

Minutes from 2/17/05 CPAC Subcommittee on the Educational Needs of Foster Children

Present: Rebecca Erb, Kathy Goldsmith, Judge Crowell, Carlyse Giddins, Tania Culley, Keith Zirkle, Faith Moore

Minutes approved from 1/7/05 meeting.

Old Business

Judge Crowell is in the process of obtaining the NCJFCJ Education checklist and will distribute once received.

Keith Zirkle reported that the numbers of birth to 3 children receiving special educations services through Child Development Watch is out for a count. He will report back once those numbers are received and brainstorm how to better capture this number in the future.

Educational Surrogate Parent Program

Kathy Goldsmith and Faith Moore reported that the ESP database is “half way” cleaned up. Some discussion about 8-10 attorneys now serving as ESPs. Rebecca Erb reported that she has been approved to be the ESP liaison between Faith and DFS. DFS is to alert staff about Rebecca’s role and ability to help, and then share that information with the subcommittee. Faith would like to be the primary contact on her end with Vivian Banks assisting her. Rebecca is to be copied on follow up e-mails regarding documentation needed by ESP. Likewise, Rebecca will assist DFS with the delays they encounter in getting an ESP appointed. Faith and Rebecca are to work out the sharing of information and reports and get back to this group. The process to be developed for the sharing of information and expedition of ESP assignments should eliminate the prior lists and backlogs this subcommittee heard about. Hopefully, it will also target trouble areas such as lack of communication from ESP and lack of supporting documents from DFS. Keith and Kathy will provide the subcommittee with the final results of the resolution of that prior list once it is completed.

McKinney Vento Act

Joanne Miro was not able to join the meeting; however, several subcommittee members acknowledged the significant assistance she has provided in getting children promptly enrolled in school. Judge Crowell took the information Joanne provided at the last meeting and distributed packets to the parent attorneys, DAGs and Judges.

Joanne and Keith were scheduled to meet on 2/18/05 to begin discussions of an MOU between education and DSCYF.

Tania Culley presented copies of Senate Bill 271 from the 142<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly as well as 14 Del. C. § 202 regarding defining foster children as homeless. Since DSCYF is specifically referenced in another part of § 202, it will not be as simple as adding some language to 202(c). Tania will draft some language and then circulate it for review by the various partners.

### Training

All partners were asked at the last meeting to go back to their administration and find out what funds could be committed to providing a comprehensive conference on child welfare and education issues. DFS and Family Court are both interested and will advise, hopefully by the next meeting, as to the amount of funds they can commit. ESP indicated its training money is with DOE and it will explore use of those funds. Kathy indicated she will talk with Joanne and find out what DOE is prepared to commit. All parties will report back at the next hearing.

Carlyse Giddins indicated that costs would be more likely around \$15K. She offered her to staff to call around regarding availability for 10/7/05 (apparently, the best day in the fall for the school districts and DOE). First choice is Dover Downs if available.

### Special Education Services

Kathy passed around a new handbook entitled "Parents Can be the Key: A Handbook on the Rights and Responsibilities in Special Education for Parents of Children with Disabilities". Kathy asked that the subcommittee members read the book prior to the next meeting and bring any questions regarding same.

Next meeting will follow up on outstanding items, address any questions about the handbook, and finalize general plans for a fall conference.

**NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2005 AT 3:00 PM  
NEW CASTLE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 9<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, FAMILY COURT  
CONFERENCE ROOM**

/tmc