

# Lorain County Children and Families First Council Full Council Meeting

7/25/2024

## Attendees:

- Chelsea Yates - Children and Families First Council; Barbra Tamas - Job and Family Services; Dr. Jeffery Graham - Lorain City Schools; Dan Haight - The LCADA Way; Michael Doud - MHARS Board; Emily Kirsch - Lorain County Court; Rick Soto - City of Lorain; Dr. Amber Fisher - Murray Ridge; Jeff Riddell - Lorain County Commissioner; Franco Gallo - Lorain County ESC; Shauna Matelski - Lorain County Community Action; Isaac Young - Early Intervention; Melissa Chernock - Family Representative; Susan Shepard - Family Representative; Jesse Ball - Lorain County Children and Families First Council; Yacylyn Velazquez - Lorain County Children and Families First Council; Tammy Taylor - Lorain County Children and Families First Council; Jon Paul Filipkowski – Lorain County Children and Families First Council

## Opening:

- The regular meeting of the Lorain County Children and Families First Council was called to order on July 25, 2024 in Elyria by Barbara Tamas .

## Approval of Minutes

- A motion to approve the minutes from the previous Council Meeting was put in place by Dan Haight and was seconded by Rick Soto. The minutes of the previous meeting were unanimously approved as distributed.

## Open Issues

### • Early Intervention

Isaac Young from Neighborhood Alliance presented updates on the Early Intervention program. Early Intervention has received 387 new referrals and 204 have been evaluated. Out of those evaluations 194 were determined eligible for services and 150 officially received services. 39% of Early Intervention referrals are currently coming from families, and 37% are coming from hospitals. The Early Intervention team continues to grow. Each coordinator currently has a caseload of 60-70 clients. New funding is available and new coordinators will be hired.

### • Current Program Update

The waitlist for direct services through Children and Family First Council is currently at 24 youth. There are 3 residential placements 2 of which are out of state. In FS24 there were 31 cases that were never opened. There is currently an 80 day wait time on the waitlist. The average time open for clients is 12 months. Council currently receives 5-7 referrals per month. Data for the county will be shared at the next meeting along with more information about Children and Family First Council's involvement with the Plan of Safe Care.

### • Old Business

- Chelsea Freeman Yates gave updates on the outreach and community events that Council is part of. These include sponsoring the Grind League Summer Camp, having a table at the Lorain County Fair, sponsoring the Lorain City School Back to School event, sponsoring the Leadership Lorain County Event, and the EI Playground Grand Opening Event. The invoice for the Lorain City Schools event has been received and is being reviewed.
- Applications for family representatives were reviewed and candidates shared their stories. A motion was put in place by Franco Gallo to approve the application of Melissa Chernock and was seconded by Dr. Amber Fisher. The motion was approved

unanimously. A motion was put in place by Dr. Jeffery Graham to approve the application of Valerie Gonzales and was seconded by Dan Haight. The motion was approved unanimously. A motion was put in place by Dr. Amber Fisher to approve the application of Billie Olsen and was seconded by Dr. Jeffery Graham. The motion was approved unanimously.

- The Youth Leadership Committee currently has 6 youth members. The meetings are held twice per month 1 in person and 1 virtual. The feedback from this committee is being used to modify current practices.

- **Committee Reports**

- The finance sub-committee met on 7/10/2024. Chelsea Freeman Yates gave an update of the budget report for FS25 and the expenditure report from FS24. A motion to approve the expenditure report was put in place by Dan Haight and seconded by Rick Soto. The motion was approved unanimously.
- Chelsea Freeman Yates informed the Council of the intention to utilize NetSuite software for fiscal administration. This software will cost \$12,000 per year. Jeff Riddell informed the Council that the Auditor will be upgrading Oracle in the near future. This might be an option to look into for Council.

- **New Business**

- Council continues to grow. A new Administrative Assistant was hired along with a new Family Service Coordinator. A new website has been created to promote visibility in the community. Council is also in social media. A majority of followers are community members rather than professionals and other agencies. Council is currently in the process of updating the Service Coordination Mechanism and Dispute Resolution. This is due by December 2024.
- A number of work group opportunities have arisen for Council to participate in. These include a Truancy work group and a Respite work group. The Respite work group will be looking into what respite opportunities are available in the county and finding out what families in the county need.
- Several ongoing ideas were discussed. Council continues to work towards holding a youth summit in 2024. The creation of a Lending Library of books and items for current families and clients was proposed. Eventually this could be expanding to being utilized by other partners for broader community benefit. The idea of a Healing Library was also discussed. This would work in conjunction with Lorain County Libraries to provide mental health books and literature for different topics that are relevant to families in the county.
- Chelsea Freeman Yates discussed the upcoming dates for FS25. A special meeting for Council Self-Evaluation with a date in August was proposed. This meeting would be joined by a state representative. Jeff Riddell encouraged Council participation in this meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

- The next Full Council meeting will be held October 24, 2024 at 9am.

## **Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was put forward by Franco Gallo and was Seconded by Jeff Riddell.

Minutes submitted by: Jon Paul Filipkowski