and has looked into which districts have liaisons. Sierra mentioned the Kitchen Cabinet meeting which gives youth an opportunity to provide input to the OHY.</p> <p>Katara thinks it’s important to bring homeless liaisons to the table because their voice and input is necessary. She does not think liaisons traditionally have a voice in these conversations. Kim asked if there is a convening body for homeless liaisons. Katara stated there was not, and there should be. Kris said it would seem that having the school liaisons informed or review this before Dec 1st would make sense. Casey asked if folks agreed that was important. Bridget said absolutely, also there are many other providers who are not represented on the WACHYA committee. It would be nice to have more mechanisms locally and statewide to collect all these perspectives. Casey asked if a subcommittee of the advisory committee could look into ways to gather broad input from liaisons. Katara asked if we are talking about getting input from more than education but all systems that impact youth homelessness. Casey</p>				

clarified the specific task would be to get input from school liaisons and staff. Katara, Bridget, and Vicente were asked by the committee to work on this subcommittee to get input from liaisons and then present that information to OHY.				
10:40- 11:10	Review draft strategies and provide individual input	Kim Justice		Provide individual input on strategies
<p>Kim gave an overview of the current draft strategies and document which was sent in advance so folks could do some pre-work. With the input of the advisory committee OHY has come up with a mission statement, a set of guiding principles, the results we are looking for, and how we are going to measure it. Outcomes could be measured on an annual basis, which may require OHY to create some new tools. For example a client survey that could measure how services are being delivered and whether they are meeting youth’s needs.</p> <p>The next part is thinking about what needs to happen to get the results we want (i.e. strategies, pre-condition). What is reflected in the document is a set of suggested strategies pulled from the advisory committee and some key research reports. These reports include a report out of Minnesota called “Heading Home “, the National Network for Youth report, and the Raikes study by Courtney Noble. Courtney was able to develop some specific recommendations within the report. Key questions to consider are “what’s missing” and “what’s most important to you”.</p> <p>Kim asked to collect member’s individual pre-work, and the rest of today will be spent answering the above key questions. Kim asked for questions or thoughts from the group. Kris asked if Kim could talk about the Survey Monkey which gave some key indicators and how the data plotted. Kim said the survey asked respondents to pick the top four from each strategy. There was no drastic polarization but there was diversity in things people wanted to measure. OHY looked at the top four and refined the wording to make it consistent and useful. Casey said people may continue to edit their document beyond today’s activity.</p> <p>Kim asked the group not to worry if something is required by legislation or if we have funding. It’s really about what we want to achieve to get results. Casey says the Minnesota plan is the most robust he has seen, but this plan has the potential to be just as robust. There are 13,000 youth statewide served by homeless providers so it’s important to be ambitious in what we want to achieve.</p>				
11:10-12:10	Group discussion Part I: draft strategies for stable housing, family reconciliation, permanent connections	Casey Trupin		Identify policy and funding strategies
Casey asked group members to talk about what may be missing and what’s most important from the plan, and asked OHY staff to				

participate as well. Casey encouraged members of the public to write down their comments and submit those later.

Stable Housing

What's missing

- Katara thinks that **a strategy for housing youth is missing from the plan** with the exception of the strategy to increase the capacity of HOPE/CRC programs. All the indicators are geared towards measuring young adults, as opposed to youth. Katara is wondering how the group will measure getting youth to stable housing (i.e. exits to permanent/transitional stable housing, etc. Youth are not involved in the coordinated entry system. We have these indicators that may give us a good understanding of young adults, but not necessarily youth. There will be disconnect if we are doing outreach to youth but don't have services to provide them beyond host homes and HOPE/CRC's which are not in the coordinated system.
- Bridget said this is where **allowing minors to give consent to HMIS is crucial** to tracking services. Katara said without a clear strategy for housing youth, what's going to happen is we are going to get a small subset of unaccompanied youth, but until we have them reflected in the indicators we won't know who they are. We want to figure out a way to provide stable housing for youth under 18.
- Bridget wants to **change the HOPE beds licensing**. HOPE is not even mentioned in the latest group care WAC's because it is assumed to be the same as CRC's. HOPE beds are not low barrier housing because of licensing. Either fund low barrier housing or make HOPE beds low barrier. Kim asked if there were specific things in licensing. Bridget said it is assumed they are dependent youth, not unaccompanied youth (i.e. contact social worker, etc.). Casey asked if Katara has language or if she is saying there should be additional capacity for youth under eighteen who cannot be reunified with families.
- Kris said in some of the strategies it is explicit when it's youth or young adults. Maybe **the draft plan needs to be clear** where it's one, the other, or both. Bridget said there is one shelter license you can get for youth 16-20 that bridges that gap. Casey it would be good to hear from the committee if it's not clear **that references to youth are for those under 18**.

What's most important

- Sierra says we should **promote low barrier shelter practices**, and **make outreach services available across the state**.
- Bridget says we should **expand SYS to 18 to 24 year olds**. They all travel together. Cole said if we are going to provide shelter and housing for young adults it's important to provide the resources to connect with those young adults on the streets.
- Sierra says we should **expand rental assistance for young adults**, and make sure there is **no discrimination based on income status**.
- Rep. Fey wants more details on the context of **expanding eligibility for beds and services reserved for foster youth**. Casey says youth in extended foster care are not eligible for IYHP. IYHP has some federal requirements that youth be in care after age 16 to be eligible. Kim says there is some work that can be done to explore those options. There is so much intersection between foster care and homelessness that rather than creating a second set of services, we should be expanding eligibility of

existing programs to serve a broader population. For example, we received flexible funding to address youth homelessness, so we mirrored the IYHP program. Rep. Kochmar says homeless youth may have a whole set of different problems, so the programs should be separated. There is an area in the strategies to invest in housing for victims of sexual exploitation which should be an area all unto itself. Casey says there are many homeless youth that want to be in foster care. There are programs in the bay area that do advocacy to help youth get into foster care. Casey says to Senator Miloscia's point some of these youth should have already been taken into the foster care system. In Alameda County, every case they've taken they were able to get the youth into extended foster care and brought down 14 million in federal funding to support youth who otherwise would be homeless.

- Kris wants to **make sure there are shelter options in every county**. Under subpopulations, the question around licensing could be something significant that allows integration and availability of funding to take a more holistic approach to serving youth.
- Kim asked for feedback on the transition planning strategy for stable housing. Bridget says, under juvenile justice where it says encourage collaboration **across systems** that's hard to do because of all the different **understandings of funding priorities**, definitions. Until we can address that it's going to be hard to make progress across systems. Casey says **train all law enforcement on youth homelessness**.
- Katara asked what would transition planning look like within child welfare if transition planning must be done in 20 days. Katara's fear is child welfare will say they already do this through their 17.5 check in but the concern is that it may not be meaningful. Katara hopes the report will **expand on what meaningful means**.

Family Reconciliation

What's missing

- Katara wants to know if there is room for CHINS reform here. CHINS are supposed to be used to achieve family reconciliation, but in some places CHINS are being just used for temporary placements. Casey explained what a CHINS petition is to the group by stating that CHINS are used for temporary placement while family reconciliation is achieved. Abuse and neglect cannot be a part of that petition. If you allege abuse and neglect you cannot file a CHINS petition, but CPS may not take placement. There is a premise that both parties want to re-unite, but that may not be the case. CHINS are supposed to be for family reunification, but often they are just used for temporary placement. Casey is suggesting that we have something in the plan that **examines how CHINS and Dependency petitions may be more appropriately used to help youth either reconcile with family or get into safe and stable housing**. Bridget seconds that CHINS have been misused in instances where there is not a real commitment on behalf of the family for family reconciliation.
- Vincente says **family reconciliation needs to include a mental health component**. There is a reason for difficulty within the family; youth are going through various developmental stages and may be experiencing mental health issues. Casey says that's good point. In FRS, mental health needs to be specifically called out. Vincente also thinks we need to **look at cultural issues within FRS** and many of the other strategies (i.e. Mattawa has a 94% Hispanic student body).
- Kim asked how FRS is working on the ground, and perhaps we **need to evaluate the FRS system we have now**. Kim

understands that because the resources have been limited that FRS looks like an initial assessment with referrals to other resources rather than the resources themselves. Bridget says FRS has not been fully impactful for at least 15 years. Rep. Kochmar says they increased funding in the last budget cycle for FRS.

- Melinda would like to see **family reconciliation include things like the Family Acceptance Project**, which helps LGBTQ youth reconcile with their families. Kris says it feels like the investment has been on FRS rather than on investing in local providers. It would seem that one option could be **instead of having Children’s Administration contracting for FRS, those resources should go to the providers** so they can strengthen the work they are already doing or want to do around family reconciliation, particularly those that address mental and behavioral health. Melinda says if they had the dollars to hire a licensed family therapist for their under 18 shelter to focus on family reconciliation they could decrease recidivism. Sierra wants to **make sure that youth know that FRS exists**.
- Cole said that whenever we talk about family reconciliation it’s always in the context of family reconciliation for minors, and never for young adults. **Providing family reconciliation services for young adults** could be a strategy for addressing youth homelessness. Melinda says that’s really important and one of things they are trying to do with their youth over eighteen is focus on that piece. Rep. Kochmar asked about how you do that. Melinda says the case manager’s talk with the youth about their plans, but it’s a special skill to do family reconciliation. There is a real opportunity once youth are doing well and are in a different place to reconcile them with their families because they see them being successful.
- Bridget says that most of youth they run into in their shelter don’t want to be in the foster care system. There has to be a different way of selling it. Their issue is they are not going to move in with some strange family. There has to be a **transitional space where youth can develop a relationship with a foster family** before they move in.
- Casey said that under child welfare we **don’t need to modify abandonment and neglect standards**, but perhaps just provide clarification.

What’s most important

- Sierra says **increasing transitional living options**. Bridget wants **housing developed next to school** so they don’t get enculturated onto the streets.

Permanent Connections

What’s missing

- Rep. Fey, how do you retain staff? Melinda says **higher wages and access to career training**. A lot of our contracts keep staff in sub poverty wages and eligible for public benefits. The contracts need to come with the resources to **pay staff livable wages**. Kris said that what was missing as a strategy under the first bullet of increasing support for homeless youth, and the fact that it focuses on supervision seems off. Kris said it’s about wages, conditions, and caseloads in addition to supervision and training. It does not focus on the broader systemic issues. Rep. Kochmar seems there should be **higher compensation for staff in areas that are more expensive**.

- Cole says we should **talk about burnout** which includes **vicarious trauma** but it's also about whether **staff has a say in the services being delivering**. When you make recommendations that are not taken seriously or you don't feel backed up in the performance of your duties it undermines your ability to do your job safely. A lot of burnout comes from not feeling like you are integrated into the decision making of your agency or organization. Casey says that there is research coming out on trauma informed care and how it contributes to retention when teachers are given training on trauma. Casey says the plan should have recommendations for enough funding to **appropriately train staff in trauma informed care**. Melinda says everyone should be trained in trauma informed care but its **providing resources to staff experiencing vicarious trauma** too.
- Sierra wants there to be **more wraparound support for youth**.

What's most important

- Melinda thinks the idea of **having a system wide case manager** that follows the youth is important.
- Jon recommends **lowering the ratio of how many youth staff case manage**. It doesn't matter how much you get paid if your case load is too high. Bridget says sometimes that is impacted by funding because you may have to choose between paying a case manager more but giving them a higher case load or hiring additional staff to lower the case load but pay them less.

12:10- 12:20	Lunch break			
12:20- 1:20	Group discussion Part II: draft strategies for education & employment, social & emotional well-being, cross-cutting priorities	Melinda Giovengo		Identify policy and funding strategies

Education

What's missing

- Bridget says there should be **some place for youth in college to live during the summer** when on campus housing is not available.
- Casey says we should modify the language that each school district needs a full time dedicated liaison to reflect that **some districts need more than one liaison**.
- Katara says it's not clear how HSSB will be used to help unaccompanied students acquire housing when the grant is going through CHG which does not focus on unaccompanied youth, and youth don't go through the coordinated entry system. Katara wants to know why HOPE/CRC beds are not a part of the coordinated entry system. Melinda says having minors go through coordinated entry would be a problem because they would sit and never get the services they need. Kim says the way HSSB is set up now, it does target homeless families rather than unaccompanied youth. Kim says one of the recommendations is a **dedicated focus within HSSB for unaccompanied youth**.

- Sierra wants to see **student housing questionnaire more widely accessible**. Some homeless families don't want to identify as homeless. Some parents might want to change the questionnaire to say the family is not homeless.
- Melinda asked about using unused school space to offer emergency shelter for homeless students. They were thinking about a 16-21 shelter license. Katara asked about confidentiality if you have emergency shelter or housing at or near the school. Melinda said it would be voluntary. Sierra says it depends on how it is setup if confidentiality would be a problem. Bridget says that when youth are found out to be homeless, they deal with more bullying. Casey said we can couch this in **expanding housing options for unaccompanied homeless students**. Rep. Kochmar asked if you have thought about using churches. Bridget says you have to have someone there and pass licensing standards.
- Casey mentioned the national report called, "Hidden in Plain Sight" which provides a lot of findings on student homelessness. He suggests the plan **set a target graduation rate for students who experience homelessness**.
- Melinda says **in tax credit funded housing youth cannot be full time students** unless they were in foster care. Unaccompanied young adults cannot move into housing programs because they are in school full time. There should be **an exemption for homeless youth**.
- Katara suggest **loan literacy education** to homeless students **to reduce student debt**.
- Melinda suggests **expanding ILS to include homeless youth** to emphasize teaching life skills.
- Katara suggests **increasing retention of homeless liaisons**.
- Kris is suggesting income based repayment plans for students. Katara says that exists but many students are not aware. Kim suggests more **support to homeless students applying for financial aid** and **getting documentation to prove independence**.

What's most important

- Bridget thinks **expanding housing choices within HSSB**
- Casey recommends **adequate staffing levels at school to identify homeless students**.
- Sierra thinks **independent living skills for homeless students** should be a priority.
- Casey says **trauma informed care is important** for youth **in schools** that have experienced homelessness.
- Vicente says teachers are highly aware of what's going on with their students and **there needs to be a way to emphasize the ability of teachers to know about liaisons**.
- Sierra thinks we should be **tracking outcomes for homeless students in higher education**.

Employment

What's missing

- Rep. Kochmar asked how you get youth to take minimum wage jobs when they can make more money selling pot on the street. Melinda says it's not just about the money; youth develop relationships with the workplace. Bridget says young people would rather have a legitimate job.

- Rep. Kochmar says we have a transportation improvement plan which includes billions of funding for improvements. Some of those projects will go on for 16 years to 2031, and so apprenticeship programs are really looking for people right now especially minorities. There needs to be **education about the opportunities available through apprenticeships**.
- Melinda says we need a **stable source of money to help youth with entry level opportunities** for youth in employment.
- Sierra says we need to talk about **employment opportunities for immigrants** who can't acquire documentation to work.
- Melinda would like to see **more internship opportunities for unaccompanied youth**.
- Kim says the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) holds a lot of promise, but asks what specific things could be done to make it more effective for young people. Melinda says that money is getting cut substantially. The outcomes are really stringent. Homeless youth are not the population they want to prioritize because it's hard to get the outcomes. Melinda says **we need some kind of apprenticeship or pre-employment program**. Bridget says they partnered with Career Path services for the WA Youth and Family Fund. It was about literally walking the streets to introduce youth to the program. This private funding makes Bridget hopeful because it's a 3 year grant. Melinda says their pre-employment program was getting almost 70% of the youth housed and they cut it.

What's most important

- Melinda says **expand youth works**.
- Bridget says **job training**.
- Sierra says **formalizing relationships between employers and service providers**.

Social and Emotional Well Being

What's missing

- Bridget recommends **allowing school personnel and service providers to sign permission slips for unaccompanied youth to get medical care**.

What's most important

- Melinda says **increase agency capacity to hire skilled staff to address these needs**.
- Rep. Kochmar asked if many of these homeless youth are involved in gangs. Melinda and Bridget say they don't have many gang involved youth accessing services. Most gang involved youth are connected to peers that provide them a place to stay. Casey points out the disproportionality in that those youth are still homeless even if they are couch surfing with peers. They are just not identified as so. Melinda says sometimes youth are discharged from the juvenile justice system without the support they need so they turn back to the gang. Kim says strategies to address this issue include **diversion, making sure youth are not discharged from JRA to the streets, and doing effective outreach to gang involved youth**. Melinda says there is a high correlation between gang activity and human trafficking.

- Sierra says **providing clean and sober housing for folks who or are going to or coming from treatment**, and addressing waitlists for treatment.

Cross Cutting

- Casey says we have to **tie some of these cross system issues to youth homelessness and not let them exist independently** (i.e. gang, juvenile justice, truancy). We have dialogues across multiple systems, and recognize we are talking about the same youth but don't call them out as homeless.
- Sierra recommends **designating 2 seats on the OHY Advisory Committee for youth**.
- Sierra says **youth should be able to give permission to have their personally identifying information entered into HMIS**
- Casey says there needs to be **cross system advocacy (i.e. legal) to get youth the support they need**.

Kim asked to collect everyone's individual work.

1:20-1:30

Public Comment

In Attendance: Erin Hathaway (Mockingbird), Brandy Sincyr (Columbia Legal Services), Victoria Lin (Building Changes), Jim Theofolis (Partners for Our Children), Nathaniel Won (Mockingbird), Samantha Wiese (All Home), Laurie Lippold (Partners for Our Children).

Jim Theofolis (Partners for our Children) says family's needs to be represented as a stakeholder in the plan. Jim thinks it's misplaced to have professional development within permanent connections. It should be about creating permanent connections outside of the service setting. Jim wants us all to agree on the distinctions between youth and young adults. Jim says the plan doesn't talk about priorities yet. Jim suggests that behavioral health support should be provided no matter where the youth is accessing services (i.e. employment, housing, etc.) as a component of those programs (i.e. therapy, chemical dependency). The same could be said for legal advocacy. Jim says he likes the cross cutting themes but doesn't see anything regarding geographic distribution. Kim says it's in the housing piece. Jim suggests it be cross cutting. Jim wants to know plans for collecting data.

Erin Hathaway (Mockingbird) says they are super excited about the summit. Young people have said that FRS is not happening or not happening well. Erin doesn't want us to lose sight of youth who are not being taken by CPS but for whom it's still not safe to go home.

1:30

ADJOURN