

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council  
Self Determination and Community Inclusion  
Committee  
April 19, 2021

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Good morning. I am unable to start any video.

JILL HANO: I started mine. I don't know if it's working. It's still un-abled by the host.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Working on it. Just give us a second. Is anyone able to start their screens now? Or their cameras, I should say? There you go.

JILL HANO: Can y'all see me, cause I don't see me.

BRENTON ANDRUS: We can see you, Jill. Mike, it does look like you have a quorum.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: All right. Good morning everybody. Sorry for the delay, technical issue this morning. Welcome everybody. It's 12:05 already. Call the meeting to order. We'll jump on into the January meeting summary approval of the meeting summary for January. If everybody can take a look at that. And after everybody's had a chance to review, I would accept a motion from the floor to approve it.

KIM BASILE: It's Kim Basile. I will make a motion to approve the minutes.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Hi, Kim. Glad you could join us today. So we have a motion on the floor to approve the minutes from Kim. Do we have a second? Or do we have any objections? We have no objections. We will let the motion carry. And the summary is approved. Next, we'll move onto the noncontractual -- let me go back to some meeting guidelines. Committee members are present when you have your cameras on and your name showing. Please keep mikes muted unless you are called on by the chairperson. You can electronically raise your hand and request to speak. Attendees, once you're recognized to speak by the chair your mike will be turned on. After speaking the mike will be returned to mute. Just a little housekeeping that I jumped ahead

of. So back to the noncontractual updates. First thing on the agenda is I think we are going to jump to Jen due to time constrictions. Are you available?

JEN KATZMAN: Yeah. Sorry. Hold on. Let me put on my camera. Just realized it's not on. Apologies. Specifically I am going to, which one would you like me to take first? The 421 update or another item?

BRENTON ANDRUS: 421 please.

JEN KATZMAN: You bet. Hi everyone. So for act 421, children's Medicaid option, our TEFRA like program. In Medicaid that we've been trying to get off the ground for a while now. And there is our website. Thanks for sharing. So this is our website, and this is where we will be posting all updates and the registration whenever we do get approval for it to launch. So right now where it stands is still with our federal partners at the Centers for Medicare Medicaid services or CMS. We have been in constant contact with them. In fact, I emailed them Friday with another submission requirement that they have. And also, they emailed me this morning to conform receipt. I have requested them to give a status update on our approval. They do not have a timeline yet. It's still undergoing their internal review. Unfortunately, I don't have a timeline for when we will be able to launch because it does require that federal approval before we can open it up for people to register and enroll. So as soon as I get more information from them, I will let y'all know. And we will post it on our website.

Our plan is that once we get indication of approval, we will have an initial registration period of a month and that will be announced through many different pathways. We will do a press release, we'll put our website, we'll send emails to you and all of our stakeholder groups. We will push the messaging out in as many different pathways as we can. Put it on our social media. Just continue to look at those places like our Medicaid Facebook page or our website for those announcements as they come. And once we get that approval, we will be able to push out the announcement

to start the registration. And once we get through the registration period then we'll be able to start processing the requests for services so that we can send out service offers, and people can start applying for Medicaid for this program. That's the plan. Any questions on implementation?

EBONY HAVEN: Christina has her hand raised in the chat.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Go ahead Christina.

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Can you guys hear me? My comments are on partners. It can wait.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Okay. Just raise your hand again when we get to the partners.

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Sure.

JEN KATZMAN: And for those who have been tracking the budget, I just wanted to let y'all know this program, act 421, is still in the FY22 budget request for Medicaid at a total annual appropriation of 27.2 million. That has not changed from our previous update.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Matthew, did you have your hand up?

MATHEW ROVIRA: I had it momentarily up. And I lowered it. Jen, I know this may be an elementary question, so I apologize. Could you just give a brief overview. I did see it's for individuals with developmental disabilities under the age of 19. But what can these services be used for? I don't want you to go into too much detail if you have done this already.

JEN KATZMAN: It's okay. I do want to make a clarification though. It's not for individuals with developmental disabilities under 19. It's for individuals with disabilities. It's more comprehensive than that. So very quick overview of what a TEFRA or TEFRA like program encompasses. And we named ours act 421 children's Medicaid option after stakeholder feedback on some naming ideas because it's not technically TEFRA and we want to make that very clear. It is a TEFRA like program. And so what these programs

offer is access to Medicaid. A door to Medicaid for individuals who have a disability who are under the age of 19 who would otherwise not qualify for Medicaid because of their parental income. So because of this program they can gain access to Medicaid services and their parental income is disregarded. Basically only the income of the child is counted. And that is because they qualified based on other disability requirements. So either they have a developmental disability, and they need that intermediate care facility level of care. Or maybe have a physical or mental disability that helps them to qualify for nursing facility level of care or hospital level of care. And we have an assessment process for all of those institutional levels of care that are prerequisites for gaining eligibility into this program. We worked on those level of care requirements with our stakeholder group. And what it boils down to if the person is pursuing the developmental disability pathway, they will go through the normal process they do today as if they were applying for a waiver. They have to get a statement of approval for the developmental disability and then they get their doctor to complete the 490L which certifies they meet that intermediate care facility level of care.

If they're going the other pathway for physical or mental disability where they might meet a nursing facility or hospital level of care, we have an assessment performed by a registered nurse. And all of that is done through the local governing entity. So the human service districts and authorities. And all that is kind of routed through the same place so families who are most accustomed maybe to the developmental disability process don't have to go anywhere new. It all goes through the local governing entities now. We decided to have that be the point of entry for this program as well to make it a little easier. Again, I want to reiterate this is not a home and community-based services waiver. No extra services. No home and community based services. It is

simply to access the core benefits and services in Medicaid. That is how we built it. And it will be in managed care. I do want to reiterate that for families who are not familiar with managed care. This program is a mandatory managed care program for cost savings. I think there was something in the chat. Nope. Not about me. Any other questions on act 421?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Okay. Thank you, Jennifer.

JEN KATZMAN: Sure. Did you want me to touch on the budget Michael?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Sorry, Mike. We did have a hand raised. I don't know if it went down. I believe Jamie Dawson has her hand raised.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Go ahead Jamie.

JAIME DAWSON: Can y'all hear me?

SPEAKER: Yep.

JAIME DAWSON: I just have a quick question about the act. My son currently has, well he was able to obtain Medicaid under the waiver we received a year or so ago, I believe. But the Medicaid he has is some type of Medicaid that we don't even qualify for many things. So should I reapply for this whenever it becomes, like, to get full access to Medicaid? Cause right now we're very, very limited.

JEN KATZMAN: Hi, Jaime. Thanks for your question. And I would love to get your information offline so we can help you. But the short answer to the question is if you otherwise qualify for Medicaid, you will not qualify for act 421. The way we designed the program it is in our hierarchy of eligibility it is at the last stop. So if you qualify for Medicaid in any other full benefit program then you won't qualify under act 421 unfortunately. And that's because we want to make sure that the people who do get Medicaid through other programs don't utilize the services under act 421 for those who have been waiting for Medicaid.

JAIME DAWSON: Yeah.

JEN KATZMAN: I think the question you have about the limited Medicaid. If you're in a waiver, if you're in a developmental disability waiver, Julie, correct me

if I am wrong, but my understanding is anyone in a waiver gets full Medicaid coverage, right?

JAIME DAWSON: Yeah. Definitely need some help then.

JEN KATZMAN: Send us your information. We would like to help you.

JAIME DAWSON: Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

EBONY HAVEN: Liz has her hand raised.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: You have the floor.

LIZ GARY: Thank you, Mike. I just wanted to state when I heard Jamie talking, I'm guessing that she might have a behavioral health card and does not possibly have either the managed care or legacy card and that's what is confusing. I've been talking to a lot of families recently who are having the same situation and don't realize the behavioral health is not their actual Medicaid card. That could be part of the program.

JEN KATZMAN: Thanks, Liz. We'll definitely circle with Jamie offline. That could be it, but in case it's not. We might need to send out some messaging to families anyway if they're running into that issue.

LIZ GARY: Yeah, Jen. It really has become a big issue. I didn't realize it until I saw some stuff on Facebook that families are not realizing one that behavioral health card is not their full Medicaid card. And two a lot of them don't have a full Medicaid card. Either one their legacy. Mostly because their legacy, if they're managed care they mostly have it. But some don't even realize why they have two cards. Definitely some more possible information that needs to be out to families.

JEN KATZMAN: We will definitely work on some messaging there. And we have-- there should be a fee for service or legacy Medicaid card that families get so I'm going to check on that too.

LIZ GARY: Thank you.

JEN KATZMAN: Is there another question? I thought I saw maybe a hand raised.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I believe that's all. Jen, did you say you were going to cover the budget?

JEN KATZMAN: I will definitely kick it off, but I think Julie has some things too. Generally speaking, the Medicaid budget for FY22 this year going through session it's intact. So due to the covid public health emergency we have received federal funding, additional federal funding due to the public health emergency. And that has allowed us to keep current services intact. However, what it also has allowed the state to do is make other agencies whole that were having a shortage due to the public health emergency and running into some revenue problems. And so what that means is we have not been able to fund a lot of additional things like we would otherwise hope for with the federal dollars we received. Those dollars are important to the state to keep it afloat and keep it running for all benefits and services. So if you run into some of those issues that might be why. Just thought it might be helpful to understand that context. That basically the Medicaid program is helping the whole state. And so I also wanted to clearly state that right now we don't have any major cuts and we will be watching that very closely. And I think that's my overview from a high level. Julie, is there anything else from the OCDD side?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Just to reinforce what you said, there's no reductions in our home and community-based waivers. There is some discussion happening now about, it will have to play its way out through legislative process, about potentially some additional funds to help support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive dental services. So we are not sure what that's going to look like, but something we are closely watching. They are talking about trying to find some additional funds to cover one is children who need to receive anesthesia for dental services and needing to take a look at that. And the other is looking at being able to have comprehensive dental service for adults with intellectual developmental disabilities. We are closely working with Representative Butler and there was an OCDD, our

state advisory council developed a task force, and that task force is what's been helping provide information related to that. So we don't really have a final of what that will look like. But we do know there is conversations happening during the session right now about that.

And then on, the only other thing I will add on the federal budget side of things that we've gotten a lot of questions about there is in the American Rescue Act there was an enhanced, a 10 percent enhanced federal match for home and community-based services. Have gotten a lot of questions and a lot of suggestions from folks, and we're happy to take those thoughts and suggestions, but we are still waiting for CMS to send us some guidance on what things we can and can't spend that additional match, those additional match dollars on. There was a CMS call last week with states and basically, they said we know you guys all want this and we're working to get guidance out as soon as possible. So while we are hearing from folks and gathering suggestions on things, we will have to wait and see what that technical guidance is before we can come up with a final plan in the department for what we would be able to do with those additional enhanced match, potentially enhanced matched dollars. That's all I'll share kind of more specific on the DD side. And Jen, feel free to correct anything I said that was wrong.

JEN KATZMAN: One hundred percent correct. And I'm glad you remembered about the adjustment because that was important. The other thing I just want to mention for folks who are not aware, the public health emergency was extended today. Yeah. So it was set to expire tomorrow so the Biden administration has extended it another 90 days. We fully expected that. That's not really a surprise. But we just wanted to let you know it did officially get extended. And the Biden administration has informed us it is likely, although not promised, that they will continue to extend it through the end of this calendar year. So we just watch to see how that unfolds cause it must be

renewed every 90 days per federal law. If they want to continue it, I mean. So we're watching that. But it did get extended today. So we will have another 90 days.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: That's good news. Thanks. Julie, do you have anything else for us today?

JEN KATZMAN: I have one more thing, sorry. For those, cause I don't think we met since we restarted this, but we have to, in Medicaid, start getting our eligibility processes running again for in preparation of when the public health emergency will end. And so in order to do that we have restarted the renewal process. Many of you might be starting to get mail outs from us about your renewals and renewal packages with some prefilled forms to verify. So I wanted to let you know that that is correct. We are starting to send those out again. However, if someone is not eligible or if they don't respond or if information they provide shows us they no longer qualify for Medicaid we are not disenrolling right now. We're still maintaining all eligibility due to the requirements of the families first corona virus response act. Which says that we cannot disenroll anyone who was eligible as of March 18th, 2020. We're maintaining that eligibility. Only a few limited exceptions to that rule. Some of the exceptions include if the person is out of state. If they pass away. Or if they request closure. And also if the enrollment was due to an error, we can disenroll. There's a few exceptions. We're also now allowed to move people between programs. So I wanted to let you know that you may be seeing some eligibility changes if we see that you now qualify for a different program like the Medicare savings program. That's a change from previously for us. Basically the whole point of this is to let you know you're going to start to see more eligibility traffic in the mail from Medicaid. Please pay attention to your mail and please help other people know to pay attention to their mail. We're trying to push out communication campaigns around and

redo the check your mail campaign now that we're kickstarting that off again. So please help us spread the word because we don't want anyone to miss an important letter that affects their eligibility in the long-term.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Matthew has his hand raised.

MATHEW ROVIRA: Thanks. Jen and Julie, thank you so much for the update. It's both a question and sort of a comment. On the question side, Julie you mentioned the 10 percent F map bump that was recently passed in Congress and y'all are waiting with FEMA guidelines and hopefully those come quick. My question to you, will that take legislative approval in order to, assuming those guidelines are favorable and y'all can do some things with the funding, would it require legislative approval. That was my question. So do we have to wait till July, perhaps, to utilize those funds.

And then the next thing is I know the Community Provider Association as well the Arc of Louisiana and Supportive Independent Living network as well as the DD Council last year are trying to seek additional funding for rate reimbursement. We are absolutely, just a situational awareness, struggling with finding field workers or direct support workers in the community. Particularly in the Baton Rouge and Lake Charles regions. I would say those regions in particular are extremely, extremely difficult. So that was my point to you, does it require legislative approval to use those funds. And I just wanted to let you know the difficulty we're having with finding labor currently.

JEN KATZMAN: Yeah. And Julie, let's tag team this one. I can say for your first question the ten percent home and community-based F map increase it's kind of-- first I will say it depends on what CMS guidance says and comes out we can and cannot do. It's not allowed to supplant current services. The only thing we've seen so far it can't supplant current services. So there's a lot of guidance we need. Depending on what we get out of that, I would say most of our coverage

and services in Medicaid can be done internally without legislative action. But that's not to say that all of them can be done without legislative action. That's the only reason I have that caveat. So if it was a new benefit or service nine times out of ten, we can do that in Medicaid through our rule making and waiver process. But there are always exceptions where we would require legislation and so then we would run into some barriers. On the budget side however, this is a F map increase. We could, it would require legislative action to increase the budget authority on our federal line probably if we don't have enough already there. And if that does happen that will either be a budget adjustment, a VA7 through our joint legislative committee on the budget. Or we can settle through the supplemental appropriations act at the end of next year. I say that to tell you that we could find a pathway to adjust our federal financing if it was found that we didn't have enough authority already in our budget. But there's multiple ways to do it. But the part about the services, it really just depends on the CMS guidance whether we would need like a bill or something like that. So that's why we're very anxious to get that CMS guidance very quickly. Before we go into the CSW, the rate issue, Julie, did I misstate anything.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: No.

JEN KATZMAN: And actually I'm going to defer to Julie on other piece because I think she has a lot more knowledge than I do.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: The only thing I'll add, and I was going to talk briefly about the listening sessions we had. We heard from a lot of folks just kind of one of those requests being some way we can help. If there would be a way to use those funds to help with the direct support workforce shortage area, we definitely heard that feedback from families and providers alike. And a lot of discussion too about how we make sure that that goes to the direct support workers. And so we have heard that regularly and we had started internal

conversations about what that may or may not look like again. We will have to get the technical guidance to see exactly what it says. But we have started our internal conversations about what some things we might want to propose. That as well as other-- depending on how much money it is, depending on what the guidelines say, we have some different ideas about things that might potentially be helpful to the service delivery system. We will definitely continue to have more opportunities to hear from folks as we get that back from FEMA.

MATHEW ROVIRA: Julie, thank you very much.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: The other thing, quickly, Matt, you know, I don't know how much you guys pay attention to the federal legislation, but I can say that President Biden has said that he wants to have an infusion of federal funds specifically for the direct support workforce. He has listed the workforce challenges as one of his major initiatives in his first hundred days. So I don't know a lot more about that. But I know through my national state DD director workgroup there's been a lot of conversation about the Biden Administration trying to make sure that states have access to funding to help with those workforce strategies. We're paying close attention to that. There's some different federal legislation out there that's being batted around. I haven't seen anything specifically filed yet. I've heard of some on the horizon potentially to help with that workforce so we will be keeping a close eye.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Julie. Do we have any other questions for Julie or Jen?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Mike, do you want me to provide my other update on the noncontractual update?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. I'm sorry. Feel free.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: That's okay. So kind of along those lines, the covid 19 and the waiver updates, we held two listening sessions last week. We had about 200 people on our provider-oriented call and over 430

people on our family and advocate call. We were really, really excited and got a lot of very positive feedback about those listening sessions. We gave some information about the flexibilities and/or exceptions we had in place during covid. Shared some information with folks. And then just really used a forum-- and something CMS has done recently, just sort of opened it up and ask families to share with us what worked about the exceptions in flexibilities, recommendations or thoughts they might have. Again, very, very positively received. Several emails afterwards saying that families felt like they had a voice and people in Baton Rouge were listening. Even if we can't do everything exactly cause we might have person who says I think I need to do it this way and another who says I think I need to do it this way. But taking all that into consideration we really have listened to people. We are still getting some suggestions in through our OCDDinfo@la.gov email address. And we're compiling those and then internally we'll be having discussions of exactly where we want to go, how we want to move forward. And that means making any waiver amendment changes. And so laying those out. And I will be sharing those once we have our final decision about that. But very, very positive and thanks for any of you who participated. I think the format is definitely one we will look at using again in the future. Especially as we continue to get our technical skills down a little bit better in terms of running webinars.

Our next step, again, will be that we'll be moving forward with making some wavier changes. I'm not prepared today to say exactly what those are. But most high importance to people were having family members in some way or another continue to be paid caregivers. That was probably the one that we heard the most about. But we also heard some on other areas as well. Things like the virtual visits and what not. And so we will be, like I said, putting together all those suggestions and then the feedback in terms of where we go next.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Julie, I know that Representative

Turner has a bill out there. I didn't know if y'all had any conversations about that piece of legislation.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: House bill 204.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. I wasn't sure if y'all had been having those conversations. Cause I know it would, I guess, legislatively extend some of these exceptions permanently or make them permanent. I didn't know if the department has been in conversations with Representative Turner or involved with that.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: We haven't yet. I think we have a meeting scheduled tomorrow with him. Will be the first time we've met with him. I know the provider association shared with me that they plan to request that legislation.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Got you.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Any other questions on that?

JILL HANO: Kelly Monroe said that meeting is tomorrow.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Jill. Any other questions?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Moving to covid 19, just a quick update. Last we met we were kind of just getting started on our vaccination efforts. So just to share with you guys an update. We now have 45 percent of our waiver participants have been vaccinated, which is an awesome number. But we still have work to do. We still have about 17 percent who would like to be vaccinated and haven't been yet. We're working on helping make sure we can get them scheduled. Different regions have different activities going on to help those that are homebound or can't get to a clinic to be able to get vaccinated and we're seeing more efforts there. Just wanted to put that plug there. That's for our participants.

We've also been tracking the provider numbers. And so for our provider agencies, this is statewide, provider agencies statewide we're seeing there is 21 percent of the direct support workforce has been vaccinated. And about 20 percent of our support coordinators have been vaccinated. So we're continuing

to look at that and we look at it every couple weeks by region to see where we might need to put more efforts out. Now that it's open it's pretty easy thing to change now that it's opened up. For a long time it was just that we didn't have enough supply and now I think we don't have enough demand. The supply has outdone the demand now. It's fairly easy I think to get an appointment within a day or two at some place pretty close by. So we expect to continue to see those numbers increase pretty rapidly for folks who want that.

And then the last thing I had on here request an update on was the visual services workgroup update. So OCDD had put together a visual services workgroup and I think some folks from DD Council are actually members on our workgroup. Want to thank the folks who participate in that. Where those workgroup came from was from a suggestion from the Developmental Disabilities Council. We had done sort of a graphic that helped to sort of walk people through from the point of receiving a waiver offer to the point of certification. Or actually from the point of SUN screening, I think. And so we got some positive feedback on that and said it would be helpful if we had other kind of info graphics to help explain the process, different processes within our developmental disabilities section. So we put together a workgroup and that workgroup has been looking at nailing down kind of what are the most important services that we want to focus on first. We are working on waiver services and working, taking a look at what we have out there on our website. I know a lot of times in DD Council meetings I hear from folks that they try to go to the website and either it wasn't very user friendly or there was information there that was out of date or information there that was confusing. So we're really starting with waiver and trying to make sure the information we have is pertinent, relevant and useful to folks and an easy-to-use format. So we are moving forward quickly, I think, on those things. But also

just trying to make sure that the documents are done in a manner that is easy for families to be able to read and navigate. And so we have a timeline document, but that's really just kind of a broad level overview of that visual services workgroup. And we'll have more to come. Hopefully, soon, changes to our OCDD website to make things more user friendly. I will stop there, but happy to take questions. Hey Jill.

JILL HANO: Hey to whoever.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Julie.

JILL HANO: Sorry. I wasn't paying attention. Do you by chance have a summary of what that workgroup has been doing, already achieved that we can maybe look at or you can send an email to me?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Sure. Would the whole group be interested? I can send it either to Brenton and Michael for everybody, or Jill, I can send it to you. Whichever you guys prefer.

JILL HANO: That's up them. That's too much power for me.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Why don't you send it to Brenton, and he can distribute it.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Okay.

JILL HANO: I know it's not technically one of our initiatives, but it's good to be in the know.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: No problem. I just sent it to Brenton.

JILL HANO: Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. Thank you, Julie. Any other questions for Julie? Okay. We're going to move onto our contractual activities. First on the agenda is a review of contractual updates and we're going to go to Marilee who is going to start us off on Partners in Policymaking. Marilee, you have the floor.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you, Mike. Good morning everyone. I am first going to update you guys on Partners and policymaking, our advocacy training. This is activity 1.2.1. So the update on this is in your status report packet. The PIP ad hoc committee met in January essentially just to receive updates on the PIP

contract, the one between the council and Families Helping Families and then between Families Helping Families and the PIP coordinator. The PIP coordinator presented on the virtual accommodations and the need for that for the 2020 class to proceed virtually. And then we reviewed ITAAC disparities and guidance from ITAAC regarding PIP alumni. That was the last meeting of the PIP ad hoc committee. A motion was made to dissolve that committee. And since then the PIP coordinator has been preparing to implement the completion of the 2020 PIP class virtually and the 2021 PIP virtual session. Which again, is not a Partners in Policymaking class, the 2021 session are not Partners in Policymaking graduates. And this is all outlined in recommendations that the PIP ad hoc committee gave to the executive committee and they adopted. A couple of different drafts of proposed plans have been made for that and then there was one meeting held in March. And that is my update. I have asked Adrienne Thomas who is the PIP coordinator to be here today to give you guys more specifics on how she is implementing the 2020 class virtually and the 2021 session. Adrienne, I think Halie promoted you to a panelist. So not sure if you are ready?

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Can you hear me? I'm here.

MARILEE ANDREWS: I hear you. So I think everybody can as well.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Are you ready for me, Mr. Chair?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. Go ahead Adrienne.

ADRIANNE THOMAS: Okay. For this quarter, January through March 2021 there was three main focus areas for Partners in Policymaking. Number one was reacquainting the class of 2020. Of course, there was basically after March of 2020 all communication was maybe more informal. Participants contacting each other. So on February 13th, 2021 the class had an opportunity to engage in an informal zoom hour that was set up. And during that opportunity I introduced ways that we would be moving forward. I took on some of the concerns regarding the virtual format. The second thing, the

second focus was initiating conversations with speakers to discuss effective ways to carry out the virtual format. Many of the speakers that we had or were speakers for past partner sessions and scheduled to present to the class of 2020 were familiar with virtual formats via webinar and lectures. Some have actually worked with other states virtual. So they had some input and ideas and recommendations. We also looked at the questions concerning the guidelines for the national partners. And I reached out to the national Partners in Policymaking representative and the objectives that she was mainly concerned about. We actually completed those objectives in January and March. Though it was recommended in the committee to do a review for those activities.

In addition, I've had other informal discussions with other state coordinators on their virtual formats what they are doing moving forward. The last and third concern was addressing participant needs and concern virtually with the same passion that we established in person. Many of the participants continue to express their desire for having an in-person program completion. But some are expressing they are willing to try virtually to see how it works out. Their concerns are mainly focused on being able to concentrate without the regular home distractions such as the same roles their children may be experiencing with virtual learning.

And also, we obtained a donating computer for one of the participants. That was one of the needs, one of the concerns that we addressed. There is a snapshot of the virtual session. I know you probably can't see it from here. But I have submitted it to Brenton and Marilee for anyone who wants to see that snapshot. And basically it just states the 16 to 20 hours that we're doing together in person on the weekend will be met through independent regions and activities, recorded lectures and interviews, live webinars. Each participant will actually participate in some of the regional virtual activities with those focused areas of

political action, education, family supported engagement, and employment. We utilized the Group Me platform as a message board for reminders, announcements and survey and evaluation. We used (inaudible) for virtual classroom, for assignments, resource and information links and classes discussion. Zoom is used for the live lectures. And the official means for communication will be email for the virtual format. Are there any questions for me?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Floor is open for questions. I believe Christina, you had a question earlier? Go ahead.

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Hey, how are you guys. Thank you, sir, for allowing me the opportunity to speak today. I don't have any specific questions for Adrienne at this point. I actually just wanted to share something with you today if that was okay. I prepared something ahead of time because I've been planning on attending this meeting since I had found out about the implementation of the ad hoc committee. And basically, I just felt there had been, you know, not very much communication to us partners classmates about the ad hoc committee. In fact, none of us knew about it except for one classmate who apparently was invited to participate in that. And so I don't know if you guys have time today, but I did prepare something that I was looking to read.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Christina, I can give you the floor for two to three minutes.

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Sure. I'll make it as brief as possible. So basically, I do want to start with a little quote by Jessie Jackson. Inclusion is not matter of political correctness, but the key to growth. Basically I'm coming before you today selfishly and on behalf of my classmates of the 2020 class to ask you to allow us the opportunity to basically not go forward virtually, but to be the first class to be allowed to restart and continue in person when that is an option. Basically, like I said, we really didn't know about the ad hoc committee. As Adrienne has gone ahead and

stated that many of us, the majority of us, all want to complete in person. It's going to be very difficult. She mentioned children and their virtual learning, but for us parents it's a little different. We're not running up to our kids on virtual class can you do this, can you do that. Kids don't have the responsibilities that we have. So that would be a little bit different in moving forward virtually. That being said, I think we can all agree that covid 19 has disproportionately affected the disability community. But most notably for me are the adverse social impacts of the virus mitigation efforts. For example, when self-care is canceled individuals with disability have to revert to relying on family supports if they're available which has led to an increase in mental health issues and feelings of isolation or dependence. Our class, we got so close with one another and honestly, I feel like I have done more with partners since covid happened that I did in class. And that's saying a lot because I absolutely love the partners experience. And everybody that spoke to us when we were in class was amazing.

That being said, I just don't think we were fairly represented, and I think-- I personally, I don't have the enthusiasm to move forward in the way that Adrienne has presented to be virtually. It seems like the enthusiasm has kind of ran out on everybody's end. That's another reason why I think at this point a year later I really would just love if you guys would consider allowing us to be the next partners class and allow us to just restart this. Because the hands-on aspect of the program is very important. And I actually have consulted with Dr. Wick of the Minnesota Partners in Policymaking class and they have went forward. They took a break in April and went forward with their class and they also opened up their 2021 class publicly as well with a flexible schedule. Ms. Wick's had mentioned several safety protocols that they were able to follow while still having an excess of budget. So I would love if the council could consider allowing our

classmates to have that opportunity.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Christina.

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Lillian, you have a question?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Yeah. I just had some input. So I think it's really, really important for us to listen to this PIP class just because it seems like there's been a bit of a breakdown of communication. I know I never heard these concerns from the PIP class before and I know as a council we're very habitual and we like to do things the way they have always been done. I think it's really, really important to listen to the needs of these participants because they're communicating with us. Hey, look. We're losing our enthusiasm and our passion. I think the really beautiful thing about partners is that it ignites that passion that we need in advocates that is so necessary for advocacy. And if we're losing that then it's not worth it. Then we're not spending our money well and we're not use our time well because partners is not having the same impact. I would just make the suggestion that we really take this seriously. Not only for the PIP class, but for our relationship with the community in general that our community feels heard by the council that is representing them. So thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Mike, may I have the floor for a moment, please, sir?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, sir. Go ahead.

RANDALL BROWN: Hi. For everyone that doesn't know I'm Randall Brown the chair of the DD Council and here today as a member of this committee. But also as the chair of the council I have the responsibility to make sure that all activities are carried out as best can be carried out during this covid pandemic. That's where the virtual side came in. We want to provide everyone the opportunity to continue and so that's where that idea came from. But I do hear you today and I'm going to reach out to Ms. Wick with the Minnesota program who

I believe were the first people to start partners a very long time ago. So I will reach out to her and see what protocols they enacted and how and how we might be able to look into ways we could accommodate some of what I hear today. So please know you are heard and thank you for bringing your concerns to our attention. I will be looking into it. Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Randall. Another hand raised. Christina, do you have a question or comment?

CHRISTINA PAOLELLA: Yeah, I just wanted to thank you all very much for allowing me the opportunity because it's been something that has been on my mind for quite some time and my classmates as well. And many of them are actually tuned in today watching. So we're seeing you guys hear us and it's very encouraging and so thank you very much.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you. Adrienne, do you have anything else to add before we move on?

ADRIANNE THOMAS: I do have some information that I will pass to Marilee for Mr. Brown who wants to reach out to Dr. Wick. The information that she provided moving forward as a predecessor for this discussion with her. And I sent out an email today. We do feel that partners is better in person. But we want to make sure that everyone is afforded an opportunity considering the concerns of the time here.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you very much.

LIZ GARY: I just have a really quick suggestion. Maybe in order to kind of bridge that communication gap that we're seeing currently and that we have seen historically maybe one thing, one mitigation measure we can utilize is possibly notifying the PIP class when there is a PIP committee meeting or even a self-determination and inclusion committee. An email chain where they are aware of what's going on in those committees that are supposed to be representing them.

RANDALL BROWN: Again, Lillian thank you for that suggestion. That's something we're already looking at doing and thank you very much for that suggestion. Just to make the public aware, every meeting we do have

is public. And also every meeting we have is posted. (audio cut out) can for everyone. Certainly is a suggestion to move the partners class in on partners activities. We have noted. Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thanks again, Randall. Now I would like to go ahead and move along. Ebony, are you available to give us an update?

BRENTON ANDRUS: I think there's another initiative, activity 1.4.3 that Marilee covers. If we could let her cover that one cause I think she has a hard cutoff around two. So we just want to make sure we get to that initiative.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Absolutely. You can go ahead.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you Brenton and Mike. And I just wanted to say before I went to the next initiative, thank you Christina for coming to this meeting. I heard your comments and I appreciate them. (audio cut out) and I'm not sure if there's any questions on that.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Hyacinth, you have the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Good day. Mr. Chair, thank you for allowing me to speak. I had a question on the meet the council video. Have we made any adjustments to the video as it relates to make sure there is a diverse population of people that are represented in the video. Have we made those adjustments yet?

MARILEE ANDREWS: So meet the council was the first video. It was diverse in terms of the type of advocates and the regions and representatives verses parents and self-advocates. I do know that you had a concern about the racial, specifically the racial diversity. And Courtney our interim executive director and I did meet with the contractor and she ultimately decided to sort of do a part two. The person, we reached out to different people of different racial backgrounds and just the way it fell someone didn't fall in that video. But we did have a person that was in another video and they are just going to loop him back into that part two.

HYACINTH MCKEE: So I need you to make some

clarification. I need to know exactly, my request that I made weeks ago when I saw this video was, I need the attempts that the staff made to reach out to persons of color that sit on the council to be included in the video. That was my first request. My second request was since that time has any adjustments been made to the video that's been put out there. Cause it appears as though the video does not have an accurate representation of persons of color that sit on the board as council members.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So this is my first time hearing your request. I wasn't at the previous meeting. So for the first video five total attempts were made of self-advocates, there were two. Parent advocates there were two. State representatives there were two. And a person of racial minority there was one. In terms of people that actually responded back and showed up and came to the scheduled interviewing, that was three. And one self-advocate, one parent advocate, two state representatives and no person of a racial minority. I'm not sure that it's a good idea for me to share the names and personal information.

HYACINTH MCKEE: I'm not asking for the names or the personal information, Marilee, and I won't belabor this point cause I know the chair has to get back on schedule. I just want to make it known that we had an excellent opportunity to put together a video that can display the diversity of persons of color that hold seats on the council. We had a great opportunity to do that. And the video actually was a really good video. I think the work that was behind it was excellent. My biggest concern is that when we say things like meet the council, we're not giving an accurate representation of people that are actually out there representing our community and it's important that we ensure that we have self-advocates and parent advocates that sit on the council that are of color that would have benefited from being a part of that meeting and being a part of that video. So again, this was a missed opportunity for the council. And I'm concerned

that folks may feel that I'm always bringing up the diversity issue, but it is a serious problem that we need to address. So we'll have some more private conversations about. Thank you so much Mr. Chair for allowing me to speak.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you.

RANDALL BROWN: Mike, allow me just one moment. Madam vice chair, again, this is Randall Brown the chair of the DD Council. You and I will definitely be having discussions with the staff on how best to rectify and implement better protocols for involvement of all council members, particularly those of color for future videos as well as whatever O'Neal Communications decides to do for the meet the council video they plan to redo or add to as I understand it. So we will definitely be in consultation with the staff on this matter, you and I together.

MARILEE ANDREWS: So Mike, I'm not sure if you have time. It's fine either way. But I did have the contractor here on this meeting and she just messaged me that she can speak a little bit to that if you have time. Not sure if you would like to do that or not.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Sure. As long as we keep it brief, we can go ahead with that.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Okay. So her name is Devika with O'Neal Communications and I think she's a panelist already. So Devika, let me give it to you.

DEVIKA: Good afternoon everyone. Pleasure to meet everyone and thanks for letting me speak a little bit about this. I do apologize if this has created obviously a very important discussion point. I do want to assure the council that we have definitely heard, definitely made those attempts and heard your opinions and your feedback and we are definitely working on that video. We are also moving forward on the other one. So the rework on the first one is underway. And we are doing a part two to the position as meet more of our council. So we can definitely add to that conversation and make sure that as, I apologize, your last name Hyacinth, I'm not very good at doing first names right

away. Sorry, don't know your last name. As Ms. Hyacinth just said, we want to be able to show the council exactly in the diversity it offers. So we are working on the part two reaching out and scheduling interviews and doing it as meet more of the council. Cause we know one video doesn't say the whole story. So just to let you also know that we are working on the other series as well, other episodes as well. We are in line to do that in our production schedule. I don't want you to feel we forgot, or we are not paying attention to your great feedback. We are and we take it very seriously. And so I just wanted to reassure you all that those things will be done and are being done and will be finished and sent to you all for review.

MARILEE ANDREWS: Thank you Devika.

DEVIKA: Welcome.

MARILEE ANDREWS: And then there's a couple more videos after meet the council part two. And I think-- so we also worked on creating a form. Part of the trouble was getting people, finding people to participate, finding people that had the information that kind of fell within what the topic was about and getting them to respond and getting them to show up. So I know Devika is working on a form. And I know this is something that has been approved to share if you have someone in mind that you want to recommend for a video or a particular topic you can fill out that form. And we can try to contact that person.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Marilee.

MATHEW ROVIRA: Welcome.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Do we have any other questions for Marilee regarding the video topic? Once again, thank you Marilee. And Ebony are you available now to give us an update on your initiatives?

EBONY HAVEN: Yes, sir. I am.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: You have the floor.

EBONY HAVEN: Thank you. I'm going to start with LaCAN. So just an update on leader positions. There's still currently a vacancy in region one and ten for the

LaCAN leader position. At the January meeting I reported that there were three applicants, but after reviewing the last applicant the LaCAN team decided that they wanted to send out the advertisement again so we could get more applicants to choose from just so we can find someone that we felt like would stay on long-term as the LaCAN leader for regions one and ten. After advertising the announcement again and having the FHF centers help us push it out at the end of January we did have two applicants that applied for the position. Unfortunately, one applicant felt that the position wasn't right for her after speaking to two LaCAN leaders. And then the other applicant that we had she never responded to any emails and we didn't have her contact phone number because she didn't submit her resume. So until the position is filled members in regions one and ten will continue to reach out to FHF NOLA for more information about LaCAN. But we do intend to push out the announcement again until we find someone to fill the position.

As far as advocacy activities for LaCAN, the council follows the federal fiscal year. So October 1st through September 30th. And since October 1st we've had one alert and that was sent out on April 9th and it was again sent out last Friday April 16th. This alert is not reflected in the status report because it was sent out after the status report was due. As of today, we do have one action alert that's actually still active and it's going to remain active until tomorrow April 20th. So if you haven't taken action yet, you still have time. And then once you take action, please make sure that you confirm your action with your LaCAN leader. And there are two ways that you can take action. Number one, you can email or call the chair or members of the house appropriations committee before the meeting on Wednesday April 21st. And the second way you can take action is through email. If you want to email your public comments about the budget, you have until tomorrow Tuesday April 20th by 11:59 to email those comments or even your testimony

to the email that is in the action alert that was sent out on April 9th. And again on last Friday April 16th.

The LaCAN leaders are also attending BESE meetings virtually at this time until the suspension of in person activity is lifted. So additionally, we are still hosting our LaCAN calls twice a month. We just want to make sure the leaders stay up to date on the council's agenda. And we are now doing bill tracking since the legislative session started on last Monday April 12th. The LaCAN leaders and staff have also strategized ways to participate in session while the council still has the suspension of in person activities. And that information can also be found in action alert one. But just to give you guys some idea of the strategies that we came up during the calls, we are asking members to watch the committee meetings live from the legislature's website. And when the meeting is in progress, they can see the camera icon. Leaders are there to help their members. If they have any questions about that if they want to log on, Brenton is actually showing it on the screen right now, that a senate committee is in progress and you can click on that button right there to view any committee meeting that is going on.

We also came up with hosting committee watch parties. So the LaCAN leaders during committee meetings will start watch parties. LaCAN members can start watch parties and they can share with their friends on social media. And then they can tag their friends, they can tag representatives, senators and other policymakers like BESE members. And we've come up with the hash tags LADDC, hash tag laledge, and hash tag LaCAN. So once they are on social media and they've started their watch parties they can use those hash tags, tag their friends, and they can post about sharing their personal stories. They can also email, tweet and message members of the committee before the committee meeting starts or during the committee meeting. And they can just make sure they share how they are watching. And even though they're not there

in person still watching virtually about how each of the issues that LaCAN and the council has on their advocacy agenda is affecting them or their loved ones.

Just to give the committee an update, the executive committee will be discussing the status of the in-person suspension during their meeting this Wednesday, April 21st. And I think that meeting starts at 9 a.m. I think they will be discussing the status of the in-person suspension. That's all I have on advocacy activities.

LaCAN legislative visits, as I stated earlier, the legislative session started April 12th and the LaCAN leaders were able to complete a total of 23 formal legislative visits with the legislators. About 44 percent of the legislators they were able to meet with. Out of those 63, 39 of those visits were with key legislators. They were able to hit 53 percent of the key legislators before session started. Some of the barriers that the leaders discussed with us during the LaCAN call last week was that some legislators did not like conducting virtual meetings with the LaCAN leaders and members. Virtual visits were easier for them to avoid. Some legislators just never returned calls or emails that they were sending in order to schedule meetings. And some of the strategies were to get constituents or LaCAN members that are constituents of that legislator to reach out to the legislator themselves maybe making it more easier for them to schedule meetings. But unfortunately that was not successful as well. So the LaCAN leaders and members they will continue to connect with legislators throughout the legislative session via action alerts, informal visits, and using the tactics that I discussed earlier.

And then the last update for LaCAN will be on member meetings and the round tables that were conducted throughout February and March. The LaCAN leaders in collaboration with the FHF centers hosted nine virtual round tables around the state. They started on February 25th with region nine and ended on

March 3rd, sorry, March 23rd with region three. A total of 297 participants that attended the virtual round tables. And you can see a breakdown of that number in the status report. But just in case you don't have it in front of you, there were 25 self-advocates, 115 family members, 59 professionals, 73 were unknown or other. Only because this was our first time doing virtual round tables and some of the FHF centers conducted them as meetings and unfortunately you are not able to get the attendance list in a meeting setting verses a webinar setting. So some of the centers or some of the leaders had trouble tracking the breakdown for those 73 individuals. But we did have 25 policymakers and that includes legislators, legislative aides and/or BESE members that attended the round tables.

Additionally, we have had ten virtual LaCAN member meetings and had 63 members at those meetings. And leaders are just discussing the council's advocacy agenda at those meetings and educating members on how they can participate in session virtually through the legislative session which ends in June. Are there any questions for me about LaCAN?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: I don't see any questions Ebony.

EBONY HAVEN: I think Jill may have her hand raised, Mike. Sorry, I can see her. Jill, do you have a question?

JILL HANO: Do you know how many, do we have the numbers of the people, the respondents to action alert one as of today?

EBONY HAVEN: I don't have it in front of me, but that is something that I can get to you, Jill. I can probably just put it in the chat once I finish giving my updates I can go and look for it.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I just pulled it up Ebony. As of Friday there was 175. So we send it out to our leaders every afternoon. But just not on weekends. So the latest number would be as of Friday 175. And then I'm sure that number would probably increase by today's

end.

EBONY HAVEN: Any other questions? Okay. I will move onto Families Helping Families. Brenton is going to share the chart that I submitted to you all. The chart that was submitted to you all in the email that Brenton sent there was some updates that I made based on information that the FHF centers were able to send in. I know North Shore Families Helping Families on your end they were missing information, but I was able to get that information before the committee meeting on today. So I updated all of that. So this is an updated chart for you all. But just to go over some things Families Helping Families does, they are on the state federal fiscal year. So their fiscal year started July 1st. So they are in their third quarter. And the third quarter marks the nine-month mark. So we are hoping that centers are pretty close to meeting all of their deliverables. The only center that has met all of them so far is North Shore Families Helping Families. They have completed all of their deliverables as of the third quarter. The other centers, they may have three or four that they are working towards. But most of the centers are on track as far as meeting all of the deliverables for July. Or June 30th. There was a typo I noticed that was in the status report. It said the centers had only completed five outreaches, but that's incorrect. It should have been 55 outreaches. But after I got all of the information from the centers for the third quarter it's actually since October 1st there have been 132 outreaches. But as you can see on the chart in front of you the outreaches total 259. Because they are on the state fiscal year. So that was the only typo that I saw in the status report. So you guys have updated information on this chart right here. Does anybody have any questions about any of the deliverables or any of the information in the chat?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Just as an FYI, the chart has been updated on the agenda which is on our website. And also in the chat is the link to the chart since we now

have updated information.

JILL HANO: I have a question, Ebony.

EBONY HAVEN: Sure, Jill.

JILL HANO: When did you say the state fiscal year ended?

EBONY HAVEN: The state fiscal year ends June 30th of this year.

JILL HANO: So it's July 1st. Okay. While I have you, the state fiscal year is July to June. And the federal fiscal year October to September, right?

EBONY HAVEN: Right. That's correct. You got it.

JILL HANO: Okay. I'm done. Thank y'all.

EBONY HAVEN: You're welcome. Does anyone else have any questions about FHF. If not, I will move onto my last contract and that's the supported decision-making trainings. Okay. As I stated at the last meeting the council has contracted with the Arc of Louisiana to offer these statewide trainings on supported decision making, also known as the Dustin Gary act of the 2020 Louisiana legislative session. As of April 2021, four trainings have occurred with a total of 71 participants in attendance. Trainings have been conducted in region seven, region two, and there have been two in region five. Unfortunately, the training in region two happened like really close to the winter storm that we had in February. So the attendance wasn't as high. They actually had 25 people registered for that training, but only a total of five people attended. So they plan on rescheduling the training for another day for region two so there are more individuals who will be able to attend the training.

Additionally, in the contract the arc is going to be walking five individuals with disabilities through the entire supported decision-making process. Currently they have three self-advocates that are being mentored through the process. There is an upcoming training for region nine on May 5th. That will be from 1 p.m. to 2:30. And we'll be sharing that on our social media pages. It is also posted on our website under

the supported decision-making page. So if anyone is interested in registering for that training you can do that on our website. We plan to push it out on social media as well. Also I wanted to let the committee know that I plan on providing a summary report with all of the trainings with the number of people they've had, also with the feedback that they have gotten back from their evaluations. Similar to the summary that Brenton provides on the training on sexuality and abuse and exploitation. But I will have that report to you all at the next council meeting in July. Does anybody have any questions about supported decision making? I think Kelly has her hand up Mike.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes. Go ahead Kelly. Kelly Monroe, you have the floor. Kelly Monroe. Must not be able to hear us.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Can you mute, I am not able to mute for some reason. Jill Egle, if you can hear us, please mute your phone or your camera.

JILL EGLE: Yes. Okay.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: One more time. Kelly Monroe.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I think she is actually on a phone. Hold on, Mike. She should be able to unmute now. There's only one Kelly that we have and it's unmuted. But maybe there is an issue on that end.

EBONY HAVEN: I just promoted her, Brenton. Promoted her to a panelist. That may help the issue. I'm not sure.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I think it's just a technical issue. But I did get, I see an update that was texted said they are updated their registration to include all the demographics. I don't know if that's something Kelly wanted to chime in about or not.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Okay. Well, we will go ahead and move along. Ebony, did you have anything else?

EBONY HAVEN: No. That's it Mike. Unless anybody had any other questions about LaCAN or FHF or supported decision making.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Okay. Thank you very much.

Move now to activity 2.7.3. Which deals with the establishing pilot programs in multiple regions across the state on first responder tactics. Approaches and resources in fostering relationships with and dealing with individuals with developmental disabilities, training for people with developmental disabilities on how to interact with first responders. Fliers for upcoming training that is happening. But we also have Dustin Chandler, excuse me, tongue tied today, Dustin Chandler from Interaction Advisory Group today who will briefly share more on what they are working on. Go ahead Dustin.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can everybody hear me?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yes, sir.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Can you see me? I've started my video.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, sir.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Good. Yeah, my name is Dustin Chandler with Interaction Advisory Group. Obviously, here to give you an update on our activities on our initiative. Really appreciate the entire council for giving us this opportunity to work inside Louisiana. We have done a total, we started training first responders, and I'm going to kind of separate these two in the first responder trainings and community trainings. Our first responder trainings which includes law enforcement, medics, so forth and so on. We started in February, February 4th and we decided to do trainings the first Thursday of every month. In February we had a total of 13 that got trained in February. March, we had about 21 class and a second that had about 20 for a total of 40. Then in April 1st we had ten attend our training classism those were first responders. I will go back to how they register for class and how we have filled up these classes and kind of explain how the process works for you guys. But those are our numbers.

On each class we try to have two self-advocates per training class. And we also try to have a self-

advocate parent or a parent that can give us a parent's prospective in training if we can. So we have had at least two or three self-advocates and/or parental self-advocates in our training. Which we think is very important to let self-advocates be empowered to talk to first responders and give their prospective on these interactions. How these classes come about is we reach out through our resources in Louisiana through our law enforcement and first responder resources. We have had excellent interest in the classes. Every one of our classes have actually filled up. The registration has filled up in all the classes. And as you probably can understand all these classes will fill up and weeks go by and then we will have the class and whether they show up to the class or not, obviously is up to them. That's why we open up, we had only 22 spots open. I talked to Ms. Ryland, we decided to bump that up and get as many as we could and try to open 30 spots or right below 30. We did that for the last two trainings. And we have it all filled up. Then we will have these numbers like 15 per class, ten per class. And so what we are going to do to address that of the people who did not show for a class what we will then do we will have a list that we will go back to that roster list from the previous month, and we will invite them back into the class to kind of fill up the remainder of the dates that we have. We are full in our class, our rosters are fill taking a look here. We are full in the May class which would be May 6th and we are more than halfway full for the June 3rd class. So I expect us to be full for June. Possibly July, depends on how many did not show from the first classes that we held. So we will kind of backtrack with these people that signed up. And we will try to get them in a class. And we obviously think the training is important, so we want to make sure those that were interested got the training. So we will reach to them. Then again, we will fill up the classes with those that did not show up when they originally signed up for the class.

It's been wonderful. Shreveport PD, they actually requested to train their entire police department from their chief. That's 580. We are working closely with Bossier Parish Sheriff's Office. We decided as a company that we would help in the effort in Louisiana cause we think the training is so important so we kind of have pitched in, so to speak, and we will be training Bossier Parish SO on our, with no extra, obviously, fee to you guys. We're going to train them cause they showed a lot of interest upfront. And that's going to be training about 420 to 450 deputies in Bossier. We've also had interest from St. Landry's ambulance service. Church Point PD. A lot of people wanting to get their entire departments trained. Right now we are currently budgeted for one training per month. So it's hard to get all those numbers. We are getting to as many as we can. And we are going to, obviously like I said, we are going to backfill these dates with the people that didn't show the first time and fill up those classes. But that's kind of the interest that we've had in there. I have tried to send on our monthly reports to the DD Council some of the feedback that we do have. We send out a survey, if they will take our survey, and we have received very good feedback on our classes. So it is going really well.

Our community trainings, we are having one tonight at 6 p.m. 7:30. What we do in our community events is try our best to introduce people to autism, to developmental disabilities kind of as whole. Of course, we can't take the whole night and talk about each individual one. We want to kind of let them know what's helpful if first responders come to their house, pull their car over, whatever they might be involving with a first responder that can be a medic, a law enforcement officer, could be really anybody in first response. We want them to know the helpful information they need, obviously that we train them on, the information they need to have the best possible outcome they can have with their

loved one or a self-advocate. We do self-advocate training as well. We want self-advocates to be prepared, to be prepared to interact with law enforcement or other first responders. We think that's very important to let them know what to expect. Because in the first responder classes we are telling law enforcement and first responders you know kind of what to expect on that end. We always look at it as a two-way street in these trainings. We want both communities to understand each other. We want both communities to know what to expect and we want mutual respect between both communities. And we are big on that. Really in our training on the first responder side we are big on fair treatment. And really acceptance on that. But we have to understand that not every instance is the same. And our number one goal in community trainings, but also especially in our first responder trainings is safety of the first responder and the individual. We want the best possible outcome that we can get anytime we have an interaction. We also go over wandering in the action plan. Parents can come up with kids that may wonder. No matter what developmental disability may be, we want parents to understand that wandering can be an issue. We know it's an issue and could be at your household. We give them action plans and ways to help build those action plans. And ways also to prevent wandering. We don't want a loss of life if we can help it. We go over that. Obviously, I just went over briefly about the info session for parents and self-advocates.

Then we share about the state resources we have that we have been given and the ones we know about. Obviously, LaCAN has talked about. Autism affiliates have really been helpful, really engaged. Partners in Policymaking and everything that we can as well. And we also share there is, and I don't know how many people know this, but I

find a lot of law enforcement divisions and other first responders don't really know this is out there. But there is within the US Department of Justice there's a civil rights division as we all know. And ADA does address law enforcement and people with disabilities. We give that information out. We show them our website. We make sure they understand there are things that cover the way you are supposed to be interacting and get as much training as you can. But we want them to understand that it is covered under the ADA. And we share that, and we have resources on our website that they all have access to to get all the documents that they need about any kind of statewide resource that they may need. And then the Department of Justice information as well. On the first responder side.

And these community events, the numbers, I will tell you the numbers we had only five really in the first meeting. Tonight we have one. We will see how many show up. I hate to give numbers before class. We rely heavily on local groups to help push that information out and try to get them that way. We may have to revisit that with some of the autism affiliates, Families Helping Families to see how we can better push that out within the community and help people understand. everybody can get a flier. But truly help them understand what the training is about. We may be looking into how we can boost attendance on the community side. First responder side, no issue with attendance. Our classes are full. Now we just have to hold them accountable if you sign up for the class, we want you to take it. So we will be going back and touching base with them. That's kind of a brief update. If anybody has any questions, I can give them about our training, about what we go over or anything like that I'm open to questions.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Dustin, there is one question in

the chat. Is there any region nine or region one outreach for first responder training?

DUSTIN CHANDLER: When we talk about regions, help me understand regions, are we talking about Families Helping Families regions?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Okay. We have reached out to all the FH, the Families Helping Families regions. We have gotten a little support from all of them. Let me rephrase that. We have gotten a little support around the state. The most support we've gotten is actually from region seven. We really don't know why that is. We are going to make more of an effort to make sure our information is being read via email and possibly follow those up with phone calls. We would love to have a real good connection with People First of Louisiana. We have reached out to them. Haven't really gotten really engaged with them. We would like to, and we are going to continue those efforts. The question about region nine and region one, there has not been much as in, you know, back and forth between us and region nine and region one. I can tell you looking at the map and looking at the people that have been in our trainings we are getting a pretty good spread across Louisiana in the first response communities. I will also say I believe it's Attorney General Landry in Louisiana. We have had several come through the AGs office that deal with child crimes and exploitation. A lot of them have come through. The AGs office has really taken advantage of our training as well. We have really been all across the state. I could give you a whole long list of departments that we've actually been training in. But that may take up the whole rest of the meeting. Specifically region nine and region one, we will double our efforts to get in touch with them again to help push that out. Cause that's really where it starts. Really to help you, really how we designed this many years ago is to have the first responder training take place and then on the tails of that have community event. Because like I said earlier, we think

it's a two-way training street. We want everybody, it's part about building community and understanding of each other. Especially with families like mine and having law enforcement, first responders understand that. So it's kind of a two-way thing.

I want to also mention we are also planning hopefully, and this is pandemic pending I guess we can say, looking at the pandemic and all the information coming into us, coming into everybody in Louisiana we hope to have at least one in person visit to the State of Louisiana and have a really big law enforcement, first responder training and then work with the local affiliates there to have a big community event as we are in person. Because that is really where we got our start. We shifted to virtual. We do virtual all the time now, obviously. But we like to come in and do those big events where we have a lot of attendees in person. If everybody feels safe with that, we are going to address that and try to do that towards the end or towards September if we feel safe. Obviously, depends on the information that we have about the pandemic.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Dustin, I have a couple of other comments, but I think if you could share your contact information some of these may be able to reach out to you for the information.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Do you want me to type my email in the chat.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: That would be great. Yes.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: We would love to have any help to spread this message to every group, self-advocate groups that want to work with us in training. Obviously, as you guys well know, we are budgeted to pay them. We want them to be engaged. That's really through all spectrums of disability. It doesn't have to be autism. It doesn't have to be any particular one. We already know of instances of individuals, unfortunately, that are Deaf that have lost their lives dealing with law enforcement. So we want really anybody that's across the spectrum of disability. Any

parents or actually anybody from any group that wants to share information with community, with first responders. I know this to be, I'm former law enforcement and law enforcement has the information that they have and that's great. But we like to bring in information that they may not have. So if anybody is having trouble getting their information to police departments or sheriff's offices or fire departments, we would love to help facilitate getting that information from you and to them. We can post that on our website if we need to if we see fit, we can get it that way. Or we can make sure they are getting it via email as well. Because it truly is about getting the information to them. We know a lot of times that law enforcement and medics and those working in first response are often times the ones that really discover people that maybe need services. And if we can just get them and those families that may need services and those services are available in Louisiana, we want to help them connect the dots. And oftentimes first response can help us do that. If anybody needs help in doing that feel free to send me an email. If you're interested or have a loved one interested in participating or your organization. And then we really need help, again, like I said on the community events, really pushing that out to the community to come learn. Cause we want to also help facilitate learning about your organizations in the community. But then also get them the information. We know wandering is a deadly issue. And we just want that. Losing lives is tragic, obviously, and what we're trying to avoid in all of our training. As best possible outcomes on the community side. Some parents, in our first training a parent had a ten-year-old and she did not know that really wandering was a big issue in autism. And it is. Drowning is the leading cause of death in autism. We want the parents to know that. So please send me y'all's information. I will send you everything that I have on any event that we have coming up, including the first responder events. People always ask how can they

get involved in that. It is really as simple as sending your local sheriff's office, police department, fire department, whomever you have contract information with. It is really just as simple as sending them an email telling when the training is and giving them my email address and say, we try to make it simple, just email us. We will register you for the class and then be up to date on when their class takes place. May have had more questions on here and I may have skipped them. I apologize.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Yeah. There's some information in the chat. The questions about regions one and nine were specific to New Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany Parishes. It was mentioned chiefs of police, superintendents and Sheriffs in those areas, a high population, particularly people of color and engage in interactions in law enforcement. And that comes from our Vice Chair Hyacinth McKee. She was just saying please let us know the steps you have made to engage those individuals. She was saying that discussion can be held offline for the sake of time. There were also comments from Susan Reems. She is our Families Helping Families director in region five. So that's the southwest corner of the Lake Charles area. And she mentioned that she asked who from your office has reached out. Cause she hasn't heard about this information and I think she included her contact information as well. Cause I don't know why they haven't received the information.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Well, and I may have some explanation. We may have bad email addresses. And I would love if everybody could just send me some contact info to that email address and I will have my assistant get back on it to make sure we have good contact info. I know that was true with some of the other affiliates we were working with. We just didn't have real good contact info. But if you'll send up updated contact info, we will put you on a distribution list to know when every single first responder takes place. That's the first Thursday of every month. And the community

events. We'll send you fliers. We can add things, anything to the classes, obviously information y'all want to get out. We just need good, updated contacts. I will have my assistant, pretty sure she's listening, we will make sure we have those contact information to get out to you guys. All this information we have coming up.

And I will tell you too, where there could be a big effort and I would like to see this really everywhere that we go. We also know there is school resource officers as well. School resources officers during the school year often times don't attend trainings cause they're obviously in schools. That's always been a little bit of an area that really needs to be touched, I believe. And that's my own personal opinion that SROs need to be more involved. In reaching out we always ask SROs to be involved because they're dealing with children every day and we want them to have the best interactions with them as well.

And to let you know how our company works, we have an advisory board and I encourage y'all to visit our website [interactionadvisorygroup.com](http://interactionadvisorygroup.com). We have psychologist on our advisory board, we also have self-advocates on our advisory board, parents. So we always collaborate with them at least once a quarter to get the information that's on their mind. Make sure we can get that in training and all that. It's not just me saying what I think you need to hear. It comes from self-advocates, parents, law enforcement, first responders, psychologists and all as a whole to make sure we're doing that.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Dustin. Jill, you have a question?

JILL HANO: Pretty sure I can answer this myself. But just to verify when you say community training, you're meaning self-advocates and parents or rather self-advocates and parents fall under the community training, correct?

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Yeah. So when we refer to community, we really mean any interested community

member that wants to learn about it, but we also yes, we do mean self-advocates and their parents. Cause we have a section in there specifically for them. But we also talk about any community member that really wants to know and understand about really our world and developmental disability. And I say our world cause my family is a part of that. We want them to know. It's really a community as a whole. But that does include self-advocates and their parents. Cause like I said, we have a specific section in there just for self-advocates and parents. And we want parents to know that if they have a loved one with a developmental disability or what not we want them to know what information does first responders need when they show up on scene to make sure that that scene is help kept safe and that they can also really serve that family to the best they can and for the best outcome. I can tell you a lot of the time that information is missed. A lot of times sometimes they just don't know. But if we can get the communication going from parents, self-advocates to police. But then also, like I said, two-way training street. Once first responders obtain this information then how do we proceed with adjusting our response to what it is we are dealing with. Assess the situation. And we always ask them always to choose the path of more safety and they get to a disposition. But we want them to be safe. And we know that caregivers, parents and self-advocates can be a very big part of that if we have that level of understanding between the two groups.

JILL HANO: Perfect.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Thank you for your question.

JILL HANO: Thank you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Do we have any other questions for Dustin before we move on? Okay. Thank you, Dustin. Very informative. Thanks for joining us today.

DUSTIN CHANDLER: Thank you. And I want to say thank you again for everything y'all do and thank you for giving us the opportunity. Thank you very much,

sir.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, sir. Brenton, will you give us an update on the remaining initiatives please.

BRENTON ANDRUS: So before I move on to the last initiative, which is the trainings for abuse and exploitation, I think we have Mr. David Whalen with us from Niagara University and he can share a little bit about what his group is doing for a training program on emergency preparedness and response. That is activity 2.7.4, I believe. Page 12 of your status report. So if you're on if you want to unmute and give you a moment as well to share about what your group is doing on this activity.

DAVID WHALEN: Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for having me. Excited to bring this into Louisiana. Ironically, we're getting funded by the Nebraska Council on Developmental Disabilities at the same time from the same grant. Our first step out of New York with emergency management. Our first responder program is in five states. Our first step into your state and other states with this. It's always an adventure when we come into the state. You have and should have seen the reports. I see up here this is our upcoming trainings. We're very excited that both these trainings filled up. Sold out hundred per program. What was initially a slow response, and I still get some slow responses as far as outreach and meeting with people and key players, the first one we did here actually had 55. The March 30th one, some of you may have attended. We had 22 attend, 55 registered. So the numbers there are consistent with virtual training across the country in our other programs. Mainly in first response, South Dakota, Missouri and New York. We are excited to have this. This is an introduction program to it. Certainly has valuable content for introducing what will be prelude to the full program. What we will be doing, I will tell you the tentative dates, don't set your calendar yet for it. As you are well aware we are scheduled to do 12 virtual trainings. We are going to be doing 13. Three of the intros as

opposed to two. Again, with the demand could even consider doing another one beyond our contract. Certainly doesn't matter to us from that standpoint.

But what we are going to be doing is a part two and part three virtually. And they will compliment what has been done in the introduction here. A part two with the emergency managers and people who have responsibility in that. Although all are encouraged to attend. Part three more of a slant towards people with disabilities. Although they're all designed to be together. Let me take a step back here. We do a lot of disability awareness training. All of our programs are customized for that audience. For instance, our firefighter, EMS, law enforcement, 911 is all customized for those audiences and attendees. This is one of our two programs that is designed for an eclectic audience. The intent of this program is inclusive planning and active participation. The end product is that people with disabilities are having a say in the planning and preparedness process. We've effectively done this in New York State to the point where what we call core advisory group, one of our end objectives, the FEMA concept is that people with disabilities are actively working what we call counties in this state or parishes in your state, working within the parishes where they are part and included in the planning process.

And ideally if we get granted for year two our objective is to come and do this live. This is the inclusive planning and active participation manual that all attendees will walk out with. And we designed this program in a twofold manner where the two-day full in person program is done for people who are stakeholders who have responsibilities in this particular field or agency organizers be it the disability community support groups. For instance, the trach mamas in your state. Working with them for a few years in years past. Individuals along those lines. The afternoon session of day two that brings in people who don't have as much role in say organizational oversight, but

people who are interested and will certainly play a role in active planning and participation. That has in years past included self-advocates, parents of people with disabilities. And people in emergency management who don't have as heightened a role in say their oversight of Department of Health or other key areas along those lines.

But the intent is that everyone is advising. What we have done is with our past involvement with FEMA at the Office of Disability Integration and Coordination developed the content that is both specific from FEMA that was never actually in the years past displayed. I was fortunate to be one of the 30 people trained how to do excess and functional needs training for FEMA, but they never deployed us to train. The content that FEMA developed in conjunction with the programs that we have developed over the years with our involvement. I have been involved with this topic for 15 years extensively. Again, intended to bring everyone together to plan and pair intermittent. I do ask, I put in the chat box and do ask you to go to first responder emergency management website. [FRDAT.niagria.edu](http://FRDAT.niagria.edu). I put my email as well. One of the objectives we've been working on is reaching out to several key players in your state who have roles in disability functions as well as emergency management. Julie, I heard Julie Hagan Foster talking earlier. I see Michelle is still on this call. Like to meet Kelly as well. Kelly and I may be meeting this week. We've met with the independent living center folks Yavonka and Alicia. Bambi, Jessica Lewis. We've gotten a call back already from the New Orleans Louisiana ready to discuss things they can do to build on their policeman specific to this topic.

And that's what our function is. It's not just to train, it's to work with and bring our programs and our areas of expertise together. But I will say this, there's no set expert in this topic. As eclectic our audience and we train in person everyone speaks. I'm not the loan speaker. People with topic areas and

areas of responsibility across both factions speak. So our intention is total inclusion and active participation with the disability community. And we've seen that highly successful in several states. Each place does, each state does it a little different. Again, working with folks like yourself. This is a key piece. We have some strong relationships with councils across the states. Especially the ones we have been in. Mainly first response. But with the council role, feel free to provide input as far as what we're looking to do in outreach. I will take a pause and take some questions.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Do we have any questions for Mr. Whalen?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Don't see anything Mike. Don't see any hands raised or anything in the chat.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: All right. Thank you, sir.

DAVID WHALEN: Very welcome. Thank you everyone. Look forward to working with you.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Brenton, you want to continue?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Sure. So for our last activity here 2.9.1, there we go, and so this if you are looking at your status of planning activity on page 15. Just a little background, the council this year they've contracted again with Team Dynamics to work on this initiative. We've actually been contracting with them I think since fiscal year 19 or, yeah, 19. Cause I think October 2018 was their first time they started doing trainings on this for us. So their training has kind of evolved over the years. But for the most part they really focus on this initiative to ensure our individuals with disabilities and their caregivers are getting the information they need about healthy and unhealthy relationships, sexuality and ways they can identify abuse and exploitation. And hopefully by having a strong understanding and comprehension of those areas they'll be able to prevent further, or maybe not further, but any abuse or exploitation they might encounter.

Like everything else we've been doing with our

initiatives things right now are hosted online via webinars rather than in person. So right now I think on my screen, I can get back to my shared screen here, you see in your packets this kind of breakdown of what's been done thus far for the trainings. So if we check out on this first page so far, we had 14 individuals with disabilities have participated in the trainings and been 46 people that were either family members or caregivers. One thing I wanted to point out typically whenever we see-- so the other feedback in this document for those this is your first time seeing it, we kind of breakdown some of the information that is provided in the surveys or the feedback that the contractor gets. So usually whenever we see kind of very consistent just loaner strongly disagree here typically that's just a mistake in the survey. I don't know if that's accurate or not because that particular survey, I don't know who provides that information. But I would venture to say this is probably not a strongly disagree cause there really hasn't been super negative feedback that would indicate someone had a really bad experience with this training. For the most part, as you can tell, overall the training has been very successful. A lot of people have provided feedback which we kind of summarized the information here. We don't put down every single piece of feedback that's given. Just because trying to condense the information that you get from the invoices. So this kind of gives you an idea of some of the information that has been shared as far as what they are doing well and what they can improve upon.

So if you scroll through, or if you did have a packet in your hands, if you look at, I think the second and third pages that's going to let you know about the trainings that have happened as well as our registration and attendance. So sometimes those numbers are a little bit off. More people that register than actually attend. But I do know probably not in every circumstance, but some individuals if they do miss one of the trainings, they tend to sign up for

another one. Also linked in this document if you are interested in attending this training, all the information about this is in our website. But you also have it here in your packet where you can click on whichever link applies to you and register for the next training that is coming up. So we do have trainings scheduled through end of this fiscal year or the federal fiscal year. So through September. And again, this training that occurred on April 9th, I haven't got the invoice yet so I can't give you an idea how many actually attended that training. But in general, they have gotten great feedback and I think, again, as with previous years it's been a very successful initiative thus far. Any questions about this particular initiative? I don't see any. All right. I will turn it back over to you Mike.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you Brenton. So I don't have any announcements. If anyone on staff has any announcements for today you can jump right in with them if you would like.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I don't have any announcements. But a couple things I will send over to the committee. Also link it in the committee summary whenever that becomes available. Shortly before the meeting we got the update that the partners coordinator sent. So I can share that with you. And I will also share, I think Jill Hano had asked for it, that summary about the OCDD visual services workgroup. Julie forwarded that over. So I will send that to you guys as well. And I will also link that in the summary. It looks like maybe Julie has something. I see in the chat she forgot to mention one thing.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Yeah. Is it okay if I do a quick announcement I forgot?

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yes, ma'am. Go ahead.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: So I sent this to you as well Brenton if you can get out, and Courtney too. We are sponsoring, the department is sponsoring, we have been doing different panels, called vaccination or covid 19 vaccination panels. And we've had targeted efforts at

different specific populations. One of those we've had, and we had a lot of success. Had one for the African American community. One for the Latino and Hispanic community is coming up. One with the divine nine. We've had a faith-based initiative. And so on April the 23rd from 1:30 to 2:30 this panel to talk about vaccination is going to be focused on the disability community and the providers who support folks in the disability community. And we have a really great panel ready to kind of talk and tell folks their stories. And why they would want to encourage folks to get the covid 19 vaccination. Thanks. There you go. There is our flier. So we will be sharing that and just encourage folks to listen and to help us get the word out too. We think it's a very important conversation to be had right now. Thanks. Sorry. Forgot that earlier.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Thank you, Julie. Does anyone else have any other announcements to make? Okay. Hearing none. Do we have a motion to adjourn? Anyone have a motion to adjourn?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Mike, you don't need a motion as long as nobody objects you are good to go.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Any objection to adjourning?

BRENTON ANDRUS: Say that five times fast.

MICHAEL BILLINGS: Yeah. So I appreciate everybody showing up today, being here today. I know it's a busy week with meetings and I appreciate your time and being here today. Look forward to seeing you later this week. Thank y'all. Bye, bye.