

Executive Director's Report
January 16-17, 2019 Council Meeting

Budget

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

Obligation/Liquidation (Period of Performance) Issue

- There has been no positive news on this issue. The Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AIDD) and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) are apparently moving forward with their new interpretation of period of performance and are working on guidance documents for Councils. Once the guidance documents are received, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) plans to schedule a conference call for all Executive Directors to review the information and discuss next steps.
- Since negotiations with AIDD and OGM have seemingly failed, it appears our only option would be to seek a Congressional remedy. This has been and will continue to be discussed.
- We have already taken steps to put the Council's budget in the best possible posture to mitigate against any potential loss of access to federal funds if this new federal interpretation is implemented.

Membership Update

- April Dunn's name was submitted to the Governor's Office for reappointment.
- Dee Budgewater resigned from Medicaid to accept a position with the State of Texas. Jen Katzman will be the new Medicaid representative on the Council and is awaiting appointment by the Governor.

Staff Changes

- Hannah Jenkins joined our staff on December 10th as our new Executive Secretary/Administrative Assistant. She is a great addition to our team and I look forward to you all meeting her at the January meeting.

Staff Development

- Brenton Andrus, Courtney Ryland, and Rodney Anthony attended the APSE Employment First Conference in Baton Rouge.
- Courtney Ryland, Brenton Andrus, Ebony Haven, Rodney Anthony and I attended the Council-sponsored Customized Employment training by Dr. Steven Hunt in Baton Rouge.
- Courtney Ryland, Ebony Haven and Brenton Andrus attended the Act 378 Training in Baton Rouge.

Ad Hoc Committees/Workgroups

- **The Act 686 Ad Hoc Committee** met and developed recommendations which will be shared with the Education/Employment Committee at its January meeting.

LaCAN

- Fact sheets were developed on all five of the issues the Council adopted for its legislative advocacy agenda and are available on our website [here](#).
- Our LaCAN Leaders are in the process of scheduling legislative visits and planning the 2019 Legislative Roundtables. The schedule of Roundtables can also be found on our website [here](#). Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.
- After many months of planning, an announcement of the Council's switch to VoterVoice was sent to our LaCAN members and LaDDC News subscribers on November 26th with an email to enroll in the new system on November 29th. Reminders will be sent on a weekly basis until

January. Our LaCAN Leaders are assisting with the transition by contacting members in their regions to help with the sign-ups.

- Training for our LaCAN leaders was provided on November 8th in Baton Rouge to ensure they fully understand and can share the issues on the Council's legislative agenda.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Conducted training on the History of Act 378, its guiding principles, the purpose of the program, and use of funds, in collaboration with OCDD and OBH, to DD and Behavioral Health staff from all of the Human Services Districts/Authorities. A total of 104 staff attended and evaluation results were overwhelmingly positive.
- Advocated for the following with OCDD's Assistant Secretary, Julie Foster Hagan:
 - For individuals who live in the home of a waiver recipient to serve as that person's Direct Support Professional (DSP). Ms. Foster Hagan said her office is not opposed to allowing this but a waiver amendment that must be approved by CMS would be required. She will share a timeline on when this may be possible at the January meeting.
 - For the 219 individuals receiving vocational services with Act 378 Individual and Family Support funding to be screened for waiver services. 136 have been screened to date.
 - To ensure that ongoing Act 378 services are not considered as long term supports in the waiver screening process.
- Sent a [letter to Julie Foster Hagan](#) from the Council requesting the elimination of Family Cost Participation (FCP) in EarlySteps without changing eligibility criteria. Subsequently advocated with other EarlySteps advocates for elimination of FCP with LDH Secretary, Dr. Rebekah Gee. Dr. Gee agreed to compromise by raising the income limit for when FCP would be imposed. Negotiations continue regarding the actual income thresholds and maximum payments for families.

Education

- Successfully advocated for several positions of the Louisiana Education Equity Coalition in developing potential alternatives to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) revision of Bulletin 111, The Louisiana School, District, and State Accountability System related to the 'n-size' threshold for schools to receive a school performance score.
 - Specifically, the Coalition agreed to not seek alternatives which would allow exemptions for schools exclusively serving students with significant cognitive disabilities or to promote a mechanism to allow school systems to receive a waiver from having school performance scores calculated and used in school accountability.
 - The Coalition remains opposed to reducing the 'n-size' threshold for determining whether a school performance score will be calculated.

Employment

- Sent a [letter to LA Rehabilitation Services \(LRS\) Director Melissa Bayham](#) advocating for competency-based certification of all Employment Support vendors.
- Advocated in person with Ms. Bayham for:
 - all Employment Support vendors to be certified through competency-based measures (not just Customized Employment vendors)
 - LRS staff to be educated in serving persons with severe developmental disabilities. Ms. Bayham advised that LRS is meeting with OCDD to develop trainings. Dr. Steven Hunt was recommended for LRS training. Ms. Bayham was interested in the possibility of Dr. Hunt presenting at the LA Rehabilitation Association conference in February 2019.

General

- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - [Council's 2019 Legislative Agenda to be Presented at Roundtables](#)

- [OCDD's Value-Based Payments for Waiver Providers](#)
- [Highlighting Successful Advocacy through #LaCANAdvocacyWorks](#)
- [Council's Switch to VoterVoice](#)
- [The Council is Hiring](#)
- [Claim IRWE; Increase Benefits](#)
- [Relationships & Intimacy: Preventing Exploitation Training Opportunities](#)
- [New Director at LA Rehabilitation Services](#)
- Provided information through Facebook and Twitter on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families.
 - Most notably was our National Disability Employment Awareness Month Campaign (NDEAM) which reached 14,213 people with 1,637 clicks/actions. The #HireMyStrengths campaign was a component of NDEAM and reached an additional 10,730 people with 1,244 clicks/actions.
 - This quarter we began introducing our Council members on social media.
 - We also launched our #LaCANAdvocacyWorks campaign to highlight the Council's successful advocacy efforts. We encourage Council members who have personally benefited or have friends who have done so to share their stories on social media with the #LaCANAdvocacyWorks.

Collaborative Efforts

OCDD System Transformation Core Work Group

- Provided feedback on the following:
 - Value-Based Payments for Home and Community Based waiver providers
 - Transition from a Supports Waiver to a ROW
 - Act 378 services being considered in the waiver screening process
- Received updates on the following:
 - Exceptional needs definition for children ages 0-3 eligible for waiver screening – must have hospitalization of 90 days, but the 90 days do not have to be continuous.
 - ICF Population receiving waiver offers
 - Complex Care Service – CMS is asking questions but has not “stopped the clock” on the 90 days they have to approve the waiver amendment – still on track for January at this time
- OCDD and OAAS will hold a Stakeholder Summit in Baton Rouge on February 11 to provide information (facts, budget figures, data, etc.) to advocates that may be helpful during the legislative session.

My Choice Louisiana Advisory Council

- After an investigation of Louisiana's mental health service system, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) concluded that the State unnecessarily relies on nursing facilities to serve adults with serious mental illness instead of serving them in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs as required by the ADA. The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) signed an agreement with the DOJ to:
 - divert individuals with serious mental illness away from inappropriate nursing facility placements by requiring comprehensive evaluations and services designed to enable them to live in community-based settings; and
 - identify people with serious mental illness who have been admitted to nursing facilities but are able to and would like to transition to the community, and provide them with transition and discharge planning and community-based services sufficient to meet their needs.
- The program was named My Choice Louisiana and an advisory council was established to:

- advise LDH in the continued development of the implementation plan (throughout at least the 5-year term of the Agreement), and
- ensure that the appropriate stakeholder voices are being heard throughout the implementation process.
- At the first meeting the group reviewed and provided feedback on the draft implementation plan
- LDH will host regional meetings around the state to hear from stakeholders and spread awareness of the implementation of this program.
- LDH will maintain a public website where periodic updates and relevant documents will be posted

Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline (ACSBD)

- Advocated for the ACSBD Data Quality Workgroup to recommend the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) form a study group in 2019 to review and revise the existing behavior infraction codes in the Student Information System (SIS).
- Advocated for the Positive and Proactive Practices Workgroup of the ACSBD to consider recommending LDOE include the input and perspectives of parents of students, particularly parents of students with disabilities, in developing decisions related to school practices and for the target audience of LDOE training sessions on evidence-based behavioral practices to include parents, particularly parents of students with disabilities. The Workgroup made three recommendations for LDOE for the full ACSBD to consider:
 - For LDOE to ensure every decision related to school practices involves perspectives and input from a wide range of education practitioners currently in the field.
 - For LDOE to provide professional development in evidence-based behavior practices and classroom management strategies on an on-going basis.
 - For LDOE to develop a multi-agency partnership including other state agencies responsible for serving students with emotional and behavioral challenges (e.g., OBH, OCDD, DCFS, OJJ, etc.) to offer training and resources on evidence-based practices for children with challenging behavior that targets families and education practitioners.
- Advocated for the ACSBD to consider concerns related to pending changes to Alternative Schools accountability measures. The ACSBD voted to recommend LDOE continue evaluating the plan on a periodic basis, specifically to analyze disproportionality of subgroups of students (i.e., disability, ethnicity, socio-economic status and English Language Learners) and to address any disparities as needed.

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)

- Passed a motion to send a letter to Julie Foster Hagan and request a follow-up meeting with Dr. Gee requesting the elimination of Family Cost Participation without changing eligibility criteria for EarlySteps.
- Served on the Nominating Committee to select a slate of officers for the SICC's consideration in January.

Meetings Attended (by Executive Director) Since October 3, 2018

Orientation for Michelle Guillory – October 3

Individual and Family Support/Consumer Care Resources Workgroup – October 4

Partners Selection Committee – October 10

State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC) – October 11

Council Meeting – October 17-18

Meeting w/ Dr. Gee and EarlySteps advocates re: Family Cost Participation (FCP) – October 30
Meeting w/ Julie Foster Hagan & EarlySteps advocates on FCP – November 2
Meeting with Chris Rodriguez – November 7
LaCAN Leader Training – November 8
Customized Employment Training – November 15
Act 378 Training for Local Governing Entity Staff in Pineville – November 16
My Choice LA Advisory Council – November 26
Governor’s Outstanding Leadership in Disability Awards Ceremony – November 28
Act 378 Training for Local Governing Entity Staff in Baton Rouge – November 29
Meeting with Partners’ Coordinator Liz Gary – November 30
OCDD System Transformation Core Stakeholders Group – December 4
Meeting with Julie Foster Hagan – December 5
Meeting with Baton Rouge Recreation Dept, April Dunn, Bambi Polotzola – December 6
SICC Nominating Committee – December 7
Act 378 Training for Local Governing Entity Staff in New Orleans – December 11
Meeting w/ Sides Employment Services re: hiring person w/ disability – December 13
Governor’s Advisory Council on Disability Affairs – December 18