

# Orange County Children's Partnership (OCCP)

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January 18, 2018 Minutes

**In Attendance:** 22

Matt Haines, Kim Goll, Karen Christensen, Mike Ryan, Eric Handler, Susan Leibel, Cheryl Meronk, Tracy LeSage, Kim Doyle, Jim Harte, Linda Smith, Lisa Burke, Victor Chavez, Denise Churchill, Marcy Garfias, Raina Lee, Noreen Lubchenko, Paula Noden, Jackelyne Sanchez, Shatoya Wallace, Chana Warnock, Veronica Zuniga

**1. Introductions / Announcements**

Introductions were made.  
No announcements were made.

**2. State Legislation/Budget**

Mike announced that the Social Services Agency (SSA) and other child welfare budgets remain flat, no additional funding. Denise Churchill stated that funding for foster care recruitment and training was cut in half.

**3. ACTION ITEM: Review and approve minutes from the November 16, 2017 meeting.**

The meeting minutes from November 2017 were approved.

**4. RFA Recruitment Efforts and Challenges – Marlene Telegadas**

Item not discussed, moved to next meeting.

**5. OCCP Bylaws – Mike Ryan**

Draft bylaws were distributed at meeting. Mike discussed the different sections of the bylaws and pointed out the term of membership which for non-concurrent members shall be three years or until he/she is terminated. There was a discussion about the term for a former foster youth as the term shall be three years or until the former foster youth reached the age of 25, whichever was earlier. The intent of the age limit is to have a perspective from a foster youth that has not been out of the system for too long and still has current perspective. Shatoya Wallace mentioned that as a former foster child, it takes time to discover different programs therefore; she felt the age to 25 was too young. The group decided to revise the age to 28 and set it as a cap, but include language that allows for an exception to be made by OCCP. Mike discussed the process for applying and approving a new member. He also emphasized that member participation was very important, and if a member is unable to attend, they must notify him or Jackie Sanchez. Mike also mentioned that the Vice Chair position is appointed on annual basis in case anyone was interested. Linda Smith suggested reaching out to new members and mentoring them during meetings by sitting next to them, so they are not intimidated when participating in meetings. Dr. Eric Handler suggested nameplates be created for the meeting. It was agreed that Jackie would create them.

Matt Haines would address the changes with Supervisor Andrew Do. Once approved, the bylaws will go to Board of Supervisors (Board) for approval. Mike and Karen

Christensen will discuss the recruitment process. Victor Chavez mentioned he will need current members to complete a packet, which will also be included in the Agenda Staff Report to the Board.

#### **6. Annual Conditions of Children's Report – Lisa Burke**

Lisa Burke reported the Fifth District held its Conditions of Children in Orange County Forum on December 13, 2017, at Mission Hospital. Approximately 100 people attended. Lisa informed the group that the final forum, sponsored by the Fourth District, will be held on February 1, 2018 from 9 – 11a.m. at California State University Fullerton (Titan Student Union, Pavilion A). The topic will be children's mental health. Lisa encouraged attendees to distribute the previously provided flyer. Lisa also mentioned that a packet of materials to help garner interest in the Report was distributed. If anyone is interested in social posts tailored to their organization, please let her know.

#### **7. Report from the Short-term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTP) Continuum of Care Subcommittee – Veronica Zuniga**

Veronica Zuniga reported that two group homes have been awarded letters of support from Orange County to convert to STRTPs. The subcommittee continues to meet. Some members have stated that it is a tough transition. The committee's prior goal was to maintain, and its new goal is to treat and move on with process. Veronica stated that all but one group home that serves high needs youth continue to move forward with their application, and some have requested extensions that are good for a six-month period, through June 2018. They can request an additional six months through December 2018.

Denise mentioned that some providers from out of state have received their STRTP accreditation. Denise mentioned that All-County Letter 17-22 included a tracking sheet or non-admissions. The state wants counties to meet with all STRTP homes and ask them to confirm their position for non-admissions. The State wants clear expectations that say STRTP group homes will serve the population they say they will serve and not refuse services to them. The State does not want providers to get certified, sign letter of support and then continue business as usual. The State wants providers to be really committed.

#### **8. Foster Family Agencies Continuum of Care (FFACCR) Subcommittee – Norean Lubchenko and Jim Harte**

Norean Lubchenko reported that the subcommittee met on Tuesday, January 16, 2017, and included representation by approximately 12 FFAs. They discussed logistics and level of care rates. The subcommittee spent most of the time discussing therapeutic foster care. The state dispersed some information and issued a toolkit on how foster family agencies can develop their program.

Jim Harte mentioned that the 64-page report from the state outlined a lot of material. However, he is concerned about the levels of staffing needed in the FFA for families because it will require a lot of support and training. There are still a lot of issues to be addressed including the rates. Jim said it was unknown if it would make financial sense

for families to do Therapeutic Foster Care as the expectation with interactions is really high. Norean clarified that care and shelter rates are known, Medi-Cal billing rate will be partially for family and partially for FFAs, to hire administrative staff. Therapeutic or Treatment foster care was originally intended to be FFA driven, but it was revised to be an overlay with kin. It is a huge transition. Language capacity can be a barrier as English is not the primary language for all. Orange County also holds value to putting children with family first, when possible. OC recognizes that challenged children do better with kin. The concern is how OC can provide this level of care with kin and also meet therapeutic standards. Linda Smith pointed out that it will be difficult for families to complete notes while also dealing with chaos in home. It was mentioned that generally the FFAs would not recruit new resource families for Therapeutic Foster Care, but would instead work with existing families that already had a relationship with a child and the child's needs increased. Veronica mentioned that usually agencies that have formed a relationship with a child will be more inclined to take that child and keep them.

Mike Ryan asked Denise how they were doing with 10-day shelter. Denise stated that about half of the population is able to leave within 10 days, however; some have high needs, sibling sets, etc. and are there for a longer period of time. They continue to experience struggles with court orders and keeping sibling sets together. Orange County values keeping children with relatives, so that is an obstacle as well. Staff meets every Thursday to brainstorm how to help children transition with their community. Denise mentioned today's population was 63. They had lowered their number to 30, but they received a few large sibling sets during the holidays. The programs are working hard to meet each kid's needs.

#### **9. 2018 OCCP Areas of Focus/Goal – Mike Ryan**

Mike Ryan informed the group that Supervisor Do wants to focus 2018's goals on taking a stronger advocacy role by looking at current and proposed legislation and possibly advocate at the State level. He discussed the issue surrounding the reduction in funding for juvenile court attorneys, representing minors and mentioned that the Supervisor thought the OCCP group could have helped advocate for additional funding. Mike mentioned that he could bring someone from SSA to discuss legislation. Dr. Eric Handler thought the proposal was interesting but asked what would happen if the Board took a different position than OCCP. Mike mentioned that the group would have to work closely with the Chair of the OCCP. Susan Leibel stated that she had the same thought, to be more proactive and work together. Mike discussed advocacy for RFA. He said the process has not been easy for early implementing counties. The State is open to listen to difficulties experienced by families seeking to become resource families. Mike asked for OCCP's hot issues, how OCCP could advocate for them. A possible suggestion was to continue to focus on Continuum of Care Reform implementation. Jim stated OCCP needed to advocate for adequate funding so families can provide therapeutic foster care. Karen Christensen asked if anyone was doing a model to see how much it is going to cost families. Norean Lubchenko said the rate structure has been the same at same level. They haven't seen their effect yet. Dr. Handler suggested the OCCP host a three hour conference to identify issues agencies are experiencing and what OCCP can do to

help bring about solutions. Key agency representatives would be invited to the conference to gather a wide range of opinions. He suggested hosting the conference in the spring instead of having a regular OCCP meeting. Jim Harte suggested inviting Casey Family Programs to discuss what other states have done that has worked and not worked. Kim Goll mentioned that advocacy is larger than we think. She questioned whether the membership should only have one idea to advocate or multiple. Mike agreed to discuss the forum further with Norean and return with an update at the next OCCP meeting.

Mike informed the membership that the Conditions of Children Report contract for the next cycle will go to the Board of Supervisors for approval on Tuesday, 1/23. Mike also mentioned that he would like the OCCP to consider placing new focus on making the online Report interactive so people can search and sort data. A great deal of work has gone into this previously, but, due to costs, the discussion has gone nowhere. The OCCP should consider pursuing other funding sources. There was a suggestion to consider not doing Report every year or getting community involvement to sponsor.

**10. General Committee Member Comments:**

Mike stated he would add an update on the spring forum to the next month's agenda, ask SSA legislative staff to attend the next meeting, and ask staff to send current members the necessary forms for membership.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Next Meeting:**

The OCCP will reconvene on February 15, 2018 at Probation Office Building.

Minutes taken by: Jackelyne Sanchez