

Children's Behavioral Health System State Board  
Meeting Minutes  
May 14th, 2024  
10:00 am to 12:30 pm  
Virtual Only

**CHILDREN'S BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:**

Kelly Garcia (co-chair)	Mary Neubauer
McKenzie Snow for Kim Buryanek (co-chair)	Bradley Niebling
Andrew Allen	Kristie Oliver
Sue Gehling	Kari Price
Aaron Johnson	Jason Sandholdt
Marcus Johnson-Miller	Representative Jeff Shipley
Carol Meade	Beth Townsend

**CHILDREN'S BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Darci Alt  
Senator Claire Celsi  
Representative Timi Brown-Powers  
Senator Jeff Edler  
Nathan Noble  
Cindy Yelick

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**

Jacob Appel	Bethany Kohoutek
Theresa Armstrong	Dree LaToure
Kurt Behrens	Stacie Maass
Devin Bettmann	Carrie Malone
Caylyn Bishop	Patti Manna
Teresa Bomhoff	Dawn Mentzer
Lisa Bringle	Mikka Mills
Kim Buryanek	Barbara Ohlund
Nick Crawford	Hannah Olson
Jim Donoghue	Michaela Ramm
Sarah Ekstrand	Tori Reicherts
Marissa Eyanson	Kayla Sankey
Greg Feldmann	Flora Schmidt
Tami Gilliland	Sonya Streit
Emma Hall	Tammy Wetjen-Kesterson
Maggie Hartzler	Tom Wood
Sherri Hunt	Ryanne Wood
Nancy Hunt	Tom Wood
Esther Huston	Chaney Yeast
Dylan Keller	

**Materials Referenced**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

Kelly Garcia, Director of Iowa Health and Human Services (HHS), and McKenzie Snow, Director of the Iowa Department of Education (DE), called the meeting to order at 10:02 am thanking the Children's Board and the public for their attendance.

### **Review & Vote on Approval of March 12th, 2024, Meeting Minutes**

Quorum was established at 10:05 am. Aaron Johnson made a motion to approve the March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting minutes. Jason Sandholdt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Department of Education Updates**

Director McKenzie Snow, Tom Wood, Greg Feldmann, and Barbara Ohlund provided updates from the DE.

There was an update on Therapeutic Classrooms Implementation, which was established through state legislation in 2020 in a statewide effort to increase mental health supports for children, youth, and families. The competitive grant is available to public school districts to establish therapeutic classrooms for learners with social, emotional, and behavioral needs that interfere with their ability to be successful in their current educational environment. Districts may seek funds to establish new classrooms or install critical components to convert current classrooms into therapeutic classroom. The DE is currently reviewing grants for the 2024-2025 school year and has seen continuous growth in the program since establishment.

The DE continues to work on elevating best practices and reducing the rate of chronic absenteeism in Iowa's schools. The DE is working to clarify definitions and recording methods, increasing positive family engagement, addressing barriers, increasing public awareness, and promoting positive school climates.

The DE Conditions for Learning Survey workgroup continues to do work with efforts to ensure the survey is an effective and actionable tool of continuous school improvement. Utilizing feedback received, efforts have been made to ensure there is clarification on definitions regarding safety and adjustments to account for incomplete surveys.

The Iowa State Board of Education published state plan goals and outcomes for the next 2 years, with 5 identified goals and associated outcomes for each.

### **Iowa Health and Human Services Updates**

Director Kelly Garcia provided legislative session updates. The Behavioral Health bill will be signed by Governor Reynolds on May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. During session, there was intensive collaborative work with stakeholders and providers resulting in enhanced rate structures for Psychiatric Medical Institutes for Children (PMIC), an increase in the Medicaid budget, and continued investment in the Direct Support Professional (DSP) wage structure. THRIVE Iowa, a new resource which will create a network of navigators to help at-risk individuals find immediate support from community organizations, received funding approval. Next session will include robust work on prevention, early intervention, and system re-design.

### **Behavioral Health Alignment Update**

Marissa Eyanson, Director of Behavioral Health, reviewed the Behavioral Health (BH) system alignment timeline that has been developed by HHS in response to the passing of HF 2673, a bill that aligns Iowa's 32 mental health and substance use regions into 7 unified behavioral health districts to improve outcomes for Iowans.

The BH system alignment timeline will include exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation phases, which may overlap.

The exploration phase will occur from the present until December 2024 and include action items such as drafting and publishing a transformation plan, launching town halls and roundtable conversations, and finalizing a district map. HHS will outline all current services and service requirements, procure for behavioral health Administrative Service Organizations (ASO), draft administrative rules, identify staffing needs, identify services and contracts, plan for care continuity and develop a BH dashboard.

The installation phase begins by January 1, 2025, and will include developing district websites, providing training, planning for cost allocation, establishing ASO governance, and reporting on progress. HHS will execute ASO contracts and establishing Thrive Iowa, a program to immediately connect Iowans in need to resources.

The initial implementation phase will begin by July 1, 2025, and include technical assistance and training, initial implementation of monitoring and reporting, and establishing a statewide Behavioral Health planning cadence.

The full implementation phase will begin July 1, 2026, and will include developing fidelity monitoring, implementing licensure, certification, and accreditation alignment, establishing financial auditing, refining outcomes, and reporting, and ensuring there are connections with the future HHS system development.

There was opportunity for discussion with questions about the stakeholder input and how the board could still be involved. The board expressed interest in participating in stakeholder groups to provide feedback.

### **Planning for Future Meetings Director Kelly Garcia and Director McKenzie Snow**

Director Garcia and Marissa Eyanson shared that Division XIII of SF2385 sunsets the Children's Behavioral Health State Board effective 7/1/2024. HHS values the work the Children's Board has done and a discussion was begun on how the Board could continue to be involved by asking the following questions:

- What does a successful feedback loop on the Behavioral Health System Design look like?
- What next steps would you like to see to continue to realize the Board's mission?
- In what ways may HHS and DE continue to engage with you?
- What data should be reviewed by the HHS Council, State Board of Education, and Chronic Absenteeism Work Group?
- What does successful integration between behavioral health, education, and other statewide systems look like?

The members of the Children's Board expressed a strong desire to continue to see stakeholder engagement with regular forums, at both the state and local level, that engage youth, children, and individuals with lived experience and focus on their needs.

The Board would like the feedback loop to include both the use of existing dashboards and a continuation of the work the data group has done. There was discussion on encouraging transparency in reporting to determine if progress is being made. It was suggested to use patient experience surveys, especially with parent feedback, as an outcome measure. Documented successes of evidenced based approaches should be used to develop future plans.

The Board discussed the importance of ensuring there is an adequate and well trained workforce to meet the needs of youth, that vocational rehabilitation is available, educational settings are supported, and successful transition to adulthood occurs.

Overall, the Board agreed that the statewide planning process should continue the mission of establishing a high quality children's system driven by defined outcomes, comprehensive education, screenings, and effective services with coordinated governance and robust funding.

### **Public Comment**

There was an opportunity for public comment.

Esther Huston would like more specific information on where and how many providers there are in each area of the state so that parents can better access services.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm. Aaron Johnson moved to adjourn; Andrew Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Patti Manna.

\*Note: Meeting minutes not approved by the Children's Board as it has been eliminated.