

Region 4 Advisory Council Voting Members Meeting

December 16, 2014
Hartford DCF Office
250 Hamilton Street
Hartford, CT

Members Present: Sarah Becker, Liz Bryden, Alice Farrell, Marline Cosme, Wayne Johnson (DCF), Nick Lebron, Chris Lau (DCF), Regina Roundtree. Josie Robles, Kathy Schiessl, Martha Stone, Chantel Thomas (DCF), Maritza Velez (DCF),

Voting Members Absent: Deb Batsie; Caban-Hernandez, Janier; Carroll, Tim; Kearney, Diane; Farinella. Ivy; Hunter, Colinda; Glynn, Hector; Blue, Terrence; Wilson, Beresford; Johnson; Winston; Little, Lorna; Parkinson, Alana; Perez, Salina; Brown, Sophia;

The DCF Region 4 RAC meeting was held at the Hartford DCF office from 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM. This meeting is for the voting membership & DCF Staff.

Overview of Meeting

The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss 2015 Performance Expectations, Legislative Proposal Ideas, Magnet/CHOICE schools, the Connect Grant and the RAC recommendations protocol.

Introductions

Minutes review

- October minutes reviewed
- November minutes reviewed
- Minutes will be emailed and no longer printed for each member
- 5 copies will be brought to the meetings
- 10 Voting members out of 21, 51% needed to vote
- Vote by email to accept these 2 months of minutes

Calendar review

- Rotate every other month with full membership and voting member meetings
- Full RAC meeting will be Jan, Mar, May, July and September

- Voting Member meetings will be Feb, Apr, June, Aug, Oct and Dec
- May 2015 will be the annual RAC meeting (some terms ending)
- March meeting should include nominations

Access to Magnet Schools

- Foster care children are underrepresented in the Magnet schools
- 3 populations are not represented, ELL, special education students and Foster care children
- Previously in Hartford only 8 foster care children applied for magnet schools, that number is up to 55
- Hundreds of children are not applying
- Performance is better in the magnet schools
- Deadline for applications is February 27th
- SW can check with the Regional School CHOICE office to see where the openings are
- Hartford has 162 children in the 2-16 yr. old range
- Hartford DCF to have CHOICE school information presented at the January staff meeting
- Chantel to connect with SW to get the applications in
- Suggested to have our providers also inform clients and foster parents about CHOICE for their children
- 40,000 children are in failing schools-19 Hartford schools are failing
- Race is an issue and address is an issue
- Magnet schools are supposed to accept special education students too
- Foster care division to inform Foster parents about school options
- There is a separate Hartford CHOICE lottery
- If we could be proactive and find out which schools have open slots
- Regional school CHOICE office head is Glen Peterson
- Staff can email Chantel for help or information
- SW need to engage the Foster parents in the conversation
- Need to look at the children in residential settings too
- Chantel will request more catalogs for the next meeting
- Hartford public schools has the data for who applied where
- Maybe we can be part of that email
- Action steps: Add to January agenda, Chris to meet with Chantel before the next RAC meeting for update, Chantel to email staff reminders and to get information out to staff

Membership

- 2 Voting Members are no longer attending
- Liz Bryden and Josie Robles took their position as voting members
- Need to fill Selena Perez' position as she is not attending
- Committee to send an email to see what the barriers are to attending these meetings?
Also to let them know about our gift cards

- RAC may need to change its time slot
- Wayne Johnson will send out the subcommittee members names with the dates and times that they meet
- How are our subcommittees doing?
- October meeting was to clarify what subcommittees and CQI committees could be merged
- DCF is working on performance expectations and how to implement them
- Chris proposed that the Permanency subcommittee merge with the Permanency CQI team
- We need time for the groups to report back to RAC
- Subcommittee chairs should reach out to the CQI chairs to make sure they are not working on the same thing
- January agenda to include subcommittee
- Regina will send a second email about the upcoming agenda items
- Reach out to our voting members
- Beth will post dates and times of meeting on the website
- Send email to approve the minutes

Legislative Proposal Ideas

- Contact your legislator to advocate for any legislature that affects the work we are doing or the needs of the RAC
- Regina and Ivy should be the ones to reach out to the Ad-Hoc
- We need an Ad-Hoc committee from RAC
- General Assembly website has the new bills coming out
- RAC needs a group to follow the new legislation coming out
- Public Act 13-178-we need children to testify on these bills
- They need to be prepped (5 days before) before testimony and given transportation
- DCF YAB can be involved

Agenda Items for next meeting:

- Update website
- Magnet schools
- Membership & Committees
- RAC Recommendation protocol
- Connect Grant update
- Early Childhood Initiative

The Region 4 RAC voting membership meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM

Submitted by,
Terry Hall