

Children's Behavioral Health System State Board
Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2022
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Ave, Des Moines

CHILDREN'S BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

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|--------------------------|----------------|
| Andrew Allen | Mary Neubauer |
| Barb Anderson (co-chair) | Dr. Nate Noble |
| Scott Hobart | Beth Townsend |
| Kari Price | Shanell Wagler |
| Marcus Johnson-Miller | |

CHILDREN'S BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM (do not count for quorum):

Darci Alt
Kelly Garcia (co-chair)
Representative Shannon Lundgren
Carol Meade

CHILDREN'S BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

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| Dan Cox | Okpara Rice |
| Representative Timi Brown-Powers | Jason Sandholdt |
| Senator Jeff Edler | Richard Whitaker |
| Senator Liz Mathis | |

OTHER ATTENDEES:

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| Mavis Anema | Brooke Lovelace |
| Theresa Armstrong | Stacie Maass |
| Tasha Beghtol | Crystal McHugh |
| Kris Bell | Robin McKee |
| Greg Bellville | Rhonda Nelson |
| Michael Bergan | Hannah Olson |
| Kathy Bertsch | Tony Raymer |
| Teresa Bomhoff | Eric Richardson |
| Steve Bowen | Dan Ries |
| Jody Bridgewater | Jennifer Robbins |
| Rachel Cecil | Lisa Rockhill |
| Liz Cox | Flora Schmidt |
| Linda Duffy | Sharrell Soliveras |
| Tami Gilliland | Kelli Soyer |
| Natalie Ginty | Michele Tilotta |
| Sheila Hansen | Carlye Wellman |
| Britney Hicken | Tammy Wetjen-Kesterson |
| Matt Highland | Beth Will |
| Julie Jones | Ryanne Wood |
| Nathan Kirstein | Chaney Yeast |
| Todd Lange | |

Materials Referenced

Children's Board March 8, 2022, Meeting Minutes

Children's Board May 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes

SFY2021 Children's Regional Data

Therapeutic Classroom Grant Update

Department of Education Updates 7.12.2022

Welcome and Introductions

Barb Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. thanking the Children's Board and the public for their attendance in-person. Barb noted that as Brad Niebling had resigned his position with the Department of Education (DE), she was asked to be the interim co-chair for the Children's Board with Director Kelly Garcia, until a new representative from the Department was appointed. Introductions were led by Barb Anderson and Theresa Armstrong who was the acting designee for Director Garcia. Quorum was not established as there were only nine members attending in-person.

Review & Vote on Approval of March 8, 2022, and May 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes

This agenda item was tabled until the September 13, 2022, meeting due to quorum not being met.

FY2021 MHDS Regional Data

Theresa Armstrong, Bureau Chief, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) presented SFY2021 Children's Regional data submitted to HHS. SFY21 was the first full year that MHDS Regions were required to fund core services for children with a serious emotional disturbance up to 500% FPL and crisis services for all children

There was discussion regarding specific data and looking at ways to improve data collection from the MHDS Regions. There was discussion regarding the number of children served in Polk County which seemed very low. There was discussion regarding block grant funding received by the Regions and how that information isn't tied directly to a child. Clarification was given regarding the data noting that it is only data from the MHDS Regions from claims paid attributed to an individual, which is only a small portion of data related to children's services. There was discussion regarding obtaining additional data that is collected by Medicaid and by the school districts that can help with developing a better picture for the Board. There was discussion regarding looking at school data of youth with SEDs to see what portion of these youth are being pulled into juvenile justice, and what are the gaps that need to be filled to prevent this from happening.

Therapeutic Classrooms

Barb Anderson and Kathy Bertch, Iowa Department of Education (DE) reviewed the PowerPoint presentation on the Therapeutic Classroom Grant Update, including information regarding the results of the pre and post-test assessment given to awarded districts.

There was discussion regarding time limitations and professional development of staff and how this was addressed. There was clarification regarding therapeutic classrooms and whether they were school wide or a standalone classroom. It was noted therapeutic classrooms are a set of required services and that it was up to the district on exactly how they want to implement. There was discussion regarding staffing and collaborations with mental health agencies. There was

discussion regarding the appropriation and reimbursement for transportation and services. There was discussion regarding how a student could be recommended to participate in a therapeutic classroom and not qualify for an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Funding for Behavioral Health Supports in Schools

Barb Anderson, Administrative Consultant, DE, provided a presentation on available funding for behavioral services in schools including Medicaid, grants, and claims reimbursement (e.g., therapeutic classrooms), federal relief funds such as the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER II) Fund, local and private grants, as well as dropout prevention and at-risk funds. It was noted that legislation in recent years has increased flexibility for schools to support social-emotional behavioral health for students.

There was discussion regarding how workforce challenges related to mental health professionals and the influx of dollars to schools as well as the flexibility offered to schools, has resulted in schools hiring more mental health professionals versus contracting with community-based organizations for these services resulting in the unintended outcome of non-profit mental health and behavioral health organizations competing with schools for the same pool of candidates.

Workforce Discussion

The Board members discussed solutions to increase the behavioral health workforce including increased rates for community providers, loan forgiveness for individuals who contract to work in Iowa for a specific period of time, and tuition reimbursement for those who work for non-profit organizations specifically those that work with individuals who have Medicaid. The Board also discussed the unintended consequences on community-based providers from some of the current workforce and behavioral health initiatives and increased flexibility for mental health clinicians.

Beth Townsend, Director, Iowa Workforce Development provided an update about education and training in general healthcare. Director Townsend noted \$3M has been given to create a CNA curriculum for high school students that is virtual based, allowing students to use VR equipment for classroom training. The Last Dollar Scholarship has continued to pay for 2500 LPN and RNs in the last year. Director Townsend also updated the Board on the Teacher/Paraeducator Registered Apprentice Program that will be available to high schools. Originally funded at \$9M, the demand for this program has pushed funding to \$45M. While not strictly related to mental or behavioral health services, the model, if successful may be a good one to look at for mental health professionals.

Break

11:33 am to 12:31 pm

Department & Legislative Updates

Director Kelly Garcia, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) noted that significant alignment work continues to happen including work on the new HHS website and the branding and logo for the Department. It was noted that HHS is working on a two-step process for the website. The first part will be the merger of the information from Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Human Services into one HHS website. The second part will be around human-centered design for better navigation for individuals accessing the website. Step one will be launching this fall. Stakeholder feedback will be an important piece for step two.

Director Garcia stated that she had attended a press conference given by Governor Reynolds that morning regarding the growing threat of illicit fentanyl and counterfeit pills laced with fentanyl and provided a brief update on the monkeypox virus in Iowa and noted that 988 launches on July 16, 2022.

Director Garcia updated the Board on a recent meeting with the Dean of Education at the University of Iowa to discuss the new Center for School Mental Health and the work being done to support schools. Director Garcia noted that former co-chair, Brad Niebling, who has left the Department of Education to work for the new Center will be rejoining the Children's Board as an ex-officio member to assist with continuity in the work that he was leading as well as provide a touch point to the Center's work as they develop and move into implementation.

Director Garcia shared that the state engaged the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to assist in the review of Polk County that had an uptick in youth suicides. The CDC worked with the state and local Polk County and regional personnel to review available data over a multiple year period. Preliminary information has been provided with a plan to have a report with findings and suggested strategies for the state. The CDC has also committed to assisting state epidemiologists in doing similar reviews and analysis.

Director Garcia updated the Board on discussions with the Mental Health Institutes (MHIs) about the uptick in admission requests for young children, and the best role for the MHIs. It was noted that they are also looking closely at individuals with ID and forensic admissions which have both seen an increase as well.

Director Garcia will be doing a statewide tour to discuss foster care as a definite strain on the system is being seen. The first meeting will be Tuesday, July 19, 2022. Director Garcia along with Chief Justice Susan Christensen, and key staff will be engaging in day-long listening sessions with a wide range of representatives including bio parents, foster parents, fictive kin, attorneys, judges, guardian's ad litem, CASA advocates, HHS workers and Joint Commission Officers. The listening sessions will span several months with the last one in October 2022.

Barb Anderson, Administrative Consultant, Department of Education updated the Board on the COVID-19 Public Health Workforce Supplemental Funding Grant, which is on its third round of grant opportunity. The grant funds must be directed to schools to establish, expand, train, support and sustain school-based health programs related to social-emotional-behavioral and mental health knowledge to address the increased needs of Iowa students because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Barb also noted that the Therapeutic Classroom Grant is on round 2 with \$2.3M and the Behavioral Health Screener Approval List is now available on the Department of Education website. [Approved Grade 1-12 Behavioral Health Screening Tools: For Contracted Mental Health Providers | Iowa Department of Education \(educateiowa.gov\)](#).

The Board discussed how many school districts are being considered for the second round of the Therapeutic Classroom Grant. It was noted that the Department of Education wasn't sure how many districts would be awarded but they would want representation from small, medium, and large districts. Priority will also be given to districts that applied previously and were not awarded.

Board Discussion on Recommendations

The Board discussed information received in the morning and what they would like to include in their annual report. These topics included strategies for increasing the behavioral health workforce, the need for comprehensive data collection across systems as the current data on children is fractured, as well as the continued support for therapeutic classrooms to build on the successes seen in the early grants.

There was discussion regarding workforce and the unintended consequences for community providers due to increased awareness and behavioral health initiatives that allow more flexibility for mental health professionals. Graduates who would have had to work with community mental health centers or other community providers are now able to enter directly into private practice, which has had a huge effect on the behavioral health workforce for safety net providers. There was discussion regarding forgiving student loan debt at a higher rate for behavioral health staff while they work in the public sector. There was discussion regarding the teacher/paraeducator registered apprenticeship program and the possibility of applying this to mental health professionals. There was discussion regarding private mental health practitioners and if there was a way to engage them in helping community providers with workforce issues. There was discussion regarding the benefit of internships in preparing individuals for work in the mental/behavioral health sector, and the possibility of providing reimbursement for internships or some other incentive for community providers who offer this type of program. There was discussion regarding the need for mental health training for teachers. There was discussion regarding substance use and juvenile justice.

Planning for Future Meetings/Additional Discussion

Theresa Armstrong noted that the next meeting will be in September with presentations from Please Pass the Love program as well as on the Iowa Youth Survey. The Board will also be reviewing the first draft of their Annual Report.

There was discussion regarding the Coalition's Vision Council is working on some projects related to substance use disorder and families in treatment. The Council is not quite ready for public comment, but a future presentation would be beneficial. There was discussion regarding the possibility of additional data for the Children's Board to help them in their recommendations. There was discussion regarding the need to have information available from the Conditions for Learning Survey to help with comparisons for the Iowa Youth Survey.

There was discussion regarding in-person meetings and the problem with not meeting quorum and the need for more engagement. The move to a hybrid model was discussed to help with these issues as well as looking at different meeting spaces to aid with technical issues.

Public Comment

Greg Bellville, Executive Director, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, introduced himself and note that he also currently serves on the Substance Use Disorder Workgroup of the Vision Council to really look at system change and how it affects kids and families. One area the Substance Use Workgroup is working on is how do we best serve families with children who are struggling with substance use both to make sure that those families don't enter the child welfare system, and those that have entered the child welfare system that are struggling with substance use as a contributing factor get those issues addressed so that the family function the best. The workgroup is working on recommendations for the Children's Board and the State on ways to best help those families in accessing the supports that they need. The Council is also working

on statewide education on the discrepancy of substance use being a medical issue and a moral issue.

Tony Raymer, Director of Brain Health, Easter Seals of Iowa, introduced himself and noted that he also the Chair of the Board of Social Work. Tony clarified information heard during the meeting regarding mental health counselors and marriage and family therapists' ability to bill Medicaid and spoke about unpaid internships as one of the biggest barriers in getting individuals into the social work graduate program. Tony also spoke about apprenticeships and a social work apprenticeship in the UK that looks like how practicums and internships are done in the US, with the exception that the government or agency pays the individual for their time in the apprenticeship.

Kelli Soyer, Senior Health Policy Advocate, Common Good Iowa, provided additional information regarding the internship requirements for social workers in Iowa and noted that the 1000 hours are a requirement for accreditation for the School of Social Work. These hours can be paid or unpaid. Only 16 states in the nation pay interns and practicum students to do therapy. Iowa is not one of these 16 states. There was some discussion regarding MHDS Regions and paying for internships. Kelli spoke about the need for comprehensive data to tell a clear story about the children's system. Kelli also spoke about outcomes and MHDS Regions.

Adjourn

Barb Anderson and Theresa Armstrong thanked the Board for their attendance and participation. The meeting adjourned at 2:08 pm.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Wendy DePhillips.