**Nebraska Child Abuse Prevention Fund Board Meeting**

**Friday, November 3, 2023**

Board Members Present: Georgie Scurfield, Camas Holder, Sara Morgan, David Hansen, Claire Bazata, and Deacon Don Blackbird (Zoom)

Excused: Jillian Chance

Guests: DHHS—Chris Seifken and David Klein, Nebraska Children—Lori Nebelsick-Gullett for Evaluation Report, Sara Riffel for Statewide Plan, and Alex Labenz for Housing.

Georgie called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM.

**Board Openings**

DHHS sent recommendations for the appointment of new board members. These recommendations were sent to the Governor’s office in May. No response yet as of August of 2023. Camas has sent a follow-up inquiry to the Governor’s office and asked the DHHS PIO office to follow up, but they haven’t received a response yet. The Governor’s office may be restructuring the appointment process and/or may be looking for more autonomy in making appointments.

**Meeting Minutes.**  Dave and Camas motionedto approve the minutes. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Budget Report**

Camas presented the 2022-2023 Allocations and Expenditure Report. All grantees have fully invoiced although one payment is still being processed. The NE AEYC invoice was approved two weeks ago.

Camas also presented the 2023-2024 Allocations and Expenditure Report. The Board discussed addressing sites that didn’t spend all grant funds last year. The Columbus Area United Way grantee can request a budget amendment to include all counties covered as well as to include personnel. There was a brief discussion on other potential grantee under-expenditures.

**Program Report**

Evaluation Report. Lori Nebelsick-Gullett introduced herself and described the new Nebraska Children evaluation team. The team is developing a systems approach to research and evaluation and shifting the focus to external evaluation work. The current evaluation report is focused on the collaboratives. It is the first of two reports with a second report with information on each initiative and program coming in late January. Common indicators will be developed over the next year. We want to be able to say what we mean by each indicator, how it was connected, and what it means to look at patterns of change at a population level. Results indicators are also being redesigned to focus on thriving. Figure 2 of the first report shows how results areas for Nebraska Children are connected to the Statewide Plan. National partners at Casey Family, FRIENDS, and others are assisting.

This report includes NCAPF investments. The combined amount is over $23 million which is higher than last year even with COVID funds. Lori provided an overview of some of the Tables in the report, including those focused on Community Response and Evidence Informed strategies including COSP. Board members asked if the NCAPF investments could be less hidden.

Lori concluded by saying a system level logic model will be drafted soon. The evaluation team will also work with evaluators and the Munroe Meyer Institute to complete a landscape analysis of communities for more specific understanding, including what’s working and what barriers exist, over the next two years.

Program Updates. Board members received a document with program grantee updates for the last quarter of the 2022-2023 grant year. The first quarterly reports for the current grant year were due on October 31 and are being reviewed.

Kathy said the first Mental Health Provider Interpreter Collaboration training through the Board’s support will be held in Omaha on December 12. Board members will receive the flyers next week.

Camas announced that DHHS has received a grant to evaluate COSP. Chapin Hall submitted the 18-month grant which will have results in 2025. Positive results could lead to allowing DHHS to use federal funds for COSP through the Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA).

**Annual Plan & Allocations**

The Board reviewed the current plan and allocations. Georgie led a discussion to prepare for next year’s plan--to include continuation of many current grants and to consider new ideas. Comments included the following:

* Coaching in Community Response is much needed and makes such a difference.
* Sara said refugee programs could share information.
* Claire said support funds are often limited to children and families and this is sometimes a barrier to support individuals.
* Claire also asked about the unavailable or very limited access to in-home family services for those not involved in court or CPS cases. Camas said Family Centered Treatment can be provided through Medicaid while Intensive Family Reunification is only covered through CPS involvement. Claire noted that Family Centered Treatment has some initial evidence based supportand has better outcomes, but the issue is not enough workforce.
* Sara recommended looking at Evidence-Based programs that align with FFPSA.
* St. Francis Ministries and Good Life Counseling may be good information sources.
* All clinical models are limited by workforce availability. (Some other states have a Bachelor’s level model.)
* Claire said parenting assessments have helped provide information on how to help though take too long to do through psychologists.

**State Prevention Initiatives**

Statewide Plan for Community Well-Being. Board members received an updated summary of the Statewide Plan. Sara Riffel joined the meeting and said that the entire plan is over 100 pages with many strategies and details and lives in an online portal where community and state partners can enter information. She said the needs are large and the community collaboratives are doing much work to meet them. Sara walked through the goals of the Plan:

Goal 1. Improve lived experience partnerships. Current work includes workgroup meetings and monthly calls that include state partners to define this.

Goal 2. Collaborative Infrastructure for equitable outcomes. Language justice is one effort for this goal and has included the purchase of new equipment that partners and collaboratives can use for interpretation. Communities have said not having enough interpreters and resources to pay existing interpreters is a barrier. Another resource under this goal is an interoperable database to connect community systems for information and resource sharing.

Goal 3. Community collaboratives system partners, and state agencies are responsive, communicate effectively, and share resources for shared accountability. This is a large goal and is a focus of the next two months. Yesterday’s Statewide Partners call focused on housing accessibility and affordability. The focus of this call in December will be support and services for older youth as they transition out of foster care. Other workgroups or taskforces will work on other strategies. Growing Nebraska Readers is a new strategy to be incorporated.

Goal 4. Further develop the well-being workforce in Nebraska. Youth and Families Thrive training and Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion trainings will be rolling out to collaboratives in the first quarter of 2024. The training plan and schedule is being developed.

Georgie expressed appreciation and noted the hard work involved. The NCAPF Board will review this plan in 2024 to align its next annual plan and allocations. Camas said we will add the current allocations to the appropriate Goals and Strategies of the plan. Claire asked about Goal 4 and the well-being workforce. Sara said this is being defined as efforts to date have discovered that assumptions aren’t shared. For example, early childhood sees the workforce as childcare centers, while others see it as mental health providers. Dave asked if the Behavioral Health Education Center of Nebraska, BHECN, is involved and Sara asked Dave to send the contact to her. Dave noted that Director Dr. Marley Doyle is working to increase the behavioral health workforce, Katie Cordts is involved, and the Behavioral Health Regions are also involved.

LB 1173. Camas provided an update. There is much alignment between the Statewide Plan and 1173 for prevention, helping families earlier (before they need to enter the system), and being community-based.

Sara M is on the workgroup that will be developing an agreement.

**Selected Prevention Initiatives**

Housing. Alex Labenz joined the Board and provided two documents on housing and rental assistance. She will have more information later, including Emergency Rental Assistance data. ERA. She spoke from the Nebraska 2022 Strategic Housing Framework first. Our state doesn’t have enough affordable housing units and has a shortage of about 32,000 units. There has been a significant increase in the number of families without housing stability, even with housing assistance, because there isn’t enough inventory. She explained housing stability as not spending more than 30% of income on housing.

Workforce development housing means $300,00 units and is not useful for our populations, but state partners aren’t social workers. We’re looking at other funding streams through NIFA, e.g., flexible bonds and housing near schools and grocery stores. We’d like more public housing diversity and don’t want more congregate living for youth. Housing affects the economy, and some state policies need to be updated. Alex described successful efforts like Family Services in Lincoln. Communities relied on turnover through seniors in the past which isn’t happening at the same rate now. Nebraska also has a construction workforce shortage; modular units are one solution as well as connecting with high schools and others to encourage entry into trades.

Sara asked about housing rehabilitation and Alex said funding is not as available. Department of Economic Development and CDBG funds could go to rehab but mostly go to downtown revitalization.

Claire asked about housing for sex offender housing and Alex said location is a factor (can’t be in school zones) and public housing can’t serve anyone on the registry. Another part of housing is concrete supports. Central Plains administers a program that includes rapid response assistance paired with coaching for youth and has excellent outcomes. Coaching is especially key for older youth without other adult guides. Overall, it’s important to understand the clients and their needs, e.g., clients with long term housing instability or mental health issues may need longer term case management. It’s also Important to build rental history and credit during coaching. We’ll need to be more strategic and resourceful following Covid funds.

A Nebraska Children partnership is helping to administer Emergency Rental Assistance funds in about one month. Community Collaboratives are being contracted to support this with community resources. The state needs to spend 24 million on rent assistance in a short period to be eligible for more funds.

Sara M spoke about bringing people together to reduce siloed approaches to housing needs. Those involved include the ED of NIFA, the Department of Education, and DHHS. Public Health has a program for HIV/AIDS housing and there are housing elements in each DHHS Division.

Full-Service Community Schools. Information was postponed due to time and may be shared at the next meeting.

**Next meeting date:** Friday, Feb 9th or 16th