

Date: Monday, November 08, 2021

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Location: Commissioners' Conference Room, 2nd Floor, 200 West Oak Street, Fort Collins, CO 80521

BOARD OF SOCIAL SERVICES MINUTES

This meeting will be recorded, broadcast online and archived.

Introduction and Announcements – Heather O’Hayre

- Human Services attendees
 - Heather O’Hayre – Larimer County Director of Human Services
 - Katherine Palmer – Larimer County Operations Division Manager
 - Thad Paul – Larimer County Child, Youth and Family Division Manager
 - Jill Maasch – Larimer County Community Relations and Public Information Supervisor
 - Lori Metz – Aging and Adult Services Division Manager
- Larimer County Board of Commissioners attendees
 - John Kefalas – District I, Chair
 - Kristin Stephens – District II, Chair Pro Team
 - Jody Shadduck-McNally – District III
- Larimer County Manager attendee
 - Linda Hoffmann
- Exciting News – Larimer has been selected to pilot the Alternative Response Program for Aging Adults
 - Teams will start convening in the next couple of weeks and we will keep you up to date as progression moves forward into the new year

Additions to the Agenda – Heather O’Hayre

- None

Family First and Prevention Services Act - Thad Paul

Link to presentation: [Family First and Prevention Services Act](#)

- Federal legislation passed in 2018
- Larimer’s Federal plan has not yet been adopted which means no financial benefits are being received at this time.
- Once adopted, this will change how Child Welfare will be funded
- This new program will help to fund more preventative measures of Child Welfare and reducing the amount of congregate care
- Trails will require many modifications to support the new federal funding source
- The buckets listed indicate the funding categories
 - Placement Continuum
 - Larimer is looking to be able to keep pre-natal or parenting youth together in setting
 - We would like to explore this further for Larimer
 - We have the boldest definition of all the states
 - Candidacy in child welfare is the eligibility factors or eligibility for the use of IV-E funding as termed by the Feds

- Larimer's bold definition would include other factors which could cause a person to enter into the child welfare system which could broaden our funding to our state and locally
 - Substance abuse
 - Mental health needs
- If approved the funding would be broaden funding to the state and to our community
- Evidence based services would be best served by the Federal funding
- These funds would be a first resort rather than a last resort (still waiting on the state plan)
 - Types of qualifying services are listed in the boxes
- Commissioner Kefalas – Thad, please explain the Trails system
 - Thad – Trails is the federally required system in which all child welfare cases are managed
 - The state allows a prevention arm within Trails as well as child welfare case involvement
 - This is the data entry system that is 100 years old which is requiring dual data entry in “old Trails” and “new Trails”
 - The State system does not communicate well with the Trails child welfare system which is presenting some issues and concerns
 - The new state department's focus is on 0-5 years of age population while Larimer child welfare's focus is 0-18 years of age
 - Thad has questions about how all of this is going to look
 - The federal dollars will now be drawn down into a Trust account and will create a number of problems
 - Trust account will not allow Larimer to use the funds for evidence-based services
 - Unsure if the funds will be accessible?
 - Kefalas would like to know who came up with the model for the federal dollars going into a Trust fund? He has concerns that there would be too many steps involved before making its way to the local level.
 - Evidence-based model was picked through a state process in which counties had a voice
 - The counties wanted more of these service types but the challenge is how to monitor fidelity for a number of evidence-based services at the state level
 - The Trust account was approved via the legislative process in 2020
 - Across the state, not all children have access to the same types of services
 - The 11 larger counties have the burden of pulling down the trust account funds but we may not have the ability or access to get the funds
 - The state office has stated that they will expand this program as it moves forward
 - The boxes on the left are included in the state plan and the boxes on the left are the programs Larimer would like to have implemented
- The QRTP process is required in order to pull down the Federal dollars
 - If the QRTP assessment is not met then state and local dollars are the only funds available
 - This process will help to serve as the treatment of youth rather than the containment of youth as has historically been presented
- The challenge for Larimer is we don't have enough beds per limitation by the Feds and per their regulations
 - Some facilities chose not to become certified
 - Lower levels of care are not available across the state which also presents challenges
- Larimer has begun the pilot of QRTP Process
- The IDD population has significant behavioral needs but do not qualify for QRTP
 - Many of these kids are being sent out of state for this reason
- Kefalas – Thad, what do you mean when you say crossover youth?
 - Thad – youth who are involved in both the Juvenile and child welfare systems
- Rural communities are driving multiple hours due to get their children into a QRTP because they lack this program in their areas
- CCI Letter, supported by the BoCC (Out of State Crisis)
 - 25 child welfare youth have been placed out of state due to a lack of resources and insurance complications in Colorado

- This does not include families who have placed their own children out of state
- Governor Polis rolled out some funding recently to help combat some of this crisis for behavioral health (high acuity kids)
 - Anticipating 35-50 new beds (in the next couple of months) – hoping to use these for the kids who've been placed out of state
- Larimer will also be piloting the use of an assessment bed in one facility
 - Better assessment will help support the juvenile justice kids who used to be eligible for detention but are no longer eligible for detention. Hopefully this will aid them with reentry into the community with the hope that they will never bump into residential which would create a need for more beds in the future
- Medical necessary is a big need and is preventing appropriate care for the children
 - Children enter the hospital due to self-harm statements and eventually no longer meet the medical necessity but no other hospital in the state feel they can manager their risk/situation
 - Medicaid says they need to get out of the hospital due to no longer being able to fund the child
 - No other placements will take the child due to the risk involved
 - This means kids are being stuck in hospitals that are not being funded by Medicaid and forcing them into the child welfare system to be placed in another unqualified setting
 - These kids end up bouncing from placement to placement creating more trauma for the child (enforcing that they are the problem).
 - Thad has brought this up with the State Behavioral Health Department (Dr Leslie Brooks) and Medicaid. They need to work to resolve this issue as it is a big concern across many counties in Colorado
- The HS department will be coming back to the BoCC with ideas to gain support on this issue for both CYF and AAS
 - BoCC would like to meet and write a joint letter to move this forward
- Larimer's Core allocation allows for some flexibility for juvenile funds
- Allocations can be used for different targeted needs and members of the community
- BoCC is happy to advocate or write letters for anything that would be of help to improve and minimize the impact on the children

Outreach and External Communications Update - Jill Maasch

Link to presentation: [Outreach and External Communications Update](#)

- Larimer County has begun our Outreach Communications plan this year which will go into effect in 2022
 - Much of this work has already been started
 - We are taking a data driven approach to reaching different populations within our community
- FFN = Family, Friends and Neighbors
- Households who earn \$60,000.00 or less were sent postcards (1100) with information about CCAP and who they can contact for further information
 - The focus was on rural communities first. Fort Collins and Loveland will be targeted next
- CCAP paid absences has increased. In 2020, 2580 absences were paid and since September 2021 we've paid for 3370 absences.
- Due to policy changes and some additional funding, Larimer has been able to implement a few changes for 2021
- 20% of the County budget is for CCAP
- These presentation were also held along with our partners Early Childcare
 - A postcard was approved by the state to send out to the community and to our partners
- We work closely with the Bohemian Foundation and Poudre School District to reach more people for SNAP and other benefits
- The Parent Navigator Program assists with the whole application process from login to end

- The RFA process in 2020 allowed us to provide dollars to help provide food and security in Larimer County.
 - Allowed us to identify and work with our partners throughout this process and dispel any myths
- We can replicate this program for other programs in the future
- The Eligible but Not Enrolled Metric
 - A Federal data factor that came out in 2016/2017 through extensive research and campaigning from Hunger Free Colorado
 - Unfortunately, this metric is no longer available and we don't have access to any longer
 - It is difficult to gage the impact we're having because we no longer have a metric
- Superusers for SNAP
 - This has allowed us greater access to CBMS (Colorado Benefits Management System) which is the public benefits management system
 - We are able to tell how many applications have been submitted via the superuser and then determine if the applicant receives benefits
 - The Food Bank has now added another superuser to assist the older adult community in the application process
 - We will have additional information on the progress once we can tie data sources together
- How are college students being reached regarding SNAP?
 - Vanessa Fewell (Division Manager for Benefits and Community Support) has established a connection with the student supportive services at CSU and meet quarterly
 - Similar to PSD, we can explore implementing superusers
- The goal with this program is to use many of the resources we currently have
- We've created a more robust, digital flipbook of the available resources which contains links to the websites
 - About 300 of our local partners now have this
 - Available in PDF format and digitally
- UniteUs along with OASIS will provide much smoother transactions with our community partners
 - These tools will also allow us to reach the populations we haven't been able to reach before
- How is the population caring for older adults being reached demographically?
 - This will be covered in the next agenda item
 - We have budgeted for this population in 2022
- Commissioner Kefalas - How are we continuing our partnerships with age-friendly communities?
 - In a variety of ways through various Boards
 - Partnerships through Extension
 - Informal and formal methods
 - Volunteer-led committees
- Many of the community partners are back up and operating so they are available once again to the community
- We just started accepting applications for LEAP which will go through November 2022.
- Looking to reach low-income areas by the means listed
- A portion of the advertising dollars go back to the schools
- We do not directly administer to LEAP
 - Goodwill industries oversees the program
- We will be reaching out to businesses to see if we can incorporate outreach through their publications or invoices
- Employment First (EF) is the case management that is offered to individuals receiving food assistance
 - This aids these individuals in finding employment or increase their wages
 - Legislation was passed last year that allows local government to pay for internships or more targeted assistance for these individuals
 - EF is very similar to Colorado Works (TANF)
 - Expanding our information to include English, Spanish and Arabic
 - We also have bilingual staff available

- Commissioner Kefalas – at the next quarterly meeting would we be able to see how funds are being used and kept locally?
- He would also like to see how we are using our local farmers and farmer's markets in the next growing season
 - It is important for people to have access to locally grown nutritious food

Expanded Services Approach - Heather O'Hayre

Link to presentation: [Expanded Services Approach](#)

- We have done a lot research to identify where the gaps are
- Our focus has been to expand our services outside of the office
 - We are making a monumental shift with our Human Services facilities to better serve our clients
 - Staff will be more outside of the county offices and more in the community while co-locating with community partners
- In 2022 we are looking to expand our services to areas where we may not have community partners
- Facilities changes
 - Changes be funded by utilizing our fund balance
 - 2555 Midpoint will have a public lobby in 2022
- We are identifying where there is an increased need
- We've also identified needs that have arisen due to COVID
- Maps indicate referrals that have gone through the assessment process and have been assigned as cases
 - Estes Park, Wellington and Berthoud
 - Urban Corridor
- Wellington has a high level of CCAP providers
 - Transportation patterns may provide alleviation if the parent(s) work in Fort Collins
 - Some may not have a choice and may need to drive to Fort Collins for childcare
- Summary
 - An agenda item will be brought forth next year regarding our procurement process
 - This will help to identify additional community partners locally while providing education
 - We will continue brainstorm how we can reach these communities in need of more services while honing-in on our own data
 - This will include targeting the mobile home parks and senior living parks and school district areas
 - We will also grow our presence within the community
 - An additional Food Pantry (with a possible superuser) is being discussed for the Wellington Community
 - We've also explored having a mobile team to reach certain demographics
 - We will provide an update at the next Quarterly Meeting in 2022
- Economic and workforce development and the Healthcare Department
 - We partner quite a bit with these community partners and are able to identify gaps and needs
 - Maintaining these partnerships with other departments and nonprofits helps to prevent duplicative work

Department Activity Report - Heather O'Hayre

Link to presentation: [Department Activity Report](#)

- Snapshot of the 3rd Quarter

- Bouncing back and looking more normal from pre-covid times
- 3rd Quarter of 2020 may be due to the implementation of virtual meetings and making family meetings happen by any means possible
- The total number of participants seem to be increasing over time
- As individuals go back to their primary care doctors, etc. we see an increase in the number of referrals
- Self-neglect is the highest in both age categories as well as the Caretaker Neglect
- We believe these categories will be impacted the most by the Alternative Response Program implementation
 - An increase in cases indicates a need for more services for safety measures
 - Throughout 2020 we didn't have as many open cases or in-person contacts as it was all mostly virtual
 - It is beginning to stabilize and in-person contacts are resuming
- Many of the services have been able to remain intact virtually for the Options for Long-term Care clients
- Families continue to receive the maximum amount which will continue through the calendar year
- The Feds will stabilize the food assistance in 2022 which means it will go back to monthly payout determined by the household size and income
- There will be some decreases in the benefits received once the public emergency ends and the state will give us a 60-day notice. We will notify our clients of the decrease once we receive the 60-day notice.
- We believe the reason for the decline in benefits is due to having to resubmit paperwork to recertify. During 2020 this was not required
- There continues to be no waitlist for childcare since we cleared it in 2020

Agenda Items to bring to the 1st Quarter BoSS in 2022

- Our efforts to continue to reach out and offer our services to targeted communities in Larimer County
- Enhanced support to community partners and how we're helping fund them through contracting and technical assistance
- We will look into incorporating superusers at CSU & Front Range regarding SNAP for traditional and nontraditional students

Other Business

- Compliments from the Larimer County Commissioners
 - Congratulations on being selected for the Alternative Response Pilot Program
 - The Larimer County Human Services Department is doing really great work

Per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Larimer County will provide a reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with a disability who need assistance. Services can be arranged with at least seven (7) business days' notice. Please email us at ohayrehj@co.larimer.co.us, or call (970) 498-7719 or Relay Colorado 711. "Walk-in" requests for auxiliary aids and services will be honored to the extent possible but may be unavailable if advance notice is not provided.