**Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council**

**Children and Families Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2016 from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM**

**DDDS Fox Run, 2nd Floor Training Room**

**2540 Wrangle Hill Rd., Bear, DE**

**Call-in information: 302-526-5475**

**Code: 6940783#**

**Members Present: Tina Fields**, Committee Chair and Self-Advocate**; Rick Kosmalski**, Parent Advocate**; Nancy Lemus,** Parent Advocate; **Alex Eldreth**, Autism Delaware; **Carrie Melchisky**, Parent Advocate

**Members Absent:** **Bill Monaghan**, Self-Advocate; **Barbara Monaghan**, Self-Advocate; **Shawn Rohe**, Parent Advocate; **Steve Yeatman**, Parent Advocate

**Guests Present: Blair Hains**, The Marketing Department Worldwide/Belike Communications; **Tommy Fields**, Self-Advocate

**Attending via teleconference**: No committee members or guests attended this meeting via teleconference.

**Staff Present:** **Pat Maichle**, Executive Director, Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC); **Kristin Cosden**, Social Services Administrator, DDC

1. **Call to order**- Chairperson Tina Fields called the meeting to order at 1:46 PM.
2. **Approval of Minutes**- A quorum being present, Tina requested a motion to approve the minutes. Alex Eldreth made a motion and Rick Kosmalski seconded the motion. The committee voted to approve the minutes.
3. **Approval of Agenda**- A quorum being present, the committee approved the agenda as written.
4. **Chair’s Report**- Tina Fields stated that she would keep her remarks brief due to the full meeting agenda. Tina thanked the committee members for keeping her in their thoughts and sending well-wishes during her recent leave of absence. Tina stated that she is excited to serve as Chair.
5. **Staff Report**- Kristin Cosden declined to give a report, due to a full agenda and time constraints. Pat Maichle likewise declined to give a report for the same reason.
6. **Current Business:**
7. **Discussion and planning session with our contractor for the Community Conversations/Inclusion Project- Blair Hains, The Marketing Department/Belike Communications**- Introductions were made around the room for the benefit of Blair Hains, who is the contractor for the committee’s Community Conversations/Inclusion Project. Blair presented a PowerPoint presentation to help introduce himself to the committee. Blair shared that this project is very close to his heart, since his school-age child has Autism.

In his PowerPoint presentation, Blair gave a high-level overview of the goals and objectives from his perspective, to ensure that he and the committee are on the same page. The goals were as follows:

1. Raise general awareness about what inclusion should ideally look like
2. Garner feedback from targeted groups. These include:
* Parents/guardians of children and young adults with disabilities
* Experts in the fields of education and disability services
* Appropriate state/local agencies
1. Prepare an actionable final report.

The committee agreed that the goals as presented by Blair are in keeping with the intent of the RFP. Pat Maichle emphasized the importance of the final report for this project, noting that the report should be as in-depth and thorough as possible. Pat cited the Transition Needs Assessment Survey conducted by The Galaxy Group at the behest of the DDC as a good example of what a comprehensive and useful final report should look like. Kristin stated that she will share the Transition Needs Assessment Survey report with Blair for reference.

Blair prepared a series of “question sets” for the community conversation events. The proposed question sets are below:

Question Set 1:

* In a school setting, what does inclusion mean to you?
* Is inclusion different as a child moves through elementary, middle and high school?

Question Set 2:

* What specific kind of supports and resources which are not already provided need to be in place to ensure each child is included to the level of his/her wishes?
* In an era of resource constraint, how do we prioritize needs? Do you have any creative solutions to meet those needs?

Question Set 3:

* Ideally, what role would each of the major players fill (child, parent/guardian, teachers, school board, state) in ensuring that each child is at the appropriate level of inclusion.

Blair outlined the proposed procedure for the community conversations events. He stated that he feels that two events are necessary for New Castle County, with one each in Kent and Sussex Counties. The RFP called for three events, one in each county. Blair proposed adding the extra event in New Castle County at no cost to the Council. The committee agreed to this idea. The committee also agreed to Blair’s suggestion to hold the events in the evening. A light dinner will be served, and there will be a drawing for a $50 gift card at each session as an incentive to attend. Blair stated that he anticipates the events will take place in late April or early May.

Blair described the website that he will create and launch for the community conversations events. Several domain names were suggested for the website, with the committee expressing a preference for the name inclusionfeedback.org. It was noted that “Delaware” should be included somewhere in the website name, to avoid confusion or receiving comments from other states, since the focus is on Delawareans’ feedback.

 The website would be launched well before the first community conversations event and remain active after the events have concluded. The website will be the property of the DDC following the conclusion of the project. Establishing the website early allows participants to register ahead of time, and also allows individuals to provide feedback on the website after the event. Registering ahead of time will allow time to plan for any special accommodations that participants may need (e.g. sign language interpreter, Spanish interpreter). Individuals who do not wish to attend or are unable to attend the event may leave comments on the website. Further, Blair stated that publicity for the events will be achieved using a multi-faceted approach. This includes advertising (newspaper, radio, etc.), sending out news releases, Partner Kits containing useful information about the events and the content covered, social media, and of course the previously-mentioned website. Nancy Lemus mentioned *Hoy Delaware* as a Spanish-language newspaper that should be utilized for press releases and advertisements. The committee stated that the provision of accommodations such as interpreters should be mentioned in any publicity materials.

The committee stated that they would like to arrange another meeting with Blair before the next scheduled Children and Families Committee meeting on March 2, 2016. Blair agreed, and said he would be in touch via email to gauge committee members’ availability.

1. **2017-2021 State Plan- Pat Maichle, Executive Director, DDC-** Pat directed the committee’s attention to the documents in their information packets pertaining to the upcoming state plan development. These included sample 2017-2021 State Plans from other states, information from the National Center for Cultural Competence, a document detailing expectations from the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD), and information on Targeted Disparity.

Pat gave an example of targeted disparity, stating that it goes deeper than just identifying a targeted group. Targeted disparity seeks to identify sub-sets of people within an identified group, then drill down even farther. Following discussion, Pat suggested the following two focus areas for targeted disparity:

1. Individuals with Down syndrome who are 35-65 years old who are at risk of developing Alzheimer’s Disease and who are not presently having their needs met.
2. Young adults with Autism who are between the ages of 12 and 26 who have a co-occurring mental health concern (e.g. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder [OCD] or Schizophrenia), who are not presently having their needs met.

The committee agreed to discuss these focus areas/groups further when considering their objectives at the upcoming Joint Strategic Planning Retreat on April 7 and the DDC-only Planning Retreat on April 29. Pat reiterated that the Joint Strategic Planning Retreat on April 7 is open to staff and members of the DDC, State Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD) and the Governor’s Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) only.

1. **Discussion- Gauge committee needs/opinion regarding a new meeting date/time each month-** Kristin stated that she was seeking feedback from the committee o n a potential new meeting date and time each month. Kristin shared her concern that the present schedule seems to present a challenge for some members’ schedules and commitments. Following discussion, the committee voted to keep the meeting date and time the same. Kristin thanked the committee for their work, and reminded them that they are part of the “engine” that drives the Council. Without fully functioning committees, Kristin stated, the Council as a whole cannot complete its work.
2. **New Business**
3. **Next meeting-** Tina pointed out that the March meeting date specified on the bottom of the February 3, 2016 agenda was incorrect. The correct meeting date and time for the March meeting is Wednesday. March 2, 2016 from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM. The meeting will be held at DDDS Fox Run, 2nd floor training room, 2540 Wrangle Hill Rd., Bear, DE.
4. **Any other items the committee would like to discuss-** Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 PM.