



Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee

The mission of the Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee is to provide oversight for and promote communication between the Board of Supervisors, the Department of Social Services and its related agencies, and the community, with emphasis on providing information and recommendations that make the system more effective and efficient.

MINUTES

April 5, 2023

9:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.

Meeting held in-person with virtual option via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to order and introductions.

Wilma

Meeting called to order by Wilma Hashimoto at 9:04 AM and introductions with roll call by DSS Staff Support, Julia Perez.

II. Approve minutes for *March 1, 2023*.

- Tracy Kashian (District 2) motioned; Kevin Lisitsin (District 2) seconded to approve March 1, 2023 meeting minutes and April meeting agenda (with a correction to the agenda date).

III. Updates.

A. Legislative Updates.

Elected Official Representative and DSS

- Ari Martinez from Supervisor Sal Quintero's office reported that there are no legislative updates but that State budgets may be decreasing; more information to come.

B. Department of Social Services Addressing Critical Areas.

Dalvin Baker

- DSS Deputy Director, Dalvin Baker, provided monthly DSS CWS data points. A handout was provided to the in-person attendees as well as attached to the Microsoft Teams invite for virtual attendees.
- Dalvin recognized April as Child Abuse Prevention month and provided blue ribbons for in-person attendees to wear in honor of children who have been impacted by child abuse.
- Every child welfare agency in California is currently working through the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).
- Updates on the Child Welfare Service Enhancement workgroups were provided, detailing that a workgroup has been developed that focuses on mapping out the community and finding out what resources are currently available and what additional resources may be needed. Developing workgroups with the community, resource parents, and individuals who have lived the experience, such as current and former foster youth, for their insight on what additional resources are needed in the community to help prevent child abuse and neglect.
- An additional workgroup focusing on the Family Urgent Response System (FURS) and how best to advertise so that it becomes a well-known resource has been developed. This group met recently purposing the possibility for magnets to be created and provided to the resource parents and foster parents.
- Complex Care 2.0 is in the works. This focuses on next steps in moving youth out of Mod-C and into a home environment. This is a collaboration between Fresno and Madera Counties as an enhancement for Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) involving daily interventions, therapeutic interventions, wrap-around services, and developing programs specific to the needs of individual (complex needs) children.

IV. New Business

A. Presentation from City of Fresno, Susan Chudy with One Fresno Youth Job Corp.

- The One Fresno Youth Job Corp Workforce Program launched in April 2022 with a \$7.4 million federal grant. The program's mission is to provide a bridge for young adults to overcome employment barriers to advance in their career.
- Fresno is one of 13 cities in California offering this program to youth.
- This program offers soft/hard skill training. Pay is based off previous experience and starts between \$17 - \$19/hr. There are options for part- and full-time employment, with wrap-around support available.
- City departments that have interned fellows from the program include Airports, City Attorney, City Clerk, City Manager, Economic Development, Finance, Fire, General Services, Information Services, PARCS, Personnel Services, Planning and Development, Police, Public Utilities, Public Works, and Transportation.
- Some entry points into the city through this program are Accounting Clerk, Administrative Clerk, Community Recreation, Computer Specialist, Engineering Aide, Irrigation Specialist, Plans & Permit Tech, and more.
- The Youth Job Corp program has received 1,040 interest forms and 587 applications. There are currently 125 fellows employed and 204 waitlisted.
- 95% of the fellows in the program have two or more employment barriers, as the program's intent is helping the underserved youth. Qualifications for the program are low-income household, in the process of transitioning out of the foster

care system, unemployed and/or out of school prior to the program start, being in the justice system or having a family member in the justice system.

- Wrap-around services include, but are not limited to, transportation assistance such as bus passes and mileage reimbursement, work attire/clothing purchases, childcare, mental health needs, and housing emergencies.
- Fellows over 18 can work an average of 20 – 29 hours a week. Minors can apply for a work permit and work a limited number of hours.
- Career coaching workshops consist of: How to Get a Job, Career mapping, Application and Resume Building, 1:1 Assessment, City of Fresno Application Process, and Guide for a Successful Interview.
- Pending further approval, One Fresno Youth Job Corp hopes to expand their reach by contracting with outside organizations to become the employer on record, which would allow the fellows employment opportunities beyond just the City of Fresno. The city will be using Planet Bids to release an RFP to potential interested organizations.
 - To apply or for more information go to: www.fresno.gov/youthjobs
 - Foster youth are high priority for the One Fresno Youth Job Corp program. When referring foster youth to this program please email susan.chudy@fresno.gov so they can be placed at the top of the list.

B. Year-end Report, Initial Discussion

Wilma

- "Priority Issues to be Addressed" on page 2 of the 2021-22 FCSOC Annual Report was read/discussed.
 - 1. Continue to work with DSS to improve dissemination of information to reach stakeholders in the foster care system, including foster children, foster families, biological families, county social workers, foster family agencies, legal counsel for children and families and judges. This is a work in progress and is still being explored.
 - 2. Work closely with DSS to provide support and oversight to the systemic changes identified in the department's critical areas document, which is based on recent interviews and data collection identified in the departments critical overview document. As work groups develop and analyze data, metrics for improvement will be established in conjunction with FCSOC members. This issue has been addressed and is being addressed still with the 14 workgroups that have been established, providing information to DSS, the FCSOC Committee and generating solutions to critical areas.
 - 3. Ensure the system for the public to contact the FCSOC utilizing the county's website is functioning. This function has shown effective and meets the needs to the committee."
- Wilma requested that the Board's recommendations for the above-referenced priority issues be revisited during the next meeting to provide updates. Ari agreed that an update will be provided.

V. Subcommittee Updates.

A. Education

Wilma

- Fresno County Superintendent of Schools has established a Cradle-to-Career program and is meeting with DSS Social Workers, County Counsel, and Judicial representatives to address the need for seamless transitions for youth experiencing frequent placement changes.

B. Children's Mental Health

Wilma

- A representative from the FCSOC is still needed. If anyone is interested in attending the Children's Mental Health meetings, please let Wilma know and she can provide information. The next meeting is Thursday, April 27, 2023, at 9:00am. In-person location will be provided at a later date.

VI. Round Table Discussion by members.

All

- Elizabeth Thomas requested that the Committee members receive a tour of Mod-C to have a better understanding of the living situations there.
 - Also inquired about the reporting of extreme actions taken by youth in Mod C – are they reported? If so, can the reports be made available to the Committee?
 - Dalvin confirmed that there is a critical incident report filed for each incident, and, if warranted by the situation, law enforcement is engaged as well.
- FCSOC vacancies: Due to Richard Bailey's recent resignation, there are now 4 vacancies on the Committee, two in District 1, one in District 2, and one in District 4.

VII. Public Comments.

- Ari Martinez and Supervisor Quintero provided information about a Family-KidsFest event celebrating Earth Day. This is a free event on Saturday, April 22, 2023 from 10:00am to 2:00pm, held at the Fresno Fair Grounds, located at 1121 S. Chance Ave. in Fresno. The event will have opportunities to learn about recycling and keeping the community clean as well as meeting and learning about zoo animals. There will be free food for the kids, bounce houses, and a free raffle with a visit from Smokey the Bear. The attendees will have access to information tables for non-profit organizations such as the Marjaree Mason Center, and more. If you are interested in having an information table at this event, please reach out via email: mdistrict3@fresnocountyca.gov.
- Social Worker Lorraine Ramirez expressed a need for resource information to be provided to Social Workers to have on hand at emergency placements. The need for more reunification opportunities was also mentioned with concern for overtime that Social Workers are putting in due to the lack of placements happening.
 - Another concern mentioned was for the safety of Social Workers and foster parents when engaging with youth at Mod-C. According to SW Lorraine Ramirez, youth have been known to get physically violent with staff and foster parents as well as vandalizing personal property. SW Ramirez also stated that the youth in Mod C have also been having sexual interactions with each other, The sentiment being shared is that these issues are difficult to address or prevent, because of the rules and regulations in place preventing staff and foster parents from defending themselves or restraining the youth, even to prevent the youth from taking further action that may cause harm to a person or place.
- Joshua Lawson, a foster parent attending the meeting as a member of the public, spoke from a foster parent's point of view regarding foster youth bill of rights, as well as the rights of Social Workers and the protection offered to them through the County; however, none of these protections exist for foster parents. His concern was that foster parents shouldn't have to take on personal and property liabilities the way they do now.
- Social Worker Deborah Young voiced a concern regarding the caseload size assigned to Social Workers. Her request was to push for more family reunifications in order to minimize the caseloads of those transitioning into long-term foster care. Deborah feels that the amount of funding provided to foster parents is negatively impacting the success for permanent placements due to long term foster parents' desire to keep their monthly stipend.
 - It was also stated that Family Finding is a resource that is no longer available to Social Workers, limiting the ability to place youth with relatives.
- DD Dalvin Baker responded that a comprehensive report-out on these concerns will be made available either prior to or at the May FCSOC meeting.
- Wilma suggested an annual planning meeting take place and that a date survey be sent out to the Committee as well as invites to the community to attend the meeting, for the purpose of refocusing the Committee's direction for the upcoming year.
- Supervisor Quintero introduced Deputy CAO, Amina Flores-Becker, who was recently hired at the CAO's office. The FCSOC meeting will be one of her assignments as she will be the person of contact for the CAO.

VIII. Adjourn

Wilma

Next meeting will be on May 3, 2023, in-person and virtually via Microsoft Teams (camera access required for Committee members). Meeting adjourned by Wilma at 10:53 AM.

Committee Attendance

District 1	District 2	District 3	District 4	District 5
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sal Quintero <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ari Martinez (Proxy)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Karina Perez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kevin Lisitsin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> James Martinez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosemary Alanis	<input type="checkbox"/> Pamela Hancock
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Maisie Young	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Elizabeth Thomas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ed Avila
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tracy Kashian	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patricia Miller	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wilma Hashimoto

Attending Staff and Guests

In Person: Dalvin Baker, Elizabeth Bell, Julia Perez, Brian Van Anne, Hillary Bolger, Dustin Ragsdale, Rocky Vang, Amina Flores, Chad Valoris, Monica Aguilar, Rigo Infante, Cathy Huerta | Microsoft Teams: Rebekah Rodriguez, Ronald Alexander, Christie Lee, Joshua Lawson, Marc Salazar, Paul Nerland, Sonja Dosti.