



**DCFS Statewide Parent Advisory Council (SPAC) Minutes
July 25, 2023**

Via WebEx Videoconference
Approved in Open Session 8-22-23

Present- Parents – Theresa Leggins, Cassandra Williams, Jenni Fofar, Melissa Reed, Shawnise Newton, Shawna Peterman, Johnny Williams, Terry Lenoir, Jacqueline Lenoir

Non-Parent Members – Janelle Pulcher, Javonna Smith, Amy Chase, Tahney Fletcher

Support & Other Staff – Kim Willis, Ray Gates

Roll Call – Co-chair Cassandra Williams called the roll.

Minutes

4/25/23 – Cassandra noted that three sets of minutes had been distributed to all, and she called for discussion about the minutes of 4/25/23. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve. Motion made by Janelle. There was no discussion. Second given by Shawna.
5/23/23 – Same process as above, with motion made by Shawna, and the second given by Melissa.

6/27/23 – Same process, with motion made by Ms. Leggins and second given by Shawnise.

Cassandra called for a vote on each set, which was unanimous. No one voted no. All there sets of minutes were approved.

Ethics, Harassment, and Diversity Mandatory Training Courses for Members

Kim stated that members can have one week beyond July 31 to complete their training due to malfunctions with the Onenet training platform.

Kim announced that Jenni still needs to complete her three training courses, as does Jacqueline. Cassandra will call Jenni and explain how to get them completed. Johnnie and Shawna will finish completing theirs. Shawnise submitted her training certificates to Kim during this meeting. Cassandra will reach out to Sophia Jones. Courtney Miller and Deedra Edwards should be removed from the list of training due because they are not affiliated with SPAC. Jacqueline will call Kim with information about Dorothy Jordan.

Motivational Interviewing/Demystifying DCFS Research Project

Ray described this project through UIUC that is being led by Verletta Saxon, LaTanya Riggs and Lania West. They wish to work with parents and others to develop podcasts informed by parents' voices about what it is like to receive services from DCFS, etc. SPAC's change management proposal may be referred to in this work. They hope to develop podcasts to share with others. Ray will invite these researchers to attend SPAC's August 22 meeting and discuss how SPAC parents and other parents can be involved in this work.

Chapter Reports

Cook County Chapter – Javonna said the chapter met earlier this month and they continued planning their back-to-school event that is set for August 10. That meeting will begin an hour earlier, at 4:00 pm, so Be Strong Families can present a training on tips for getting children ready for school. The following two hours will be devoted to the event. Videoconferencing will be available, and Javonna will send the link. All who plan to attend in person are asked to RSVP.

Northern – Cassandra noted that work continues to get the Northern Region to recruit parents for a chapter in Rockford as well as for membership on SPAC.

Southern – Cassandra asked if anyone was present from Southern Region. Hearing none, she noted that work also continues to get Southern Region parents involved.

Springfield Chapter – Cassandra noted that they had a great in-person meeting this month, and they have been approved to have every meeting be in person. Cince Bowns spoke about reunification, and Tahney Fletcher spoke about programs she works with. Kim made a cake to celebrate Cince's impending retirement. Next month Norma Machay will speak about visitation.

Membership Needs – Kim said she has made calls to Northern and Southern regions but has received no return calls.

Topics for Future Meetings - Members discussed options and needs, which resulted in the following:

- Remedies for parents who are verbally abused and disrespected in other ways
- Housing options for parents, possible speaker John Egan
- Focus groups to improve ACRs, possible speaker Jamie Ralph
- The research project on demystifying DCFS, possible speaker Verletta Saxon
- Ways to encourage disenfranchised parents to attend CFTMs and other important meetings

Adjournment - When there was no other discussion, Rev. Lenoir made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Leggins gave the second. There was no discussion, and all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:59 pm.

