

**STATE AND LOCAL ADVISORY TEAM (SLAT)
CHILDREN'S SERVICES ACT
Richmond/Henrico Rooms
1604 Santa Rosa Road
Richmond, VA 23229**

**MINUTES
February 1, 2024**

Members Present: Mills Jones, SLAT Vice-Chair - CSA Coordinators Network; Katharine Hunter DBHDS; Kari Savage, DBHDS; Cristy Corbin, Parent Representative; Em Parente, DSS (*virtually*); Laura Reed, DMAS; Kyndra Jackson, VDH; Shannon Updike, VCOPPA; The Honorable Marilyn Goss, Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Representative; Sabrina Gross, DOE; Linda McWilliams, DJJ; Karen Reilly-Jones, CPMT – DSS Representative

Members Absent: Lesley Abashian, CPMT – Local Government Representative; Susan Aylor, CPMT – School Representative; Sandy Bryant, CPMT – CSB Representative; William Stanley, CPMT – CSU Representative

CSA Staff Members Present: Mary Bell, Marsha Mucha, Kristi Schabo

Welcome/Opening

Mills Jones, SLAT Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made. Mr. Jones acknowledged and thanked Rebecca Vinroot who had been serving as SLAT Chair and has left her position with the James City County Department of Social Services.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 2, 2023 meeting were approved on a motion by Shannon Updike, seconded by Cristy Corbin and carried.

Status Items

Kristi Schabo, OCS Senior Policy and Planning Specialist, provided the update:

- Policy 2.4 – Public Participation in Policy-Making Actions
- Policy 3.4 – Dispute Resolution Process
- Policy 4.2 – Payment for Services and Change of Legal Residence –Ms. Schabo reported that based on public comment, more substantive changes were made to this policy. The changes provide additional clarification regarding the processes related to the transfer of CSA special education cases due to a child/family's change of legal residence.

Ms. Schabo further reported that the SEC, at its December 14, 2023 meeting, approved the draft revised policies for a 60-day public comment period. To date no comments have been received. The public comment period ends February 16, 2024. The draft revised policies along with the public comment forum can be found on the CSA website.

SEC Report

Mr. Jones reported on the following items from the December 14, 2023 SEC meeting (from Rebecca Vinroot):

- The SEC heard and approved three appeals for late filings of FY2023 pool fund reimbursement requests from Fairfax-Falls Church, Essex County and Dinwiddie County.
- As reported earlier, approved a 60-day public comment period for the three draft revised policies. (Policy 2.4, Policy 3.4 and Policy 4.2)
- Reviewed and approved the SEC's amended bylaws.
- Approved the SEC Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2025.

SEC Strategic Planning

Kristi Schabo reported on the three broad areas of focus of the SEC's Strategic Plan:

- Policy and Oversight
- Leadership and Collective Action
- Empowering Families and Communities

She further reported that each of the areas of focus has defined goals and two-year metrics. Ms. Schabo reviewed SLAT's assignments in each of the three focus areas to assist the SEC with meeting those goals and metrics.

During the discussion, members asked that standing agenda items be added to the SLAT agendas for policy and initiative updates. Ms. Schabo has a spreadsheet of all the policies to be reviewed that she will share with SLAT at the May 2024 meeting.

Members also discussed ways to raise awareness of the resources available for families and communities and how they could be shared, such as through a specific quarterly report of resources. Also, a Family Guide Video is currently under development by OCS. A suggestion was made to add a young adult representative to SLAT to mirror the SEC's representative. Kyndra Jackson, VDH, suggested exploring a collaboration with the Virginia's Youth Advisory Council.

Mr. Jones will report at the March 2024 SEC meeting and ask the SEC for their direction on their priorities for SLAT's work. Members were asked to provide feedback and/or thoughts on the SEC Strategic Plan and today's discussions to Ms. Schabo for an update at SLAT's May 2024 meeting.

OCS Updates

Updates were provided in the following areas:

- 2024 General Assembly Legislative and Budget Update – Ms. Schabo and Em Parente from VDSS provided an update on several bills of interest to CSA:
 - HB 27 (Callsen) and SB 39 (Favola) – Would establish the Kinship as Foster Care Prevention Program to promote and support placements of children with relatives by LDSS in order to avoid foster care.
 - HB 75 (Hope) and SB 40 (Favola) – Would amend DSS regulations to require that LDSS apply for federal benefits on behalf of children in foster care; prohibit the use of federal benefits to pay for the care and support of children in foster care; and, require that LDSS protect these federal benefits in an appropriate trust instrument or protected account for these children.
 - HB 1313 (Tata) – Would increase the age limit eligibility from 21 to 23 for participation in the Fostering Futures Program.

- The Governor’s introduced biennial budget for 2024-2026 includes an increase in CSA funding of \$36.5 million in FY2024 and an additional \$14.5 million in FY2025.
- CHINS/CSA Parental Agreement Workgroup - The workgroup met on January 13, 2024 with a wide representation of stakeholders participating. The next meeting date should be scheduled soon. The workgroup will be reviewing a draft revision of policy 4.1.1. A new CHINS document will replace the current CHINS checklist. The meetings are virtual and open to the public.

Members received a copy of the Bench Card for Evidence-Based Programs (it was noted that the document needs to be updated) and reports to the General Assembly. Ms. Schabo noted several other reports that are or will soon be available on the CSA website. She also noted that the process for requesting CSA administrative funds is being simplified and should be in place by July 1, 2024.

New Business – Nominating Committee

Mr. Jones reported that a Nominating Committee is needed to present recommendations for SLAT officers for the upcoming fiscal year. Anyone on SLAT may serve on the Nominating Committee but only local government representatives may serve as officers. Cristy Corbin, Laura Reed and Shannon Updike agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee. Elections will be held at the May 2024 SLAT meeting.

Member Updates

Members reported for their agencies and organizations on their legislative activities, projects, new programs, and other ongoing activities. Members continue to work within their agencies and advocate through their associations for improvements to services and service delivery for the children, youth, and families of Virginia.

- VDH is developing a mental health tool-kit for school nurses.
- DJJ is updating regulations and tracking legislation.
- VDSS continues to work with and travel to local DSS offices to offer support to those offices.
- DMAS is tracking legislation and is working through issues with the transition to the new behavioral health services provider.
- As of July 1, 2024, all private day schools licensed by VDOE must be accredited. The Special Education Advisory Committee meeting will be held March 6-7, 2024.
- Local DSS offices are training on a new service offering, motivational interviewing.
- The CSA Coordinators Network is tracking legislation and has representation on the CHINS workgroup. Several CSA coordinators will be participating in the New CSA Coordinator Academy in May.
- Cristy Corbin reported on activities and trainings of the Virginia Family Network and ways in which parents and youth can become informed and involved. She will be presenting at the Northern Virginia CSA Symposium in March.
- Private providers are navigating changes/transition to the new Medicaid behavioral health services provider. They are also developing a survey to ascertain usage of the Safe and Sound Task Force Universal Referral form.

Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m. on a motion by Cristy Corbin, seconded by Shannon Updike and carried. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2024.