

Executive Director's Report
October 17-18, 2018 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through August 2018 is included in the packet.

Action Plan for FFY19

- The Council Action Plan for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY)19 was submitted electronically to the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) before the deadline of August 15th.

Obligation/Liquidation (Period of Performance) Issue

- We sent a letter to William Kim with the U. S. Office of Grants Management (OGM) on August 15th making the case of why we believe their new interpretation of period of performance is not consistent with federal regulations.
- On September 12th National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) staff and three Council Executive Directors met with Mr. Kim and AIDD officials to present the Councils' position in person of why this new interpretation should not be implemented. Mr. Kim did not provide a response to the Councils' request to maintain the current period of performance, but did commit to take the request to his superior at OGM.

Appropriations

- The President signed the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill for FFY19 which funds DD Councils at \$76 Million, an increase of \$3 Million from FFY18.

Membership Update

- Melissa Bayham, the new Director of LA Rehabilitation Services (LRS), was appointed by the Governor on August 31st to represent that agency.
- Michelle Guillory was appointed on September 17th to represent the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs.

Staff Changes

- Ebony Haven joined us on July 23rd as our new Program Monitor. Her main responsibilities are with LaCAN and Families Helping Families.
- Courtney Ryland and Halie Belin will both join us on October 8th. Courtney will be our new Program Manager over planning, federal reporting, and employment initiatives. Halie will serve in our contracts position.

Staff Professional Development

- Brenton and Shawn attended the AIDD Technical Assistance (TA) Institute in Oxon Hill, MD. Sessions were designed to enhance Council program opportunities, improve fiscal accountability, and discuss federal statutes, regulations and requirements, including AIDD's new interpretation of period of performance.

- Brenton attended the NACDD Annual Conference immediately following the TA Institute. Sessions included information on Councils' roles during disasters, strategies to engage diverse communities, and utilizing data to assist individuals with disabilities to connect with their communities and engage in advocacy.
- A day-long staff retreat was held on August 27th where staff discussed ways to improve our operations.

Ad Hoc Committees/Workgroups

- **The Employment Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee** met on September 11th to develop strategies for the Council's employment advocacy activities.
- **The Individual and Family Support and Consumer Care Resources Workgroup** met on September 17th and will meet again on October 4th to review the policies and practices within these two programs and make recommendations to address issues and concerns identified. The workgroup's recommendations will be presented to the Act 378 Subcommittee on October 17th.
- **The Act 833 Ad Hoc Committee** met three times this quarter and developed recommendations that will be shared with the Education/Employment Committee on October 17th.

LaCAN

- LaCAN and the Council lost one of our advocacy leaders and friends, Duane Ebarb, who passed away in September. Duane served as our Region 7 LaCAN Leader for over twelve years and was well known and loved far beyond the disability community.
- The Council's Annual Legislative Kick Off was held for our LaCAN advocacy leaders and the Families Helping Families (FHF) Directors. Information was shared and discussed on the state-of-the-state in home and community-based services, employment, and education. The participants made recommendations for the Council to consider for its legislative advocacy agenda.
- Training for our LaCAN leaders was provided to enhance their skills in developing and supporting grassroots advocacy members as well as developing relationships with policymakers.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Submitted written comments to OCDD on the draft NOW amendment that includes the new Complex Care Service that is being added to the NOW.
- Sent a [letter to Louisiana Department of Health \(LDH\) Deputy Secretary Mark Thomas](#) recommending LDH include language in the contracts with the Local Governing Entities (LGEs) requiring they each budget more than the nine percent required minimum on Act 378 DD services to ensure the full nine percent is actually expended. The amount budgeted greater than nine percent could be negotiated by LDH and the LGEs; the Council's goal is simply to budget enough to ensure the full nine percent is expended.
- Advocated for the following with OCDD's Assistant Secretary, Julie Foster Hagan:
 - Consistent implementation of Individual and Family Support policy across LGEs. As a result, joint training by OCDD and the Council will be conducted for LGE DD staff in three locations in November.

- For OCDD to establish criteria to determine which children ages 0-3 would be eligible to be screened for waiver services. OCDD is working on this now.
- For individuals who live in the home of a waiver recipient to serve as that person's DSP. This would help alleviate the DSP workforce shortage.
- Advocated for support of funding for the following with LDH Secretary, Dr. Rebekah Gee:
 - Restoration of waiver provider rates
 - Expansion of State Personal Assistance Services (SPAS) program to serve those on waiting list
 - Rate increase for EPSDT-Personal Care Services (also implementing self-direction in this program)
 - Funding and implementation of TEFRA

Education

- A [letter was sent to LDOE Superintendent John White](#) requesting information regarding how LDOE intends to:
 - Prioritize encouragement of teacher candidates to pursue coursework leading to special education certification
 - Address the shortage of school psychologists given the decision to cease funding to the Louisiana School Psychology Internship Consortium (LAS*PIC)
 - Assist school systems in implementing evidence-based behavioral interventions given its decision to cease funding the Teams Intervening Early to Reach All Students (TIERS) program.
 - Read [LDOE's response](#).
- Advocated for BESE to consider revising Bulletins to clarify Act 833 promotion guidance and direct the LDOE to provide additional guidance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) on implementation of Act 833 relative to grade promotion. BESE chose to not clarify language in the Bulletins. LDOE indicated it would send LEAs guidance on promotion relative to Act 833 of 2014.
- Advocated for the Accountability Commission to consider:
 - not endorsing an increase in the number of students at alternative schools (i.e., the "n" value) from 10 to 30 as criteria for an alternative school to receive a school accountability score;
 - defining which schools will be eligible for the alternative school accountability measure and how these measures will influence administrative decisions for students;
 - endorsing the core credit index for all high schools rather than just alternative schools; and,
 - the evidence indicating students sent to alternative schools do not receive adequate instruction and access needed supports and services.

The Accountability Commission endorsed the full slate of recommendations for using a different accountability measure for alternative schools than is used in traditional schools offered by the Louisiana Department of Education.

- Advocated for the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) to consider not endorsing increasing the n-size required for alternative schools to receive an accountability score from 10 to 30. SEAP received the report without an endorsement or objection to the recommended proposed changes.

Employment

- Advocated for the provision of financial incentives to serve people with the most significant support needs with the new LRS Director, Melissa Bayham. She indicated she is willing to pursue this and agreed to research how it could best be implemented. She also committed to provide training for LRS staff in better serving people with developmental disabilities.

General

- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - [2017 Annual Report](#)
 - [Partners in Policymaking Graduates and Recruiting for 2019 Class](#)
 - [Customized Employment Training](#)
 - [Nominations for GOLD Awards](#)
 - [Employment Resources and Training](#)
 - [Recruiting Applicants for 2019 Partners Class](#)
 - [#HireMyStrength Focus of NDEAM](#)
- Provided information through Facebook and Twitter on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Collaborative Efforts

OCDD System Transformation Core Work Group

- Provided feedback on the following:
 - The new Complex Care Service
 - Waiver certification flowchart
 - Criteria to be used to determine which children ages 0-3 are eligible for waiver screening
 - Stakeholder Summit

Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs (GACDA)

- Passed motions to ask Governor Edwards to support:
 - Legislation requiring cameras and microphones in all special education self-contained classrooms in LA.
 - Continued discussion and efforts to implement and monitor Least Restrictive Environment in LA's public schools.
- The Employment Committee was dissolved and a Housing Committee was created.

NACDD Executive Director Obligation/Liquidation Work Group

- Provided input on the information to be covered at the meeting with AIDD and OGM.

FEMA/DD Council Regional Meeting in Dallas, TX

- Educated FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialist on DD Councils
- Learned about FEMA's new plan to provide disability training to all of their staff so disability services will be integrated into all of their operations. A handful of Disability Integration Specialists will still be deployed to each disaster to provide technical assistance to the leaders of each division. First test of this model was Hurricane Florence.

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since June 29, 2018

LDH Press Conference on Elimination of the Waiver Waiting List – July 16
Council Meeting – July 18-19
Governor's Office of Disability Affairs Conference – July 26
Meeting w/ Julie Foster Hagan – July 30
Interviewed by Lillian DeJean – August 2
OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – August 7
Conference call w/ DDC Executive Directors re: obligation/liquidation issues – August 13
Meeting w/ Community Provider Assn. and advocates – August 14
NACDD Conference Call re: obligation/liquidation issues – August 14
NACDD Workgroup Conference Call re: obligation/liquidation issues – August 15
Staff Retreat – August 27
Meeting w/ Julie Foster Hagan – August 29
Conference call w/ Tanya Murphy re: Individual and Family Support – September 10
Employment Advocacy Ad Hoc Committee – September 11
Legislative Kickoff for LaCAN Leaders and FHF Directors – September 13
Individual and Family Support Workgroup – September 17
Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs – September 18
Meeting w/ LRS and WINTAC on customized employment – September 20
Meeting w/ FEMA Regional Disability Integration Specialist and 3 DD Councils in Dallas – September 25
Meeting w/ Melissa Bayham and Bambi Polotzola re: LRS funding – September 27
Meeting w/ Dr. Rebekah Gee and her Leadership Team – September 27
OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – October 2