

CPAC DATA meeting February 25 2015

Attendees: Joann Bruch, Melody Caulfied, Jackie Mette, Jen Davis, Michele Marinucci, Eliza Hirst

Updates:

We discussed the previous minutes, which were approved except for the fact that the DFS Q/A system will track best interest meetings in both investigation and treatment, if and when best interest meeting occurs. Joann reported that data can be further refined by county/supervisor, but DFS is currently in process of revising Q/A tool and expects to have it revised and ready around July 2015. As such, Q/A should be up and running by next school year and DFS will track Best interest meetings.

Jen Davis reported that, currently, the DOE is not tracking best interest meetings. Right now, DOE is only tracking that the child is homeless or in foster care. Jen mentioned there is an issue with the time frame for when best interest meetings occur and the quality of the discussion. We discussed why tracking best interest meetings are important: issue of transportation, decision making, tracking when they occur. Jen explained that she cannot enforce school districts to enter this data, but she can put it in the manual. Jen agreed to follow up on whether there is an access code and drop down code on best interest decision to put in Eschool. Jen said that DOE is going to build her a platform for all homeless kids. She indicated there is a new platform drop down that pulls the DFS caseworker's name. When DFS sends it, ESchool updates the system and checks/uncheck's foster care. (There's no historical data about placement history). Melody asked if there is a unique identifier that is shared between DFS and DOE. It was explained that each agency uses different numbers, which can make this confusing to track.

Discussion of Data:

2013-2014 data: IEP data is very high for kids in special education. IEP numbers go down in high school for youth in custody because they may opt out of services. The data shows that the dropout rate happens most in 9th grade. However, the higher grades have more transient population because of moves. In contrast, kids often remain in the same elementary school. The group discussed credits and alternative placements. **Currently, there is nothing in the data to track if they changed placements/schools.

Retention: Michele explained that each youth is assigned to a cohort in 9th grade and they will have to have a graduation rate 4 years out. If it takes 5 or more years to complete school, they're no longer part of that graduation cohort. Data is then skewed because it is not an actual drop out; it is a youth taking more than 4 years to graduate. This may be particularly relevant for youth with IEPs, because IEPs allow for youth to attend school up to age 21 to obtain a diploma. So the dropout rate at 9th grade means they are not on track to graduate in four years, they could have been retained or they may have moved out of state and cannot be located. The only way to track it is for a person to actually document that they youth dropped out. Michele indicated that when looking at the data, it is better to focus on number of diplomas awarded.

One other issue addressed is that DFS's highest numbers of kids entering custody are teenagers—who come in with a host of issues—including academic struggles. Plus, the data may be skewed because for example there are certain foster homes in Woodbridge that takes teenagers with special

needs. However, that data may help drive services. Michele mentioned that needs based funding could be used for services—it's done for IEP services.

Need for additional data: The group discussed whether there is other data we need or how can we use the data to help with services? Jackie agreed to circle back with Rosie about her 2013/2014 data comparison. Jackie is also going to get some data from Woodbridge and Brandywine data to see what happened the 1-2 years before these kids entered care. Joann suggested Jackie track if they were involved with the juvenile justice system and mental health system before entering DFS custody. Eliza distributed the Venn report during the meeting to show how youth cross over into different child welfare agencies at the same time.

Credit Recovery: The group also discussed the issue of credit recovery—twilight programs to help kids catch up. Credit recovery is self-paced. For example, Woodbridge HS has an after school van to help kids trying to do credit recovery. Credit may be an issue that the group should focus on.

To Do:

- 1) Jen will determine if DOE can create a drop down menu to track best interest meetings.
- 2) Joann will report back in the summer about the Q/A.
- 3) Jackie will circle back with Rosie about her 2013/2014 data comparison.

Next Meeting: February 25, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. Collette Education Center