



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board

Summary of Subcommittee Meeting

Subcommittee:

Foster Alumni and Youth Community Empowerment Subcommittee (FAYCES)	6:00 -7:30 pm
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Date: Thursday, February 16, 2023

Location: Virtual

Facilitator: Sandra McBrayer

Meeting Staff: Emily Lay

Foster Alumni and Youth Community Empowerment Subcommittee Summary:

16 attendees took part in the Subcommittee.

Advisory Members Participating: Simone Hidds-Monroe, Stephen Moore

Sandra McBrayer opened the meeting and recapped that the meeting is a subcommittee of the larger Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board. Sandra encouraged participation via the chat and raise your hand feature for those participating via Zoom. She also reminded current foster youth to turn off their camera for confidentially purposes. Sandra then turned it over to Simone Hidds-Monroe, who reviewed the goals of FAYCES.

FAYCES 2023 Priorities

Simone gave a brief overview of FAYCES and shared the vision and mission of FAYCES is to improve the experiences of those impacted by the system through lived experience and expertise. Simone shared the main priorities for 2023 include: enhancing youth engagement, Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), and implementation of youth-centered decisions.

Update on Child and Family Well-Being – ICF

Elly Chung from Child Welfare Services (CWS) who shared a brief update on how CWS is transforming into the Child and Family Well-Being (CFWB) department. Elly then introduced ICF representative Elliott Hinkle. Elliott gave a brief overview of the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) and explained that the County of San Diego is transforming from “mandated reporting” to “mandated supporting,” by supporting and strengthening families within the community.

- Questions and comments on the presentation:
 - A participant commented that mental health and wellness resources are an important part of prevention and these types of services are often only provided when youth and families are in crisis.
 - Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that asking families what they need in order to stay out of the system would be beneficial. She suggested that staff at Prevention Hubs should be reflective of the community being served.

- A participant reiterated the importance of Prevention Hubs being “judgement-free zones” where families can ask for resources without being punished for living paycheck to paycheck.
- A participant shared that childcare should be addressed at the Prevention Hubs. Many families do not think of childcare as a resource, but having partners that can provide childcare services could be beneficial to many community members. He shared that in-person services should be the standard practice at the Prevention Hubs, as virtual services can be difficult for everyone to access and participate in.
- Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that FAYCES included a Prevention Hub as a recommendation for the System Improvement Plan.
- A participant commented that focusing on mandated, active supporting is important to prevention efforts.
- Simone Hidds-Monroe shared that a shift to mandated supporting will empower youth and families that are struggling in the community but aren’t experiencing neglect or abuse. She suggested letting community members decide the name and environment of the Prevention Hubs to encourage use.
- A participant reiterated the importance of community members being involved in the development of the Prevention Hubs.
- Stephen Moore suggested One Safe Place is a great resource for families in the community and Prevention Hubs should look to One Safe Place for ideas and suggestions.

Update on SPA Student Experience Survey

Sandra opened the item and turned it over to Simone Hidds-Monroe. Simone shared that the results of the San Pasqual Academy (SPA) survey have been formally presented to the FAYCES subcommittee, Rites of Passage (ROP), and Dependency Policy Group.

Update on SPA

Valesha Bullock from CWS shared that ROP is transitioning into SPA and will be officially on-campus on March 4th. She shared ROP has been able to get on campus and meet with the youth and staff, and many youth have been able to ask questions about the transition. She stated CWS staff are going to be on campus the week before ROP takes over to help the transition and to be available to answer any questions.

- Questions and comments on the presentation:
 - Simone Hidds-Monroe asked how many students are currently on campus and when new youth will be placed on campus. Valesha clarified that there are currently 47 youth on campus. She shared that ROP would like to meet and get to know the current youth before bringing any new youth on campus.
 - Valesha shared that there are staff changes being made while ROP is hiring staff for SPA and there is a little confusion with which staff are staying at SPA.
 - A participant asked what mental health services are in place to help youth during this transition and asked if anonymous services are available for youth on campus. Valesha shared that SPA does currently have clinicians on campus until the end of March, but stated she would look at opportunities for youth to participate in anonymous mental health services.
 - A participant asked how the SPA Grandparents are involved in the transition. Valesha shared the Grandparents are very involved in the transition and have met with ROP to answer questions.
 - Simone Hidds-Monroe asked if ROP is available to meet with SPA alumni on campus who have questions about the transition and housing. She asked for clarification on whether alumni housing is run by ROP or CWS. Valesha shared that the alumni program is

supported by New Alternatives and CWS was not involved with the program. She shared that New Alternatives will continue to operate the alumni program and she is unsure whether ROP will absorb the program from New Alternatives.

- Sandra McBrayer suggested inviting ROP to present at the next FAYCES meeting in April.
- Simone Hidds-Monroe asked if there will be a formal “good-bye” for SPA alumni to say farewell to New Alternatives staff who are leaving. Valesha shared she would look into it and stated a concern that heightened emotions during this transition may disrupt current youth on campus.
- Sandra McBrayer suggested connecting with New Alternatives to find a location that is off-campus to minimize any disruptions to current youth.
- A participant asked what FAYCES can do to support the transition with ROP. Valesha shared that this transition is difficult, but FAYCES is doing a great job keeping current youth and alumni updated and involved in the process. Sandra McBrayer suggested inviting ROP to participate in FAYCES meetings so they can explain their side of the transition and what is happening on campus.

Date of Next Meeting – April 20, 2023, at 6:00pm

Sandra concluded the meeting by reviewing agenda items for the April meeting.

- Rites of Passage Presentation
- Update on Child and Family Well-Being