

CWAC RACIAL EQUITY MEETING MINUTES

Department of Children & Family Services
CWAC Racial Equity

Date of Meeting: 09/27/2023
Meeting Facilitator: Dagené Brown

Time: 10am – 11:30am
Location: WebEx

1. Attendees

Name(s)

Dagené Brown (Co-chair)	Dr. Charles Montorio-Archer	Beatriz Valdez	Lourdes Rodriguez
Jasmine Mobley (Co-chair)	Damaris Acevedo	Chandler Mattison-Farris	Sylvia Fronseca
LaTasha Roberson-Guifarro	Prestina Singleton	Paula Truitt-Alohan	
Yeni Rojas			

2. Meeting Objective/Agenda

CWAC RE Meeting

3. Attachments & Handouts

Description	Prepared by
https://hoyletonorg-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/jmoble_hoyleton_org/EeFmHDYOJpJAvBsgOiu4FHfYBWBKBU_c3_2YHuN-r0cM70w?e=Sugmhb	Dagené Brown

SharePoint Link to meeting: [Dagené Brown](#)
[CWAC RE Meeting Link](#)

4. Meeting Summary & Minutes

1. Welcome

a. Roll call was completed via the WebEx chat box and participant list.

2. Approval of minutes for May 2023 was held because a quorum was not obtained. Sylvia asked for clarification on quorum., Dagené clarified quorum count is 9. Lourdes asked clarifying question if quorum can be obtained virtually. Discussion concerning quorum.

3. Dagené provided committee with updates on new business.

a. Update on Blind Removal Pilot was given. Stated the pilot initially set for January 1st 2024.

Extension for pilot requested due to implementation for CWIS and SAFE model to allow for successful implementation for Blind Removal Pilot roll out. Extension was requested for July 1, 2024. Some counties that were previously identified were changed due to disproportionality percentages. Changes in counties include DuPage, Williamson, Champaign. Stated last change is makeup of task group. No questions were asked from the group about the Blind Pilot Removal.

b. Update on coordination with external service providers (i.e.: courts) for implementation of Bias Free Removal provided

c. Question to obtain Bias Free Removal Logic Model was asked. Answer: the logic model will not be provided due to specificity towards this pilot.

4. Dagené provided committee with updates on old business.

a. Dagené provided update for Legislative Boards. Dagené shared recommendations from the Reducing the Disproportionate Representation of African American Children in Foster Care Advisory Commission Report. Lourdes asked for clarification on the use of the recommended "Warm Line". Further feedback/discussion around the report and implications for practice based on the recommendations.

b. Updated provided for Racial Disproportionality Task Force.

c. Dagené provided update provided for Racial Equity Toolkit. Committee will not be able to vote/approve the final draft of racial equity toolkit. Question was asked how the toolkit will be used in reference with the Blind Removal Pilot. Further discussion about collecting racial data to effectively represent families involved with child welfare system.

5. Dagené introduced Translational Team (Dr. Lasota, Dr. Fox, and Cady Landa) to present data presentation. Translational team presented findings on race equitable supports in permanency planning.

a. Data that was presented included quantitative and qualitative information from caregivers, professionals.

b. Discussion opened based on data presented. Dagené prompted discussion on strategies to strengthen cultural competence in the legal system. Lourdes suggested a training specific to judges and states attorney's office due to court professionals' perception of African American families. Sylvia stated a specific area of focus is with GALs in Cook County. Dagené suggested reviewing current trainings and considering development of current training and identifying training gaps with AOIC. Prestina also stated reviewing the current trainings offered to court professionals. Discussion opened about definition of the nuclear family. Paula Truitt-Alohan stated there is a narrative that case managers do not advocate for families and suggested change in perception of court and power dynamic and approach (more collaborative). Dagené suggested cultural competency survey to understand starting point with legal system and then develop next steps.

c. Data that was presented included quantitative and qualitative information from caregivers.

Discussion opened up strategies to support caregivers. Dagené reviewed current available resources available for grandparents and the partnership between DCFS & DOA. There is a gap between communication between the two departments. Evelyn stated the statewide extended family support person is run by one person who is available during investigation stage. Evelyn suggested expanded program and warm hand off. Sylvia stated there are DCFS trainings for grandparents however they are

not required for home of relatives. Sylvia suggested change in communication of resources and utilizing Foster Care Advisory Council. Sylvia recommended more representation of families of color at foster Care and Adoption Advisory Councils. Jasmine asked if data presentation would be presented to other councils. Dr. Lasota stated the presentation has been shown to other councils directly involved with foster families.

c. Findings presented on bias against black professionals. Discussion opened on strategies to address diversity, equity, and inclusion of Black professionals in child welfare practice. Sylvia discussed personal experiences with bias throughout the state.

d. Dagené asked if further comments., Yeni suggested working with PRIDE director to identify licensed and unlicensed families and how to support them. Paula suggested documentation of discussion with grandparents needs by case managers. Paula also mentioned the foster parent handbook. Dagené stated grandparent is filtered through foster parent support program and needs addressing. Jasmine suggested working with city councils and police to address bias within towns. Dr. Lasota stated there is a journalist that was raising awareness on sundown towns. Dr. Lasota stated continuing to have conversations to promote awareness and strategize.

6. Dagené thanked Dr. Lasota and the translational team for presenting information and participants. Meeting adjourned.