

Executive Director's Report July 20-21, 2011 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through May 2011 is included in the packet.

Membership Update

- Mark Martin, the new Director of La. Rehabilitation Services (LRS), was appointed to the Council by the Governor.

Membership Application Form

- Our membership application form has been revised to get better information from potential applicants. The interview questions are being revised accordingly. The new application form is available on our website.
- We are currently soliciting applicants for positions on the Council that will become vacant in late 2011.

Annual Report

- Our annual report was published and mailed to all Council members, Louisiana legislators, our Congressional delegation, Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) members, OCDD state and regional offices, LRS state and regional offices, the Families Helping Families centers, all other DD Councils, the Governor's Office, Sec. Bruce Greenstein, Acting Supt. Ollie Tyler, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, and the state and legislative libraries.
- We have a few additional copies at our office and it is also posted on our website under publications.

Cash Subsidy and Individual and Family Support Survey

- The results of the survey were distributed to members of the Senate Finance Committee and used in testimony before the committee on House Bill 1. The survey could not have been more timely as the Cash Subsidy and Individual and Family Support Programs would have been reduced or eliminated had the budget cuts proposed by the House not been restored in the Senate.
- The one page summary and full survey results are posted on the Council's website under Council Initiatives.

Advocacy Activities

- Letters were written and delivered throughout the legislative session to legislators on several issues according to the Council's positions.
- An advocacy campaign was developed and successfully implemented for the passage of rules governing the appropriate use of restraint and seclusion on students with exceptionalities. Shawn led this effort with LaTEACH and he provided information on the bill in the Senate and House Education Committees with Sen. Donahue. Parents of children with disabilities were provided support to testify before both Committees.

- An advocacy campaign was also successfully implemented by the Council through LaCAN for the restoration of cuts to services for people with developmental disabilities made by the House in HB 1. Family members were provided information and support to testify before the Senate Finance Committee and LaCAN had a tremendous turnout on two “yellow shirt days.” We also used the media to help tell the story of what the elimination of vital services would mean to people with developmental disabilities. All of the press coverage is documented on the Council’s website at http://www.laddc.org/main/?page_id=3034
- We successfully advocated with OCDD on behalf of the children and families who had been offered one of the 425 Children’s Choice waiver slots for additional options if CC did not meet their needs. This meeting also resulted in OCDD’s commitment to work with the Act 378 Sub-committee to review the Individual and Family Support Program across the state for inconsistent or incorrect practices and to take corrective action where needed.
- Family members and the Director of the Autism Early Intervention Program at McNeese State University were supported to prepare testimony for BESE related to the rule that will certify Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) to be employed in Louisiana schools.

Collaborative Efforts

OCDD Employment First Work Group

- With the support of our DD Network partners, we successfully advocated for strong language in the Employment First position statement that was adopted by the group and subsequently released by OCDD on June 1st. We also successfully advocated for an implementation plan to be developed.

OCDD Emergency Waiver Work Group

- This group is revising the criteria used to prioritize the urgency of a person’s situation for an Emergency Waiver slot and the process used to offer/announce the availability of Emergency Waivers by OCDD Central Office.

OCDD Mortality Review Committee

Of the 29 cases reviewed this quarter, the committee found no abuse/neglect issues and no indication of rights violations. The committee found concerns in no cases for which a plan of correction was requested by OCDD of the provider. There were systemic concerns in three cases which were referred to the appropriate personnel at OCDD central office for follow-up and/or change in policy:

- the designation of a Certified Medical Assistant who was administering g-tube feedings (not approved by the nursing board) and the lack of timeliness of receipt of documents,
- a 70-year-old waiver recipient diagnosed with Dementia and Bipolar Disorder lived with her 73-year-old brother who was listed as providing “natural supports,” and
- an individual with a history of multiple bowel conditions but was not monitored for bowel management. The committee recommended to OCDD to mandate the use of bowel management monitoring practices for persons at risk.

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) to BESE

- SEAC approved the final version of recommendations for guidelines on the use of restraint and seclusion in schools. This approval was instrumental in having stakeholder input into language that would form the basis of SB59.
- SEAC made recommendations related to compliance monitoring of Local Education Agencies' special education services. Significant was the removal of selecting any school districts randomly. The selection of which school districts to monitor will be based entirely on data – which historically has included inaccurate data reported from school districts.

Work Pay\$ Coalition

- The Coalition and its three committees (Policy, Business, and Consumers) continue to implement activities from the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Strategic Plan for Employment. Job Fairs are being planned around the state, a disability employment summit is being planned for early December, and other collaborative community efforts are in the planning stage.

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

- The SICC held a retreat to develop a new strategic plan for 2011-2013. The plan will be presented and approved at the quarterly meeting on June 13th.
- The EarlySteps Program administered by OCDD received “Meets Requirements” from the Office of Special Educational Programs’ (OSEP) annual determination. This is the highest level a state can achieve.

Home and Community Based Services Improvements Work Group

- This group will begin working on the comprehensive plan to address the delivery of quality services to people receiving home and community-based services as called for in HB 642. The initial meeting focused on a review of the components that will be included in the plan, many of which are intended to reduce the administrative burden on providers, leaving more time and funding to provide quality services.

Meetings Attended Since April 1, 2011

OCDD Employment First Work Group – April 13

Council Meeting – April 20-21

OCDD Emergency Waiver Work Group – April 28

OCDD Employment First Work Group – May 3

House Criminal Justice Committee re: HB 86 – May 4

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) Strategic Planning – May 4-5

LaCAN Leader Interview – May 6

Meeting with Governor’s Office and Advocacy Center re: HB 86 – May 6

Senate Education Committee re: SB 59 – May 12

Meeting with Jamie Tindle re: LaCAN – May 13

Meeting with Val Hiser and Sen. Heitmeier – May 24

Senate Finance Committee re: HB 1 – May 30

Conference Call re: Region IX LaCAN activities – June 1

House Education Committee re: SB 59

Meeting with Julia Kenny & Mark Thomas re: Family Support & Children's Choice – June 10
Senate Finance Committee re: Public Testimony on HB 1 – June 11
Partners in Policymaking Graduation – June 18
Meeting with Barry Meyer re: Employment education – June 21
OCDD Employment First Work Group – June 21
Admin. on Developmental Disabilities Transition Grant Planning – June 28
OCDD Home and Community Based Services Improvements Work Group – June 29