



Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board

Monday, September 28, 2020 4:30-6:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Ken Larson
Megan Porter
Alyssa Oradat
Aaron Perzigian
Arrissia Owen-Turner

David Charleston
Jeffery Hart
Kathleen Harrigan
Russ Sapienza

Board Members Excused:

Kathy Kershner

Board Members Absent:

Guests Present:

Emily Aagard, Cascade Connections
Kait Whiteside, Max Higbee Center

Jordan Wendland, Max Higbee Center
Beverly Porter, Arc of Whatcom County

Staff:

Jessica Lee, DD Specialist; Amber Wolpers, DD Specialist; Ann Beck, Supervisor,
Ashley Geleyense, Coordinator

1.  Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order and introductions were conducted. Quorum was present.

2.  Minutes Approval

Jeff motioned to approve the November minutes; Arrissia seconded. The motion passed and minutes were approved.

ACTION January 27, 2020 minutes approved. Aye 8, Nay 0, Abstain 0



3. DDA and County DD Program Updates

Jessica shared highlights from the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) proposed 2021-23 Biennial Budget. The Office of Financial Management required that all departments in the state propose 15% cuts to their budgets. The guiding values DDA used to propose the budget included preserving services with individuals with high needs, preserving the system of providers as much as possible, as well as maintaining staffing.

Budget requests include:

- Opening 5 Children's State-Operated Living Alternative (SOLA), (residential services provided by state employees) across the state as an alternative to institutional care.
- Children's Intensive In-Home Behavioral Support (CIBS), to prevent out of home placement.
- High school transition funding for young adults exiting school
- Technology/Remote support services

Proposed reductions include:

- State furloughs Days
- Reductions to state institution services
- Provider rate cuts
- Eligibility changes to waiver services; which would predominantly impact individuals with lower support needs.

Value Based Payments

- DDA, in partnership with OSPI is funding a County pilot to implement a "value-based payment" approach to services. The pilot is driven by federal efforts which focus on payment incentives which promote quality services. (i.e. Paying for an "outcome" rather than for work performed at an hourly rate etc.)
- DDA developed the "Job Foundations" pilot with a focus on transition aged youth.
- The pilot mirrors the work of the Whatcom County School to Work project, but will change how we are paying providers, allows us to start earlier with students, in their second to last year, and will result in a written "outcome" report.
- The report will provide a comprehensive look at the student's vocational skills, interests and experiences and will be used to help move the student along their vocational path.

4. Special Education Updates

Jessica reviewed the OSPI Guidance for Special Education during COVID. The document emphasized that:

- Students need to continue to receive services that are written into their IEP.
- Recovery services, or compensatory services, need to be considered.
- Teachers and families need education and training to work in this new environment.
- Communication with families is critical, and it is the school district's responsibility to keep up communication with families who are not engaging or who are difficult to reach.
- School districts need to continue with behavior supports to families.

- Career exploration needs to continue to happen for transition aged youth.

Beverly from the Arc shared that OSPI provided funding for technology and training for educators to be readier to teach and support families. While Whatcom County Library System has provided hot spots to families, there is a big gap in technology and other resources for families that live in more isolated areas. Overall, schools have been flexible and organized during the transition to online learning.

Families on the call were asked to share their experiences with district services:

- Online schooling is organized clearly, and I can't think of how it could be made better, but it's challenging when your child has attention issues.
- The back and forth with school being cancelled and then opening again has been a struggle. Starting again this fall was challenging at first, but the team at my child's school is very helpful and flexible, with paraeducators dropping things off once or twice a week. Families have not gotten a lot of breaks since spring.
- My child was not able to get their IEP over the summer, so glad that this plan made a proposal to accommodate virtual IEP services. It is pretty much impossible for my child to participate in online schooling as they require supervision and support.
- What other state or local resources are available to parents who are apprehensive to sending their child back to school due to immunocompromises and higher risks, and who need respite or support?
- Behavior support at home has been one of the biggest challenges to families that the Arc has seen, because it affects the mental health of the entire family. In response to this, ARC of Whatcom County's November workshop will be focused on social-emotional learning.

If families are struggling to navigate or access the school system, they are encouraged to speak up to the ARC or OSPI Ombudsmen who is tracking information which gives a report back to the Governor and the legislature which informs policy.

The Northwest Justice Project has set up Special Education Legal Clinics for low income families to address issues families are having with districts. Appointments can be made by phone or through an online intake form.

5. Public Comment

Ken Larson provided updates from Self-Advocates in Leadership (SAIL)

- 2 Leadership awards were granted to Self-Advocates.
- SAIL sent several letters to elected officials and others about a variety of concerns related to COVID and disability, including mask wearing and vaccines.
- People First Convention will be held virtually in October. Jessica will follow up with Ken about registration.
- People First received a Group Health Grant for technology to support self-advocates during COVID-19

- Ken's term with Disability Rights of Washington ended. Ken will be applying to the Governor's Disability Council.

Max Higbee Center and the ARC of Whatcom County are planning a virtual Legislative Forum with legislators on October 22nd 6-7:30 p.m. via Zoom.

6. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by Ken Larson at 6:04pm

Next Meeting: Monday, November 23, 2020. This meeting will be virtual on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Geleynse, Coordinator

HD Staff

Jessica Lee

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