



SUBCOMMITTEE ON RACE POVERTY AND NEGLECT

Katherine Stoehr, Chair

"In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, the Trenton Times and the Newark Star Ledger and posted at the Department of State, 125 West State St., 1st Floor, Trenton, New Jersey."

**Please note the meeting was recorded for the transcription of minutes.*

September 30, 2024

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

Katherine Stoehr, Department of Children and Families
Eleanor Gilliam, Department of Children and Families
Wendy Yallowitz, Department of Children and Families
Sonia Moticha, Department of Education
Natasha Johnson, Department of Human Services
Larry Braasch, Department of Human Services
Mary Coogan, Advocates for Children of New Jersey
Nydia Monagas, New Jersey Children's Alliance
Lisa Drago, Cooper Health
Lauren Burd, Warren County Social Services

Guests:

Kayla Rivera, Parent Council Member
Kimesha Kelly, Parent Council Member
Justin Wang, Department of Children and Families
Amanda Gillam, CASA of New Jersey

Introduction

This meeting was convened to deliberate on strategic initiatives aimed at advancing child welfare and addressing child poverty across the state. The meeting was called to order with the reading of the public notice.

Key Discussion Points

1. Clarification of Strategic Directions

- The meeting commenced with a review of the proposed strategic framework established by the subcommittee over the past year. The focus remained on ensuring

effective pathways for family support outside the Child Protective Services (DCPP) system, distinguishing between maltreatment and poverty.

2. Subcommittee Structure and Responsibilities

- Recent task force meetings confirmed the scope of work and mission statements for the various subcommittees. This clarity allows for structured outreach to be initiated with the prevention subcommittee.

3. Focus Groups and Data Collection

- Focus groups within the education and healthcare sectors have commenced, with plans underway for similar initiatives in law enforcement to begin soon. These focus groups aim to gather insights for refining reporting protocols and enhancing systemic support.
- Conversion of focus group protocols into surveys for broader data collection is planned for the Task Force Conference on October 7.

4. Strategic Consultation and Collaboration

- The subcommittee is exploring the engagement of external consultants to assist with training and provision of materials requisite for informed decision-making regarding making referrals to the hotline, as well as to facilitate broad collaboration across sectors.

5. Pending Initiatives and Recommendations for Change

- Drafting a Statement of Work for the proposed engagement of a consulting body reflects a structured approach towards driving systemic improvements.

6. Presentation by Eagleton Fellow, Office of Applied Research and Development

- A reflection on the National Academy of Sciences report highlighted the need for strategic policy comparisons with New Jersey's existing frameworks.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The subcommittee will circulate an outline of potential directions and solicit input from relevant stakeholders to finalize actionable plans. Anticipated outcomes and preliminary data from the focus groups will be shared in the forthcoming meeting scheduled towards the end of October. The continued collaboration and generous contributions of all participants are paramount as we refine our strategies for maximizing child welfare across New Jersey.

This memo aims to maintain transparency and provide the public with an overview of the task force's recent deliberations. The committee values community input and engagement as we collectively strive to enhance the welfare of children and families across New Jersey. This meeting report was prepared, in part, with the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

For further information or queries, the public can reach out via the contact channels provided by the Department of Children and Families.