



Children's Services Advisory Board-Virtual Meeting

November 18, 2020

A meeting of the Children's Services Advisory Board of Manatee County, Florida, was held at the Bradenton Area Convention Center, 1 Haben Boulevard, Palmetto, FL 34221, Longboat Key Room on Wednesday November 18, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: (In Person) Debbie Tapp, Connie Shingledecker, Xtavia Bailey, Charlie Kennedy, Jannon Pierce, Sandra Stone, Amy Diss, George Van Buren, Kelly Hunt, Rita Smith; (Virtually) Gail Wynne.

Absent/Excused: Kimberly Kutch.

Also Present

County Staff: (In Person) Susan Ford, Kristi Hagen, Lawanda Timmons, Chris Handy-Honeycutt; (Via Zoom) Ava Ehde; Members of the Public (In Person): Kelly Stasurek, Drena Green, Evelyn Almodovar, Char Young, Laurel Lynch, Lisa Davis, Tony Stevens (Via Zoom) Pepper Sellers, Derrick Randall, Dawn Stanhope, Becky Canesse, Katrina Bellemare Kristina Tincher, Sean Staffieri, Beth Clark; there was also 1 unidentified Zoom call-in attendee.

Call to Order/Welcome

Debbie Tapp, Chair called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Motion: Minutes for October 14, 2020, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Jannon Pierce, **Seconded by** Kelly Hunt, **Vote:** Motion passed (**Summary:** Yes = 10, No = 0, Abstain = 0).

OST Program Updates

Myakka City Community Center update was provided by Pepper Sellers on their alignment with CDC guidelines during COVID-19 for staff and parents. The Center keeps their doors locked during the day; staff is greeting parents at the door, taking the kids temperature before entering the building and confirming they have not been sick or out of town. The children remain 6ft apart while engaged in activities. At the end of the day parents are meeting the children at the door for student pick up. They are serving less children during COVID-19. Children that reside in the same household are kept together in the same groups, as well as staying with the same teacher throughout the day and week. This procedure ensures the safety of the children and staff members.

Q&A ensued on decreased numbers served, transportation from schools, outside activities, and the mental health status of the children.

Xtavia Bailey entered @ 3:08 during the Myakka City presentation

D.L. Randall Foundation update was provided by Derrick Randall. This agency currently serves 35 youth daily in the before and after school program. He provided a brief overview of their program. Over the summer, 25 youth participated in the Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge; 70% of these youth achieved no loss in reading skills.

Over the summer they provided a food site, internet, computer access and informational resources to ensure the families received what they needed. Presently, there are approximately 73% (16 out of 22) youth in their program reading on grade level or above which is measured by the Development Reading Assessment II. During COVID-19, the agency is following the CDC and Manatee County guidelines.

Q&A ensued on the program daily average attendance; how they determine the kids who need reading assistance; if they are conducting a mid-term evaluation and if so how it is completed; and evaluation conducted on the kids who gained reading skills during their summer learning program. Charlie Kennedy mentioned that Mr. Randall was a part of the Community Partnership of School at Manatee Elementary and asked that Mr. Randall speak on his collaborative responsibilities.

United Community Centers update was provided by Derrick Randall. This agency report is similar to the D.L. Randall Foundation update. They are currently serving 123 youth. From 3-4pm youth are receiving reading instruction; from 4-4:30 classroom exercises are provided; from 5-6pm there are recreational and leadership activities. Their Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge included 65 youth and 65% of them demonstrated no reading loss. The Agency provided childcare for essential workers; a food site for the youth, internet, computer access and informational resources to ensure families received what they needed during COVID-19. Presently, the center has 70% of the 42 out of 60 youth reading on grade level or above which is measured by the Development Reading Assessment II.

Q&A ensued on how the agency determines the youth needing reading programs; they tend to keep the youth in the program until they no longer need services and then replace them with others who need it; current enrollment compared to pre COVID-19; online services are being offered to their youth; mental health status of the youth, and there is a wait list at this time because they must keep the numbers attending lower.

Boys & Girls Clubs update was provided by Dawn Stanhope. Their Palmetto and Desoto Club remained open for full days since September 2020. They served children of essential workers and provided online support to families, provided food distribution throughout the summertime and currently support E-Learners in their teenage groups. The Club has not charged any fees to families since April 2020 for services. They have been faced with challenges getting data from the School District on how kids are doing academically, and can only determine their progress based on report cards through the parents. Their assessments have shown a drastic downward slide in youth reading levels. The youth seen on a regular basis are doing well and the youth they do not see on a regular basis is where the great concern is. The Club has purchased tablets to support reading initiatives for all six of their sites, leaning on partners for virtual opportunities and piloting a mental health program for youth struggling to get back on track. They made investments in their infrastructure, including building improvements for their Palmetto Club. They are currently serving at 30% capacity.

Q&A ensued on online services are being offered to their youth; mental health status of youth served; and challenges in receiving school data. Charlie Kennedy was asked how the necessary data can be accessed. Mr. Kennedy stated he would conduct a follow-up and provide an answer at the next meeting.

Just for Girls update was provided in person by Drena Green, and virtually by Becky Canesse. Expressed their commitment to the girls in their community. The agency has displayed flexibility, accommodations, resilience and reliability to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. Through weekly meetings, health and wellness checks they have learned what was most important to their families. Food assistance was provided and through one-on-one meetings discussed coping skills and mental health issues with families. They provided full day services since April 2020 to accommodate essential workers. The supported the community with homework assistance, tutoring and weekly take home packets were provided for those who could not attend in person. Their girls participated in the Suncoast Summer Reading Challenge. Their staff was supportive and took the lead in assisting their

girls. The agency complied with the CDC guidelines in keeping their girls safe and healthy. They currently serve 129 girls; the same amount of girls they were prior to COVID-19. Daily attendance is approximately 89 between their three sites. Becky Canesse appeared virtually, reinforcing the statements of Drena Green and thanked the CSAB.

Approval of CS Annual Plan

Susan Ford presented the Children's Services Annual Plan and requested approval by the CSAB. The Annual Plan and Report will go to the Board of County Commissioners for their approval on December 15, 2020. Discussion ensued on some of the data.

- Clarified the numbers are still the same from the previous year of the Agencies target for 5 years
- Requesting more information from Charlie Kennedy on out of school suspension for elementary students, because the numbers are increasing drastically, (Why and what can we do about it, does the School Board have a plan)
- Connie Shingledecker, spoke on Handle with Care Program overview. Expressed how the program addresses children that have been exposed to trauma, which has been helpful.
- Xtavia Bailey expressed that Handle with Care is addressing only 50% of the problem and the other issues are cultural related. She would like to know the communities where the children are coming from of all races and their economic disparities.
- Charlie Kennedy expressed his reactions toward systemic issues in the community. He will bring to the Board information on trauma informed care reports and details on what the training will entail. Centerstone is providing mental health support work to families. Suspension procedure were 3-5 days and have currently decreased to 1-3 days. Charlie will provide an update to their questions asked at the December 16, 2020 meeting.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the plan. **Motion:** To approve the Annual Plan and Report, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Gail Wynne, **Seconded by** Jannon Pierce, **Vote:** Motion passed (**Summary:** Yes = 11, No = 0, Abstain = 0).

Subcommittee Updates

Debbie Tapp discussed the CSAB subcommittee summary and provided a handout of the recommendations. The subcommittee consisted of Debbie Tapp, Connie Shingledecker, Kim Kutch, and Xtavia Bailey and has been meeting weekly for the past 4 weeks to determine ways to improve the CSAB application review and decision-making process. They suggested the following recommendations be adopted into standard CSAB policy and procedure.

Changes to the review process:

Recommendations:

Pre-review meeting:

- Pre-review meeting to be held in January or February, prior to beginning the review process. At this meeting the board will review the application scoring instructions and discuss how the board will approach scoring of the different areas. Timeline for reviewing and scoring applications weekly will be reviewed. Process for asking additional questions will be reviewed.
- **Rationale for recommendation for pre-review meeting** – This will enable all members to have a common understanding of how to score and when to score. We can seek guidance on any hard to score areas prior to beginning reviews. (Hal Williams is working on improving some of the scoring guidance for application questions.)

Weekly meetings:

- Weekly meetings- will be used to discuss the programs that were reviewed by CSAB members individually the prior week and to begin to formulate the rationale for each program's funding recommendations. The rationale information will then be cut and pasted from the weekly

minutes and provided in for each program in alpha order for the members to use during the recommendation meetings.

Addressing New Programs:

- New programs will be reviewed early in the weekly process to allow more time for questions to be sent to agencies and received back. Agencies will be allowed video or in person presentations to address set questions at the meeting. The new programs will be discussed and reviewed on their merit and the beginnings of a rationale for funding/no funding can be drafted.

Addressing requests for increases:

- A standard process and a "Decision Making Guide" will be used to review and evaluate requests for increases at weekly meetings prior to the recommendation meetings. The Decision Guide will allow members to be much more intentional about approving increases based on the impact of the dollars, the best use of the money, fulfilling a wait list, a history of strong results, etc. The chart will result in a yes/no/maybe designation and a rationale that can be used during funding recommendation meetings. (See Decision Guide)

Standard information to be provided by staff:

- Staff is requested to develop a list of possible information to give the members weekly as a standardized report. Report could include pertinent historical information on an agency that is coming before the CSAB such as previous funding cuts and why, adverse fiscal noncompliance or action, noncompliance, corrective action, not serving appropriate clients, licenses out of compliance or expired, not in compliance with counseling or OST standards, under claiming units, uncooperative with staff or refuses a site visit, or internal audit reports. (Staff cannot initiate anything that would include an opinion on an agency or program.)
- **Rationale for weekly meeting recommendations** –Using weekly meetings to begin to develop the rationale for funding a program, and addressing the new programs and increases during the weekly discussion meetings when there are 9 or 10 programs to discuss vs waiting for the recommendation meetings when there are 50+ programs will allow us to remember the key pros and cons of each program. Rationale information from weekly discussions will be available for members at the final meetings and will allow us to be more intentional about our funding motions/decisions. Allowing new programs to do a presentation will provide an opportunity to "meet" agency leadership and hear an overview of the program. New programs will be more fully vetted, and requests for increases will be pre-sorted into yes/no/maybe. Standard information from staff for every program will ensure we have a complete picture of each program.

Non-meeting week:

- After all programs have been reviewed at weekly meetings, a bye week will allow time for questions sent to agencies to be answered; for members to complete and submit any missing scores; and for staff to tally and sort scores.

Kelly Hunt exited @ 4:34 pm

Buffer meeting - prior to the final decision meetings a buffer meeting will be used to:

- Review the rules of order for funding decisions such as order of consideration, motions including rationale, voting, conflicts of interest, and the ability to reserve dollars and do RFPs for under-performing programs.
- Set thresholds for grades, no funding, and possible increases.

Setting thresholds:

- Program scores will be grouped into grade ranges of A-F by grading "on the curve" based on the range of scores. Thresholds will be set for funding priorities and for funding other programs. Threshold for no funding will be set.

- **Rationale for recommendation for setting thresholds**– We will know the range of scores but without program names attached, so objective threshold decisions can be made. Grouping into grades using a score range will allow us to see at a glance the number of excellent, above average, average and below average programs. Taking the emphasis off the exact score of programs will allow us to focus more on the results of each program within the grade grouping. Preset thresholds for no funding will ensure we are not funding poor performing programs.

George VanBuren exited @ 4:41 pm

Investment decision meetings:

- Propose setting 2 meeting dates for recommendations
 - Day 1 – Address Priorities and Special Initiatives one priority at a time with pre-set thresholds (Special Initiatives include: System Advocate and Adoption Preservation programs only). Also, address high scoring requests for increases in these programs
 - Day 2 – Address all non-priority programs and programs that are “Results as Services” with preset thresholds. (Results as Services are scored with a different matrix and include only food distribution.) Also address requests for increases that qualify for consideration if funding is available.
- Scores will be converted to grades, and grouped by grade A-F on the spreadsheet
- Programs will be listed in result score order on the spreadsheet in each grade group.
- The order of consideration during both meetings will be by “grade” and in order of result score and will move down the line from highest to lowest. New programs and increases will be considered based on their merit as discussed in the weekly meetings. Each motion will include the rationale for investment.
- Allow the option of motions to set aside special reserve dollars for programs that are needed but do not meet expectations – followed by an RFP process – rather than fund failing programs. Note: The RFP process may take some time to complete.
- **Rationale for recommendation for investment decision meetings** – Spreading decisions over two meetings will not feel so rushed and allow for full discussions. Grouping into grades using a score range will allow us to see at a glance the number of excellent, above average, average and below average programs. Listing programs by result score within each grade will allow us to focus more on the results of each program in the grade grouping. Considering each program in order will feel less haphazard and ensure programs are considered in order of their impact on results. Referring back to the rationale discussion from weekly meetings will inform our decisions and provide a starting point for the rationale to include in our motions. The possibility of reserving dollars and doing RFPs for services allows us to address gaps in services for which no high performing program exists.

Post process review:

- **Recommendation:** Each year, in the meeting immediately following the recommendation decisions, it is suggested to have a meeting for members to discuss what went right and what did not with the process while thoughts are fresh in our minds.

Changes to the application:

Recommendations

Determining whether a program is meeting a priority:

- **Recommendation:** Change the choices on the application to meet set results per priority. We will now list the expected priority result as a choice on the application. To be considered a priority program, agencies will choose the result they intend to measure from the list.
- Note- When an agency meets more than one priority, staff will provide that information to the CSAB in one of the informational handouts at the recommendation meetings. This may be taken into consideration when making funding decisions.
- **Rationale for recommendation on meeting a priority**– The more RFP style of stating the result we want will help ensure all programs within a priority are measuring the same thing,

which will allow us to roll up all the results into a total and help measure whether we are moving the needle. Whether a program is meeting a priority will be obvious by their result statement.

Number served vs number measured for result:

- **Recommendation** - Add to the applicant guidance that the agency must measure the majority of the clients served to qualify as meeting a priority and must explain how children are chosen to be in the measurement cohort.
- **Reason for recommendation** – Programs should be producing results for the majority of their participants. Measuring the results for a small proportion of children served (40 measured out of 200 served for example) defeats the Results First concept and should be discouraged. If not all program participants are measured for results, it is important for CSAB members to understand the criteria by which the program participants are chosen to be in the measurement cohort.

Tracking results year over year:

- **Recommendation:** To discourage agencies from changing their results each year, add the requirement that agencies must continue to use the approved result for the current year contract or must be pre-approved to change the result prior to submitting the new application.
- **Reason for recommendation** – This will allow for tracking results year over year. Once staff has worked with an agency to improve the result statement, programs should not change it without discussing the reason for the change with staff.

Scoring points for diversified funding:

- **Recommendation:** Add the criteria for diversified funding to the rater guidance for the application in scoring area 3b, which allows for a range of scores from 0-4, and the score should be less than 4 if there is a lack of diversified funding.
- **Reason for recommendation** – Diversified funding sources is an important part of an agency's financial stability and should be included in scoring

Discussion ensued.

The Chair called for a motion to approve the subcommittee recommendations. **Motion:** To approve the CSAB Subcommittee recommendations on the investment process outlined in the update, **Action:** Approve, **Moved by** Xtavia Bailey, **Seconded by** Gail Wynne, **Vote:** Motion passed (**Summary:** Yes = 9, No = 0, Abstain = 0).

Gail Wynne exited @ 4:59 pm

Staff Updates

Susan Ford reported that the interviews for the replacement of James Slusser are being scheduled for the first week of December. The staff looks forward to this position being filled.

New/Old Business

None.

Public Comment

Laurel Lynch, CEO of Hope Family Services, provided a public comment. Thanked Susan Ford for prompt response to her questions regarding program scoring. She did not understand, from a provider standpoint the questions thoroughly and Susan Ford provided her with the answer with details. She was extremely thankful.

Dr. Lisa Davis, CEO of Family Resources, provided a public comment. Thanked the CSAB Members for all of their volunteered hours spent serving the community. She had concerned on how recommendations have been applied because it has affected their shelter. Their Agency was not considered for recommendation for an increase and another Agency scored lower than them was in the same priority area. Dr. Davis asked the Board to spend an equitable and defensive amount of time

scoring. In addition, she thanked the Subcommittee because she now feels optimistic about the decisions made.

Katrina Bellemare, CEO of Parenting Matters, provided a virtual comment; giving feedback on the diversified funding recommendation. She agreed that the agencies should not solely depend upon CSAB dollars for funding and should put in the effort to diversify their funds. Katrina expressed another perspective that while some agencies are able to take advantage of state and federal dollars there are others that can only rely on local funders. Perhaps the CSAB should look at the efforts of agencies that try not to rely on county funding, but cannot access state and federal dollars, and other ways to look at diversified revenues.

Next Meeting

December 16, 2020 – 3:00 pm, Bradenton Area Convention Center, 1 Haben Blvd., Palmetto FL 34221

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Approved

Debbie Tapp, Chair

Date