

Executive Director's Report
April 19-20, 2017 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through February 2017 is included in the packet.

Membership Update

- On February 10th the Governor appointed Sharon Buchert to represent the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs, and Dr. Alan Coulter to represent the Human Development Center. He also reappointed Randall Brown and Tara LeBlanc to represent the Office of Aging and Adult Services.
- On February 24th the Governor appointed Kim Jones to represent the Advocacy Center.

Staff Changes

- Nadine Lege began work with the Council on March 6th in our Contracts' position.

Ad Hoc Committees

Two ad hoc committees met/will meet this quarter:

- The **Planning Ad Hoc Committee** met to develop recommendations for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2018 plan activities. These will be considered by the full Council at the April meeting.
- The **Membership Committee** will meet on April 10th to consider applicants and make recommendations for the full Council's consideration.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

- Nine Regional Legislative Round Tables were held across the state with a total of 534 participants and 34 legislators, legislative assistants and/or BESE members participating. Ten Council members attended. Council staff attended all of these events and presented the information on the State-of-the-State in individual and family supports, employment, and education.

Community Supports

- Advocated for increasing accountability in the Human Services Districts/Authorities, increasing the representation of developmental disabilities on their boards of directors, and establishing a mandatory minimum of each District/Authority's state funds be spent on Act 378 services with Sen. Mills, the sponsor of SB58 which deals with Districts/Authorities.
- Yellow shirt days were held at the Capitol throughout the Special Session with 79 LaCAN members in attendance to communicate the importance of identifying revenue to prevent drastic cuts to home and community-based services. LaCAN recorded 476 confirmed actions by members to legislators regarding the budget/revenue during the Special Session.
- A yellow shirt day will be held on April 5th to communicate the need to fund services for people with developmental disabilities to the Appropriations Sub-Committee on Health and Human Services.
- Successfully advocated with Commissioner of Administration Jay Dardenne to include full funding for Families Helping Families in the Council's budget in the Governor's FY 18 Executive Budget.
- Provided comment at the public hearing on the proposed revisions to the Individual and Family Support Manual.

Education

- Provided recommendations regarding stakeholder input in the development of the state plan, academic assessments, the statewide accountability system, school support and improvement activities, and other provisions on the Governor's Advisory Council on Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

- Advocated for Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to include parents in the special education monitoring system; construct an accountability system with universal design features allowing value added for schools appropriately serving any student, regardless of need and starting achievement levels; require the La. Department of Education (LDOE) to follow the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula in allocating funding to all schools even for the local share portion; align stated priorities with funding distributions related to teacher shortages, behavior and mental health supports, and transition to post-secondary education; specify in the ESSA Plan how LDOE will address the shortage of teachers certified in special education; and, ensure data used in ESSA plan is validated.
- On the Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline, advocated for LDOE to provide information on how data from Local Education Agencies are validated and for the advisory council to focus on recommendations to LDOE/BESE regarding how to support schools implementing their Discipline Plans according to the Model Master Discipline Plan.
- Four yellow shirt days were held this quarter during BESE, Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) and MFP Task Force meetings with a total of 31 LaCAN members in attendance. LaCAN members provided testimony before each of these groups.

Employment

- Advocated for certification of employment support professionals and for a system of quality monitoring and improvement for supported employment provider agencies at the LA Rehabilitation Council meeting.

General

- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - Council's 2017 Legislative/Advocacy Agenda
 - Recruitment of Applicants for Council Membership Vacancies
 - Self-Direction Workshops
 - Council's FFY2016 Annual Report
- Provided information through Facebook on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families, including information on the Special Legislative Session and the upcoming regular session. Increasing an awareness of Developmental Disabilities was highlighted during the month of March.

Collaborative Efforts

Employment First Work Group

- With the support of Council funding, David Hoff, with the University of Massachusetts' Institute for Community Inclusion, provided an overview of Employment First-focused policies and practices, and recommendations for systems change.
- Advocated for the group to focus on six areas: clear policy; resources; rate structures; staff development and competency; provider capacity; and individual service planning.

OCDD Mortality Review Committee

- Of the 41 cases reviewed this quarter, the Committee requested additional information for five cases and noted no issues related to potential abuse/neglect.

OCDD Person Centered Workgroup

- Provided input on making the individual planning process for waiver participants more person-focused.

ABLE Advisory Council

- The La. Office of Student Financial Assistance presented the ABLE website and preliminary investment plan options. The projected start date is in April but this depends on the completion of the website and agreement with Vanguard on the plan options.

Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

- GACDA approved a motion to send a letter to Superintendent John White and BESE recommending the delayed submission of the state's implementation plan for ESSA.

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since January 2, 2017

Orientation for Sharon Buchert – January 5
State Interagency Coordinating Council – January 12
New Council Member Orientation – January 13
Presentation on Council at Partners in Policymaking – January 13
Meeting with Kim Jones and Jeanne Abadie – January 17
Council meeting – January 18-19
Presentation on Council and Legislative agenda at OCDD Central Office Staff mtg – January 23
Meeting with Dr. Rebekah Gee, Michelle Alletto, Mark Thomas, Michelle Hurst – January 24
Legislative Roundtable in Shreveport – January 31
Legislative Roundtable in Madisonville – February 2
Legislative Roundtable in Lake Charles – February 7
Legislative Roundtable in Baton Rouge – February 8
Legislative Roundtable in Gray – February 9
LaCAN Leader Conference Call – February 10
OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – February 14
Employment First Workgroup – February 16
Meeting with Self-Direction Mentors – February 17
Legislative Roundtable in Pineville – February 21
Public Hearing on Proposed Changes to Individual & Family Support Rule – February 24
Planning Ad Hoc Committee – March 6
Presentation on History of Act 378 at Partners in Policymaking – March 10
Staff Retreat – March 13
OCDD/DDC Direct Support Professional Partnership Conference Call – March 17
Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs – March 21
Employment First Workgroup – March 23
Meeting with Senator Mills re: SB58 – April 4