

Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council  
Quarterly Meeting  
October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

RASHAD BRISTO: Good morning, everyone. Just wanted to let you know we're going to get started in about two minutes.

Good morning, everyone. Just want to say thank you for taking the time. We're going to go ahead with the quarterly meeting of the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council will come to order. The time is 8:33 a.m. on October 20th, 2022. Just acknowledge everybody. Thank you for taking the time out your day to be a part of this council meeting to make sure we make the decisions that are best on behalf of those we are stewards over. Also want to announce to everyone on YouTube thank you for taking the time also. Having the interest to be a part of this meeting. At this time we will have a roll call. Ms. Deaville, would you please.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Banks.

NICOLE BANKS: I'm present.

AMY DEAVILLE: Dr. Barovechio.

PATTI BAROVECHIO: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Basile.

KIM BASILE: Present.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Bayham.

MELISSA BAYHAM: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Cosse. Ms. Crain.

CHERI CRAIN: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Egle.

BRENDA COSSE: Good morning.

SPEAKER: There's Ms. Cosse.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Egle.

JILL EGLE: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Gonzales. Ms. Guidry. Ms. Hagan.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Hano.

JILL HANO: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Harmon.

ANGELA HARMON: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Hymel. Ms. Jordan. Dr. McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Present.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Polotzola. Ms. Richard. Mr. Rocca.

TORY ROCCA: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Mr. Rovira. Ms. Stewart. Ms. Tarver. Mr. Taylor.

ERICK TAYLOR: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Ms. Washington. Ms. Webb.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: Dr. Wilson. Mr. Bristo.

RASHAD BRISTO: Here.

AMY DEAVILLE: You have a quorum.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. At this time can you put the mission statement and the ground rules on the screen. And while she's doing that want to go ahead and acknowledge the guests that are in this room as well. So if you will just state your name.

NICOLE FLORES: Nicole FLORES, executive director of Families Helping Families of Acadiana.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Lillian DeJean, self-advocate.

NICOLE DEJEAN: Nicole DeJean.

CHARLIE MICHEL: Charlie Michel.

RASHAD BRISTO: Missing anyone sitting at the table? All right. Thank you. Mission statement. I'll read the mission statement. To increase independence, self-determination, productivity, integration and inclusion for Louisianians with developmental disabilities by engaging in advocacy, capacity building and systems change.

Ground rules. Council meetings shall be accessible via Zoom and live streamed on YouTube. Council or committee members will participate via Zoom and shall be considered present when they display a live feed video of their face with their first and last name. Have microphones muted unless called upon by the chairperson. Electronically raise their hand to request the chairperson recognize them to speak. Once recognized to speak by the chair their microphones shall be turned on. After speaking microphones shall be returned to mute. Guests may participate via Zoom or observe meetings live on YouTube. All public

meetings shall be recorded and may be made available on the council's YouTube channel as determined appropriate by the chairperson. Public comment submitted during the meeting via any format shall be considered. During the Zoom meeting guests may electronically raise their hand to request to comment. Upon being recognized to speak by the chair their microphone should be turned on. After speaking the microphone will be returned to mute. Post comments relevant to the item under consideration in the chat box. Public comments of a person's character will not be heard. If comments continue after being asked to stop by the chairperson council staff may instruct to end the meeting. Chairperson will notify the executive committee of this occurrence. Council chair will seek guidance and determine if legally appropriate to redact or share the video of the meeting on the council's social media page. So with that being said, just wanted some housekeeping rules. For those that are in the room let's make sure our phones are on vibrate. That way there's not going to be an interruption to someone in the middle of a thought. Also, if you have a call step out to take it.

Oh, this part. Let's always be mindful that we're on YouTube, that we're streaming live. The last thing we want is to say something that would be considered insensitive or put in the position where this council could become a spectacle or scrutinized under the eyes of anybody else. So let's just make sure we're mindful of that. We're here to set the example and to set the tone. We don't want to be the ones identified as being a problem as opposed to the solution for what we're here to try to resolve.

Last thing, I'm going to ask this of every council member, everybody that's in this room. Always remember the face, motivation for why you're on this council. It's easy to get distracted, but we're here for systems change. And with those systems change we're the ones at the forefront where people are believing in us to make the necessary decisions. And sometimes we got to make the hard decisions. But with that being said, that's why we're here. So please, (inaudible).

Next item up for business is the approval of the

meeting summary. A draft of the July 21st meeting summary was distributed. The summary will not be read unless requested by a member. Are there any corrections to the summary? Does anybody have any questions in regard to the summary? Any in the chat box in regard to the summary? Not seeing none, the summary is approved as distributed.

One more thing I do want to add that I forgot. Let's not forget when we do have public comment, public comment's only going to be for three minutes. If you have spoken on the subject at least twice you're going to be dismissed from the conversation because the first time you're making your point. The second time you're emphasizing. After the third time you're just antagonizing. So I just want to make sure we do emphasize that. I'm emphasizing that on this particular meeting because we want to make sure that we stay within a professional range of why we're here.

The next report is going to be my report. And as the chairperson I had the opportunity to meet with State Representative Tammy Phelps. She's part of district three out of Shreveport. She's new in her office and wanted to try to get a chance to meet her. That way we can try to have some advocacy in different parts of the region to make her more aware about disability rights. And also to my interest I found out she has a son that's on the autism spectrum. So she is definitely interested in possibly being an advocate and a support legislatively for the DD Council. Also had a chance to talk to State Representative Kenny Cox. He's in my district of DeSoto Parish in Mansfield district 23. A good relationship with him to make him more aware that when we do have legislative agenda that we would like the support to be made available. I did get an opportunity to attend virtually the Families Helping Families virtual roundtables. Found them to be very integral. Just going to ask that we just continue to support those that way we can make sure that the message is unified as we get things going across. Does anybody have any questions about the report that I just presented?

Next item is the executive committee recommendations. Ms. Deaville, if you would place them

on the screen. Thank you. So on the screen we have the motions from executive committee. I will read them for the record. Nicole Banks move to accept the YLF committee's recommendation of Families Helping Families of Acadiana to be the contractor for the Youth Leadership Forum. Dr. McKee seconded the motion. Kim Basile abstained from voting due to sitting on the FHF Bayou Land board. No objections. All other members voted in favor and the motion passed.

Legislative advocacy motions. Dr. McKee moved for the LaDDC to provide advocacy surrounding issues number one, incontinent supplies. Kim Basile seconded. No objections or abstentions. The motion passed. Dr. McKee moved to include change open meetings law to increase representation of individuals with IDD and ensure diversity of public bodies and change open meeting laws to provide virtual meetings as a standard of public input for the IDD community to the legislative agenda. Seconded by Vice Chair Nicole Banks. Motion was amended. See below. The amended motion by Dr. McKee was to change open meeting law to increase representation of individuals with IDD and ensure diversity of public bodies and change the open meetings law to include hybrid meeting standard means of public input for the IDD community in legislative advocacy agenda. Seconded by Kim Basile. No objections or abstentions and the motion passed.

Under DEI training Dr. McKee motioned that the full council receive training on DEI practices by April of 2023 and that it become a mandatory training for new members of the council. Vice Chair Nicole Banks seconded. There were no objections or abstentions and the motion passed. Dr. McKee motioned that the bylaws be reviewed to include that we have language that is inclusive of diversity, equity and inclusion practices specifically as it relates for members that hold seats on the council. Seconded by Vice Chair Nicole Banks. Motion passed. For the record I read in the executive committee recommendations. Is there any discussion from council members?

EBONY HAVEN: I think we have to go through each motion separately. So you want to go back to the first one for YLF.

RASHAD BRISTO: For the first one for YLF the recommendation was for Families Helping Families of Acadiana to be contractor for the Youth Leadership Forum. Do we have any discussion in regards to that?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We do have a hand raised. Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Great morning, Mr. Chair and full council. I want to restate what I stated yesterday that I hope that our executive council will seek legal consult regarding conflict of interest considering that some of the members from this particular Families Helping Families center did sit on that ad hoc which was posed with the task of creating the guidelines for that solicitation of proposal. In addition to that, I do think that it needs to be some real recommendations as far as in with the public possibly regarding what that rubrics is going to look like for the selection of the young individuals that would be attending YLF. Making sure diversity, equity, inclusion training is provided to all staff that would be working with the youth that will be in attendance. As well as making sure that children, like children with autism what will it look like for them to actually get acquainted with the staff prior to attending as well as getting acclimated to the living parameters of where they will be staying for the course of that conference. So I do think that we definitely need to make sure that we address that. But also the language that's going to be in the contract regarding diversity, equity, inclusion definitely need to be at the forefront as it relates to this particular matter. Those are my comments. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Corley. Do we have any other comments? I see Ms. Hano. Ms. Hano, you have your hand raised. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: From my understanding when FHF of Acadiana found out that we were soliciting proposals, I believe I heard that Ms. Flores is with us today, as soon as they heard about the solicitation of proposals they immediately dropped out. So I think, now Amy I

could be wrong, but I think legally and ethically there's no conflict of interest. Am I correct?

AMY DEAVILLE: I agree with your opinion. The meetings were public. They were recorded. They were posted on YouTube. Everyone had access to see them to participate in them. So they didn't have any greater access than anyone else did and they did resign when they decided to apply.

JILL HANO: All right. And so, I mean, it wasn't like, I don't think they went like yeah, let's go in and see all we can see and make a bid. Like I think it was handled very professionally and like we were saying. And I truly believe that they dropped out once they made a decision to submit a proposal. So I do not see how that's a conflict of interest in the least. Thank you, Rashad.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Hano. And thank you for your comments and input. Do we have any other council members with any questions in regards to the recommendations? Dr. Michel, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CHARLIE MICHEL: First, I want to commend the council for actually supporting this whole venture, the youth leadership forum. Because as the executive director of Bayou Land Families Helping Families, I'm thrilled to see that there will be more people learning how to advocate for themselves and to pass that forward. As a former special educator and a school administrator it gives me great pleasure to know that as a result of the education of this young lady who is spearheading this has gotten and because of the parenting she has received over the years that she has learned the skills and is now willing to share those skills so that other people can have an easier life in advocating than maybe she had, than my kids had. And as the parent of two children with disabilities it gives me no small amount of comfort that kids growing up that don't have strong parents, that don't know how to advocate or don't have access to the best educational system in the world possibly, they will be able to continue to advocate for themselves, help others like Lillian is doing and make our society a better place. And if we look at the news any given day

of the week, I think there's precious little that we need more than that.

And finally, I'd like to say I know that the interest right now is diversity, equity and inclusion and as we're doing that, I hope that we can do diversity of all things including age. I hope that-- when I was a child nobody took me seriously. Because I was a child 14, 15, 16 years old. I hope that we learn that youth is not a measure of intelligence or lack thereof as is age is not a measure of intelligence or lack thereof. So I would hope that as we're doing diversity, we look at age as a definite factor. As we look at equity, we find equity of thought to all including those who are younger than we are. And as we're looking at inclusion that we include all. Because it is with all that we get the best product. And I do again commend y'all. This is a wonderful project. And lastly, I have watched Families Helping Families of Acadiana in a crisis. They work very well together. They work very well with others. After Ida they were priceless for us. So I feel really good about the recommendation y'all are making. Thank y'all very much.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that comment. Ms. Webb, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Thank you. I fully agree with the two previous statements, and I would also like to reply on something Ms. Corley said. She had concerns about like how autistic kids may be adjusting to the YLF program. They can go on campus like beforehand for a tour and I believe they will be able to, they will be able to bring like bags with them with comfort objects or fidgets.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that comment. Do we have any other council members with any comments before we move to the public and the chat? Not seeing any.

AMY DEAVILLE: Jill Egle just raised her hand.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Egle, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL EGLE: I'm a little confused. Can someone on the DD staff or the chair or somebody embrace me what's



this all about so I can get the big picture as a leader.

SPEAKER: I'll have somebody contact you, Jill.

JILL EGGLE: They can email me or call me, you can pass that on. Cause I'm just a little confused about this situation.

SPEAKER: Sure.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any comments in the chat? One minute. I'm sorry. Someone behind me had their hand raised.

NICOLE FLORES: I also want to thank the DD Council for considering this. Actually, after I (inaudible) Partners I learned about YLF. It was very important because I have a daughter who is in middle school, and I was also very adamant that she needs to learn how to self-advocate. And that's when Lillian and I met, and we got to learn that YLF was a thing. And about bringing it back because it's important cause it's that natural seg way into Partners. And then for people in our community so our kids, all of us, you know, the disability community can all be advocates together. We would always be involved. I was at every meeting trying to help bring this to life. We did resign to make sure we were not part of any kind of selection to make sure to be completely transparent so that it was fair and equitable. So that was one thing. And this is just very important and dear to me too because now I have a daughter that's in high school. You know, she probably won't be a part of this right now, but to see other kids learn how to advocate for themselves, to see these mentors come in, these speakers and then, you know, go onto Partners, go onto help in Louisiana, in the US. It's real important and I really thank you for considering us.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Flores. Any other comments in the room before I go to virtual?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We have two comments from Corhonda Corley, and she also has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Let's go to the comments first before we go to the questions.

REKEESHA BRANCH: Okay. Her first comment, the FHF center dropped off of the committee on Friday which was

the meeting that chose the fiscal agent. I request for you to consult legal for confirmation. I believe the program can and will be amazing if all youth with disabilities will be attending. Her next comment was we should focus on equity and equality for this community. And her last comment for individuals with autism they have difficulty with transitioning. During the school term you cannot tour the dorms. That changed during Covid 19. Additionally, with all of the dialogue it should not be a problem to confirm no conflict of interest exist.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Those were the comments?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Yes, sir. And she still has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was waiting on them to allow me the opportunity to unmute. As it relates to the dorm, so let me explain, I want to make sure that I'm explaining this to people cause I don't think everybody know what it's like to deal with a child with autism and I don't think that everybody knows the changes that occurred during Covid 19 as it relates to college campuses. So you cannot just go up on a college campus like you used to be able to do. Especially in the dorm rooms cause, in the dormitories because of Covid 19. I know this because I do have a child that is that age that is living, that lived on a college campus in a dorm. Along with nephews and nieces that live in a dorm. You cannot go in the dorms like that even when it came to us moving them in the dorms. They are not allowing you constant access due to Covid 19.

So when it comes to a child with autism, my child with autism, I'm going to use him as an example. When it came to him having surgery, we had to continue to tour the hospital going into the actual areas in which he would be for preop, for the actual surgery and postop. And that was so that he can get acclimated into the area which we would be. Children with autism have problems with transition. Some are extreme flight risk. So you have to actually allow them the

opportunity for wherever we're going to hold the conference, allow them the opportunity to continue to go in those areas and get acclimated with what the surroundings are so that they can actually get used to it before the actual conference occur. When it came to my child having his surgery, spinal cord surgery for spina bifida, it took, we had to tour a little more than a week. So for every person with autism they are not the same. And individuals with autism are not the only ones that have transitioning problems. We do have others with turrets, etc. that do have difficulty with transition that also are flight risk. And so I'm just stressing to y'all that that is something that you really need to take into consideration with choosing the location for the actual conference because yes, we are talking about diversity, equity and inclusion, but we also want to talk about equality because equality and equity mean two different things. And equity right now is the buzz word, but equality is not ever brought to the forefront. So we want to make sure equality is present that is going to allow every child regardless of their disability to actually be able to benefit.

And last, but definitely not least, we've had a lot of dialogue about it, but it doesn't hurt for us to actually make sure that legal says, because nobody that has spoken is an attorney and knows those laws like that but me. And that's why I'm telling you to consult with legal to have a confirmation, so it don't hit you in the end to say that it was no conflict of interest. That's the only thing and that's just advisement to make sure that we are protected. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that, Ms. Corley. Okay. But let me respond real quick before just to kind of redirect everything. The motion is about the contractor. Those details would be after we get a contract. So I just kind of want everyone to remember that the motion that we're talking about recommendations about the contractor. Those details that are being presented are very legitimate, but those would be further down the line. Reciprocate based on who the contract is. And then we would hope with the contractor those kind of details would be followed through to make sure that we can ensure that this is

going to be the productive program that we know that it will be. So I just wanted to redirect and refresh everybody's memory. We're talking about the motion about the contractor. Ms. Polotzola, I saw your hand.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. I mean, I just wanted to say that just out of respect for everybody's time that's here, I mean, first off, the things were not legitimate. I too have a son with autism who actually attends the university and the program, and they do allow people in and out of the dorms now. So some of the concerns were not legitimate. And just out of respect for people's times all of these things have been fleshed out thoroughly in the committee which I think are still recorded on our YouTube channel. So before we allow our time to be, you know, taken away by things that have already been discussed I wish the council would have some way that we can of course allow public comment, but not allow these things to be rehashed over and over which have been rehashed. And also not allow misinformation to be shared. And I don't know how we can stop that, but we have to have some way to be able to correct that. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Did I see another hand? Ms. DeJean, you're recognized by the chair. You have to floor.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Like to clarify with everyone Ms. Corley's concerns about the conflict of interest. Ms. Corley made multiple inaccurate statements in her public comments. One of which that Families Helping Families employees resigned on the Friday of our meeting. That is actually not accurate. The Families Helping Families employees resigned over a week before and well before they submitted their solicitation of proposals as to avoid all conflict of interest. Ms. Corley was not on any of these emails. And then our committee meeting did occur on a Friday where I did announce this, but those emails of resignation did not occur on the Friday that the meeting did as well. So if you have any questions about the things that our committee did to avoid any sort of conflict of interest, I'd be happy to answer them. We've crossed our Is and dotted our Ts to make sure YLF is coming to Louisiana in a good way. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: I don't see any more council members with their hands raised. Do we have any hands raised in the public?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Yes, sir. Ms. Kathy Dwyer has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Dwyer, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Before we go any further let's make sure we keep all comments relevant to the recommendation. We're talking about the contract for YLF. We're not talking about YLF about the program for programmatic purposes yet. Ms. Dwyer, you have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to make a suggestion. As being part of the administrative committee, so to speak, of the first YLF that was held in Louisiana, handling much of these technical issues in terms of contracts and so forth, I would just suggest that y'all make sure that there's language in the contract that the YLF is held, you know, prepared, presented so that it is accessible to all. And in terms of addressing each individuals' needs that can be done in the application where you ask for any specific accommodations that people need. I'm assuming you're going to have applications. At least we did in our first year.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes, ma'am. Okay. So point of order, remind everybody we're discussing this about YLF. We still have more things to discuss. We've already spent about 23 minutes on this. I just want to make sure we're being cognizant of everyone's time. Do we have any more discussion? Any more hands raised?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We do have one last comment from Ms. Vivienne Webb. She stated I understand your concerns. I am a self-advocate on the autism spectrum, and I also have siblings with autism. I believe that the program will be during the summer so there should be a time period where people may tour the campus beforehand. Transitions are a part of life. YLF is designed to help prepare for a major transition to living on your own in a dorm if that individual so chooses.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Webb. No more comments? No more hands raised?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No, sir.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. So are you ready for the question? Okay. So the question is on the motion to move to accept the YLF committee recommendations for Families Helping Families of Acadiana to be the contractor for the Youth Leadership Forum. Are there any objections? If not, we'll take a roll call vote. Ms. Basile, you call the names, please.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Point of order. If there's no objections, do we have to call roll?

RASHAD BRISTO: No. We really don't. I'm sorry. Thank you for that, Ms. Polotzola. So no objections, we're moving forward. Now we're going to move down to-- am I missing anything before I move forward? Okay. So now we're moving forward with the legislative motions. Dr. McKee moved for the LaDDC to provide advocacy on issue number one, incontinent supplies.

AMY DEAVILLE: Let me pull up what it actually says.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you.

AMY DEAVILLE: This was issue number one, funding for hygiene/incontinent products for adults to be covered by Medicaid to include things such as briefs, diapers, diaper cream, lotions, gloves, etc.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any discussion from the council members in regards to issue number one that's being presented? Oh, let me preference this particular legislative session that we're going into is a fiscal legislative session. So for the public I want you to be aware it's going to be a more, this is a fiscal legislative session as opposed to anything that's going to be addressing laws. So just kind of want to preference that that way everybody's on the same page and have the same insight knowing. Any discussion from the council members in regards to this? Okay. Ms. DeJean, you're recognized by the chair.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: I actually have two suggestions. I'll make it quick. Y'all this tubing is a pain. I also realize that earlier I said that my committee has dotted my Ts and crossed my Is and I regret saying anything now. So first of all, I am currently working with Representative Miller on a study resolution for next legislative session. There is a phenomena within

the rare disease chronic illness community where if a patient is complex and difficult to understand, either the patient or the disease process, their disease process is chalked up to mental illness, so the doctor doesn't necessarily have to do further explanation on the issue. I have many friends in the rare disease community. Every single one of them has been accused of something similarly. It took me about 20 years to be accused of the same thing despite having plenty evidence that my organs don't work right, and my body is different than yours.

So as I started thinking more about this and talking to more people, I realize this doesn't just affect the chronic community. It also affects patients with acute issues as well. So, for instance, we understand in Louisiana we have a really, really bad maternal health outcome for black women who are pregnant in the state. We understand that pregnancy for black women is dangerous for both mother and baby. And we also understand that black women are statistically more likely to be accused of histrionics whenever they complain of pain or other symptoms.

Or I also know someone who went in with pain, she was a black woman, serious pain and the doctor chalked it up to generalized anxiety disorder. She did not have a diagnosis of generalized anxiety disorder. This didn't make any sense. I also question what happens when people with serious mental illness goes in with physical issues and the doctors question why they're there and the doctors don't like research why they're having these issues and simply chalk it up to serious mental illness. So this is a rampant issue in our healthcare system that's based around bias and discrimination. And we understand specifically that young women are more likely to experience this. So I'm working-- two minutes, okay. Working with Miller to create study resolutions and I want the council's support on this so this can go through, and we can start figuring out on how to remedy this issue. So I want to stop because I know there may be some discussion and then go onto the next thing. I apologize for taking so much time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any questions in regards

to what was just presented before the council?

HYACINTH MCKEE: I do have a question. First of all, thank you, Lillian, for bringing this to the council's attention. And I'm really impressed with your advocacy on this issue. I do have a question. How are we able to tie this and align this with people with disabilities? How are you able to articulate your advocacy to tie to the population that we serve?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Well, because we understand that people with developmental disabilities are sometimes people with rare diseases. We also, within our work, we also consider, you know, I think people with mental illnesses whenever we consider disability advocacy as well. So this issue specifically affects people with rare diseases, serious mental illnesses and chronic issues that could be considered a developmental disability as the illness may have started before the age of 21.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Thank you for that. One more circle back question. I share your passion in this. My only concern is is that, which I do believe we should move in the direction to be inclusive of making sure that disabilities does cover people that have mental health concerns and mental health illnesses as well. That speaks to the future, right. That speaks to where you are and what we should be doing. My only concern is where we are now how do we ensure that people recognize that mental illness, mental health and all those issues that you brought could be considered a developmental disability as per state law, right. And so that's where the fight is. And so I support what you're saying. But my concern would be how do we get it to a place where we can make sure that's included in the population that we serve. So that's where we need to go with it, right. Rare disease, absolutely. But we need to go in-- and you're right there and I want to be able to support you, but we have to tie it into what we're doing, right, our population.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Absolutely. And I think it really boils down to bias and discrimination within the medical system against people with disabilities. I mean, whenever I go into the hospital, you know, I do have a lot of rare diseases, but I'm also a young woman



with a history of anxiety and that works against me greatly. So in order to be taken seriously I have to provide much more information than perhaps an older male would with no history of anxiety, right. And so it does affect a lot of our population. Especially since we've recently started talking about co-occurring disabilities, people with behavioral health issues and also mental health issues, right. So it affects a lot of our population, it's just been overlooked. And I think because people are scared to speak up about it because then people ask well, if I speak up about this what if the other person doesn't believe me and believes the doctor that's been saying that I'm crazy.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. Do we have any other comments or questions in regards to what's being presented by Ms. DeJean?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Ms. Nicole Banks has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Vice Chair Banks, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

NICOLE BANKS: Good morning. Thank you for recognizing me. I just have a question because I'm trying to get more clarification. Just as like Dr. McKee was saying, how are we going to tie in black women in regards to this issue? (Inaudible) representing a small portion of it because of the chronic pain issues that they're having? I'm just trying to get there, that's all. I mean, like I support what you're saying like full-heartedly, of course, I'm a black woman so I'm going to support you. But I just want to see how is that going to get to where we needed to be at. How you're explaining it, how do we get there like how do we get-- I'm just trying to figure out how are y'all getting black women into that category of developmental disabilities.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Absolutely. And I think I probably failed to place the correct emphasis on developmental disability because my example of black women being statistically more likely of being accused of histrionics was simply trying to demonstrate the potential scope of the issue, right. Where the focus is people with rare diseases, chronic illnesses that are considered developmental disabilities because they

developed before the age of 21 not being able to access medical care because they're written off by doctors. And then it poses a huge issue, especially with people with chronic issues who need ongoing medical care. So that was my bad and in not placing the emphasis in the correct area, but it was really just trying to demonstrate the potential scope of this legislative study.

NICOLE BANKS: Thank you for the clarification cause I just needed it. I'm like I see where they're going. Okay. But now I totally and fully understand what you're saying in regards to the whole disability and the black women. Thank you for that clarification. I yield the floor.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Vice Chair Banks. Ms. Webb, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

VIVIENNE WEBB: I think it is important that we don't discriminate against others. What we're talking about here is doctors will write off other people as faking things or not believe them. Also mental health and chronic pain can coincide or be caused by developmental disabilities, and they can exist because of mental or developmental disabilities. I have autism and anxiety. I have had a doctor not believe me in the past about my chronic pain. I have been accused of lying about my chronic pain or mental illness. But it's been proved time and time again that I was correct. He called and apologized several times. I feel we need to not discriminate against others when it comes to developmental disabilities. And lots of people, especially black women struggle with getting their diagnoses because people won't believe them. They're more likely to not be found truthful even though they have problems. They need doctors to believe them, to listen to them and to diagnose them. We need to not discriminate against others based on this. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that, Ms. Webb. Ms. Egle, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL EGLE: Yeah. I'm a little confused about I know Vivienne was saying she has autism and the mental

health illness. But if you're IDD how can that tie in of having a mental illness?

RASHAD BRISTO: Well, I'll respond to that one. It's going to be very vague because there's no defined line. This is just a conversation that's exploring another issue that's being brought to the forefront in regards to making legislation.

JILL EGGLE: Okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes, ma'am. Thank you for that. Do we have any more hands raised by council members on Zoom and in the room? That actually rhymed.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Real fast. I just want to clarify that this would essentially study the frequency that this occurs within our communities so then we can figure out how to potentially remedy this in our medical system. But it's a study about the frequency this happens so we can get solid evidence.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you. Ms. Hano, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Is the study specifically going to mention black women with developmental disabilities? Because I'm kind of on the fence. I definitely see like where this would be finally important, but also like if these, and I don't even know if this is fair for me to say, but like I mean if women would have to have shown the critical illness before the age of 22, correct, Amy? And so like that was-- I'm just thinking out loud. So I just wanted some clarification on that before I can kind of piece my thoughts together. Like does that make sense, Lillian?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: It does make sense. And it would be a broad study. It's not just going to focus on black women. The language has not been flushed out yet. This is the core of the issue of the study though. The study would study the frequency that patients are written off just by blaming things like mental illness or histrionics. And I'm bringing this to the council today because we know that this is going to be more likely to happen to chronic patients who are likely going to fall in the category of developmental disability.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. So with that being said, I

need to table this for just one minute because it's been brought to my attention, we have a motion on the floor. We're just going to hold right there for a few minutes. Can we bring back up issue one, the funding of hygiene, products for adults. Just to refresh everybody's memory, we have a motion on the floor. Do we have any more discussion in regards to the motion that was presented by the executive committee? No discussion?

EBONY HAVEN: Are there any comments, Rekeesha, that are relevant to the motion that's on the screen for the issue one, the incontinent supplies. Are there any comments in the chat relevant to that issue?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ready for questions in regards to the motion? Do we have any objections in regards to the motion? Okay. So the motion passes. The next motion as presented-- Ms. DeJean, I'm not dismissing you. Let me go ahead and do this real quick. So the next motion for legislative advocacy motion was, the amended motion, I'm going to read it. Change open meeting law to increase representation of individuals with IDD and ensure the diversity of public body and change open meetings law to include hybrid meetings as a standard means of public input for the IDD community in the legislative advocacy agenda. Do we have any questions in regard that was presented by executive committee in regards to this motion? Not seeing any in the room, do we have any on Zoom in regards to the motion?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We have two hands raised. Ms. Kathy Dwyer and Ms. Corhonda Corley.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Dwyer, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not sure if this is the appropriate time, but I would suggest that we amend the motion do include that notifications are also equally accessible for meetings. I'll give an example. You know, I appreciate the DD Council sending out public notice meetings about all the DD council meetings and subcommittee meetings. However, the email notifications are not providing any instructions or information about it being available on Zoom. I've had

to a couple times ask if it's available on Zoom and then I am referred to go to the website. So when I think about an individual with a developmental disability, you're asking them to go through several steps. One, they have to be knowledgeable that it's possibly available on Zoom, but the email I think, you know, not just DD Council, but public meetings needs to be clear that this is also available in other formats to participate and here's how you register. We shouldn't be having our constituents or individuals with disabilities having to go jumping through hoops so to speak just to find out if it's available and how to register.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that comment, Ms. Dwyer. That's going to be more a programmatic issue. That's not going to be something that's going to be legislative. That's something we would just try to have to hold accountable those designated entities of interest whenever that comes down to it.

KATHY DWYER: No. I think-- excuse me. I'm sorry. I don't mean to interrupt. But I think the proposal can include notifications should include the necessary information to participate virtually.

CORHONDA CORLEY: I'm not amending my motion.

KATHY DWYER: Well, that's a shame.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for your comments. Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair and council. I love the motion. The only thing that I'm requesting and recommending is the part about a standard means of public input. If we can define, like if we want the public input to be able to be provided during live time. Because I know as it relates to some of the current meetings like the BESE meetings, the Advisory Council for Student Behavior and Discipline, that task force for student behavior, discipline and mental health, LAPIE meetings and the list goes on and on. They don't normally provide a means for individuals with disabilities to be able to give public input during real live time of the meeting and it is important that we do give real live input during that time on the issues. And I know that we may have staff

attend, but I do have to remind you that our staff don't actually speak on record. So it is important for them to actually hear from our community during that timeframe when they're actually addressing issues that impact and affect us. So that's the only recommendation I have is the part that says standards means of public input. Because right now the standard means of public input from BESE is for you to submit it in writing days prior to the actual meeting. So that's the only thing that I want you to actually look at because things actually get changed right then during live meetings. And so it's important that we give our input then. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for your comments. Do we have any more questions in regards, any more comments in regards to the motion that has been presented?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We do have one comment in the chat in regards to this motion from Ms. Kathy Dwyer. Is the DD Council interested or not in making meetings fully accessible to people with disabilities.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. Ms. Polotzola, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Just a point of clarification. The DD staff does have the authority to speak on record if they're following our plan and they do that. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. Any more questions in regards to the motion that's on the floor in regards to changing open meeting laws to increase representation of individuals with IDD and diversity of public bodies and change open meetings law to include hybrid meetings as a standard means of public input for the IDD community to the legislative advocacy agenda. Not seeing any hands raised in regards to it. Do we have any hands raised virtually, Ms. Rekeesha?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Yes. Ms. Vivienne Webb has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. Ms. Webb, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Thank you. I would like some clarification here what does this motion actually change. We already have everything open to the public. Everyone can join the Zooms. Everyone can see the

YouTube. I mean, I would like it if the YouTube chats were read as well, but that's one of the only issues I really see. Everything else is available for the public, isn't it?

AMY DEAVILLE: For our meetings, yes. But for a lot of other state government entities, boards, commissions, public bodies their meetings are not open. They might not have hybrid options. They might not allow people to participate or watch via Zoom. They might not live stream it. Some meetings for some state departments are 100 percent in-person meetings. And so that's I think the intent of this motion was to try to help open up those other entities meetings so that they could all be I guess more like ours. Although I don't really like to say it that way. Did that answer your question, Vivienne?

VIVIENNE WEBB: Thank you for the explanation. I think is another entity maybe already working on this though?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes. There is currently a task force that is working on looking at open meetings law. In fact, I think Lillian sits on it. And they're looking at ways to open up. I believe the intent is to actually change some open meetings law legislation.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Thank you. So that doesn't really mean we need this motion then. It doesn't really do anything if someone else is already working on it.

AMY DEAVILLE: It would perhaps be a duplicative effort, yes.

VIVIENNE WEBB: All right. Thank you. I think we should like let's put our efforts elsewhere and try to make more change instead of doing something that's already being done then, please.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that. Once we go through the comments we'll see if this motion will be adopted. Do we have anymore hands raised in regards to the motion that's on the floor?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No hands raised at this time. But we do have two comments in the comment chat. Ms. Corhonda Corley stated we need this motion. Ms. Vivienne Webb stated it's already being done by another entity.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that. Do we

have any more comments? Getting ready to call the question. Any hands raised in the room? Any hands raised on Zoom?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Not at this time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay.

REKEESHA BRANCH: Ms. Jill Hano has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Hano, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: What is the task force for the open meeting law?

AMY DEAVILLE: Do you mind if Lillian answers cause she's on it?

JILL HANO: That was directed at Lillian, but I didn't want to be out of order.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: So the task force is the SR147 task force. It passed last year to create the task force. And the task force is studying open meeting laws and best practices for hybrid meetings as I understand it. And the intention is that eventually we will make recommendations to the legislature on open meetings laws, hybrid practices and virtual participation. In the law it required that a person with a disability be on the task force so they could consider accessibility issues as pertains to open meeting laws and that's why I sit on the task force.

RASHAD BRISTO: Did that answer your question, Ms. Hano?

JILL HANO: Yep.

EBONY HAVEN: Can I ask a question? What's the timeframe for you all to make the recommendations? Was there a timeframe put in place in the resolution or are you guys just meeting until you figure out which recommendations you want to recommend to the legislature?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: That's an excellent question. I can pull up the piece of legislation. I don't have it offhand.

RASHAD BRISTO: Mr. Michel, you're recognized.

CHARLIE MICHEL: Just one comment real briefly. While I know we don't typically like to do duplication of efforts I think in this instance it's such a huge problem and having LaCAN and the DD Council behind it



will help that task force to complete that assignment. I know in my region our LGE does not have meetings open virtually. And they changed their meetings at the last minute so we can't even attend them. So I think if we did something like this that would help them help all agencies be more consistent because it is confusing to me how we can do this here, but every other agency seems to have the latitude to make their own choices which is fine. This would limit some of the options out there that's more consistent for people, who like many of us here, attend multiple kinds of meetings. That's it. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. Thank you. Ms. Bayham.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: I do have an answer. The deadline is February 1st, 2023. And the law specifically states that we are to give specific proposals for legislation to the senate and David Pointner from the legislative research library. So the deadline is February 1st next year.

RASHAD BRISTO: And my curiosity, this would be also more of a re-enforcement of what you guys will be presenting, correct?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: I would assume so, yes. It would be y'all coming behind and saying the disability community really needs that virtual participation.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. Do we have any more questions in the room in regards to the motion on the floor?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Just one quick point. I think whenever this committee that's created legislatively when they meet that if this is put on the agenda that that's whenever it should be activated so the recommendations are inclusive of what the community wants. And that way it would make it easier for our advocates during the session if we can get it agreed upon before the session starts that's always the best way to go, I think.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Polotzola. Do we have anymore hands raised by council members?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No, sir. But we do have Ms. Kathy Dwyer with her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Dwyer, you have the floor. You're recognized by the chair.

KATHY DWYER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The point about the other LGEs, and I'm thinking about legislative committees as well, not making meetings virtual is one reason why I suggested notifications be fully accessible too. I had to-- it took a little bit of extra work, more than I think was necessary to get some things implemented to be accessible for our LGE. And I think if we have it clear in law what the expectations are, not only to make these meetings virtual or hybrid, but that the notifications about how to participate virtually or via hybrid is equally accessible. Without having that information about being accessible you're not, you know, being able to participate virtually you're not going to have any participation.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that, Ms. Dwyer. Taking in all consideration our comments we need to move to make a decision on it.

REKEESHA BRANCH: We also have two comments in the chat and one hand raised. The hand raised is for Ms. Christina Martin. And the two comments, Ms. Liz Gary stated collaboration is the key. And Ms. Vivienne Webb stated does this truly help or are would we just be stating the same thing unnecessarily.

RASHAD BRISTO: To answer Ms. Webb's question, like I said earlier, this would be more of a reinforcement to let it be known that it's coming from another designated entity of interest so that way the legislature won't see it as just saying it's only coming from one direction, only one agency or entity is having an issue with it. It comes from more than one agency. This gives more interest and raise the radar more to let people know that this is a concern. I missed the name of the hand that was raised.

REKEESHA BRANCH: Yes, sir. Ms. Christina Martin.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Martin, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CHRISTINA MARTIN: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I'm speaking on behalf as the LaCAN body as a whole. And I would just like to kind of throw out there that this is a fiscal session so I would like the council to look at the other two recommended agenda items as well if we can, please. So

that we can prioritize the importance of that fiscal session. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. Any more hands raised? Ready to move forward? Ready to call the question. The motion, I'll read it in for the record. Change open meetings law to increase representation of individuals with IDD to ensure diversity of public bodies and change open meetings law to include hybrid meetings as a standard means of public input for the IDD community as legislative advocacy agenda. Do we have any objections? Not hearing none, motion passes. Next legislative agenda item.

AMY DEAVILLE: That is one that came out of executive committee--

JILL HANO: Can I abstain?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes.

JILL HANO: But that is only from the open meetings, correct.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes.

JILL HANO: Okay. Sorry, y'all.

RASHAD BRISTO: Not a problem.

AMY DEAVILLE: Those were the only recommendations made out of executive committee for the legislative advocacy agenda. However, there was one that is coming out of the education committee. So you may want to address that one now. This is the motion that was for inclusion with the legislative advocacy agenda. The motion reads the education and employment committee recommends the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council add additional funding of 3 million-dollars for the post-secondary inclusive education fund to the 2023 legislative advocacy agenda.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any discussion from the council members in regards to this motion? Do we have any hands raised? Not hearing anything, do we have any hands raised from any council members online or virtual?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Not at this time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Do we have any comments in the chat box in regards to the motion?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No, sir.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ready to call the question. Any objections to this motion that's presented by the

education and employment committee? Any abstentions? Anybody abstain? Not hearing anything, motion passes.

VIVIENNE WEBB: Do I need to abstain from this?

RASHAD BRISTO: Do you have a conflict?

VIVIENNE WEBB: I'm not sure. I'm on the education and employment committee. Is this something I need to abstain from?

RASHAD BRISTO: No, no, no.

VIVIENNE WEBB: All right.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for asking, but no. Do we have any public comment?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No, sir.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Next order of business.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Mr. Chair, just a point of order. You need to take public comment before you vote on the motion.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. Thank you, Mr. Andrus.

REKEESHA BRANCH: There's no public comment at this time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yield the floor back to Ms. DeJean. Since we've gone through our motions I wanted to go ahead and let you present what you wanted to present to the council.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Okay. So like I mentioned earlier, I'm working with Miller on that HCR. I would like the council's support on that because it affects our community greatly in access to healthcare.

The second thing that I would like to bring forward in front of the council is potentially advocating for a piece of legislation that would allow for accessible absentee voting. Currently absentee voting is inaccessible to our disability community. As we know whenever you vote absentee you have to hand mark your paper ballot. If you think about it how does a blind person do that independently and privately. How does someone who may be a quadriplegic do that independently and privately. And the answer is it doesn't really happen. And national standards from the national disability rights network states that voting is only accessible if it can be done by the person with a disability 100 percent privately and 100 percent independently.

And this is the time to do it as the secretary of state is in the process of choosing a new voting system for the State of Louisiana. And it's also the time to do it because it's a fiscal year and the state is going to need funding for the machines that is needed, or the technology needed for accessible absentee voting. We need the support of LaCAN for this because of the narrative surrounding voting fraud surrounding using machines with voting, right. So our community is going to need to use technology to vote accessibly absentee. But there is huge pushback from some of the public because it involves machines, right. So we need the disability community to show up and state that this is needed because right now our voting system actually isn't accessible and our people with disabilities cannot completely access their democracy like everyone else. So I would be happy to take any questions or answer any concerns.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any questions by any council members? So the takeaway, Ms. DeJean, is to ask if us, the council...

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Support the HCR that I'm working on and then secondly push for accessible absentee voting because that's likely going to need to happen legislatively and it's also likely going to need state funding for the technology required. And it's also going to need a big push from the community to make it happen so the legislature knows that there's support for this outside of false narratives about the dangers of machines.

RASHAD BRISTO: A course of action for the council, would like a letter of support or agenda item or what?

LILLIAN DEJEAN: I think both should be added to the legislative agenda.

RASHAD BRISTO: With that being said, do we have any?

HYACINTH MCKEE: I have a question, a comment about this. So my concern is is that one, both issues are truly needed. But I do have to take in consideration the survey that we put out and all of the other requests from family members that the rubric that we utilized. And although what you're bringing to us is very important and I think something that the LaDDC

could try to support in whatever way we can once we get more information, particularly the first one and the second one. But I cannot overlook the work that was done when the community all said they have other priorities as well. So, I mean, although I think this is awesome, I need to also look at the other requests that the community has asked for us to do to consider advocacy to support as well, right. We have an entire list of priorities that was brought before us that were ranked. You know, we have ones and twos and threes and fours. And so in all fairness to those families and what they brought to our attention I would need to consider those first before I can take a stand and just take the information that you're providing in front of me today and say that we should fully support what you're doing and put it on the legislative advocacy agenda. Certainly should we support it, absolutely. It seems like you have the data, the information and the hard work. I would say we need a little more data on the first one though. But I like where you're going, but we need mere data on that one. But I cannot, you know, overlook the other priorities that our families have brought in front of us for this year.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Absolutely. And the first one the intention of the study would be to gather that data so we can remedy that issue. I completely respect what you're saying. I think the DD Council sometimes misses people like me though because if we look at the demographics of our LaCAN members, our LaCAN leaders, we mostly see parents of individuals with developmental disabilities. Meaning parents of children with diagnoses like autism or like down syndrome and you're not necessarily catching your parents of rare disease patients or your more chronic and fluid conditions.

And additionally, we know that our LaCAN membership has a very, very low population of self-advocates. So we have to take into consideration when looking at this legislative agenda the voices that weren't heard and the voices that weren't counted. And largely that is going to be your self-advocates and your individuals with disabilities who have rare conditions and fluid conditions that we don't necessarily think of whenever we think of DD that are

DD. So I just wanted to bring that issue up as well.

HYACINTH MCKEE: I thank you for doing that, Lillian. And I think that this Youth Leadership Forum will be one of the best ways to get that and raise that awareness. I'm totally in line in that vision and I think that's where your best work is going to be. Making sure that we can get everyone to know that is what they think DD is is not what's actually what it is, what's happening. So thank you for that.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Polotzola.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Is there a way that we can make this issue, because it's going to be a study resolution and hopefully that is not something that if we get the right people involved that need to do it that it happens. So it might not need to be a priority, but that, a priority one. But how does that work if like we want the DD Council staff and LaCAN to be engaged as needed to make sure that that passes, but it's not something, hopefully the work can be done to where something we need to get people there to advocate in yellow shirts for. So is that...

HYACINTH MCKEE: I think hearing Lillian and wanting that support from the DD Council to stand with her in this work. And then also LaCAN, you mentioned that as well. I think that can happen like what you're saying. It may not, you know, result in yellow shirt advocacy, right. But I think she brought up the point about it being a fiscal year. And when you start things like being a fiscal year that is going to take that type of advocacy in order to throw funds behind it. And my only concern is that I don't want to overlook the existing asks from the other parents, right. Because we do have other asks of us. And I feel uncomfortable with not considering those and just, you know what I mean, just taking this one without considering those. And that would be my position on it, you know.

RASHAD BRISTO: I saw Lillian's hand, but you're probably going to correct me on something. Go ahead.

BRENTON ANDRUS: I was just going to say as far as bill tracking goes, which is what we use throughout session to kind of get everything that's coming through the legislature that's specifically related to

developmental disabilities or just disabilities in general. I do the bill tracking list so I would guarantee you that any bill, as long as I would assume the task force isn't going to come out with anything just completely detrimental to what we're trying to accomplish, but I can tell you this would be something the council would support in the tracking mechanism. We have it, for those of you that have looked at our bill tracking in the past, we had certain levels. So if it's something, or a LaCAN activity, some things might warrant council member activity only so we might reach out to some of you to participate. Maybe not participate in the task force, but maybe go and share some sort of testimony there. There can also be administrative advocacy which is where staff do things. We may send a letter on behalf of the council. We may go to the committee meeting. We may meet with the legislature or task force members outside. And so those things are kind of developed once we see all the legislation that has come out. I would hope if they're pushing out something for February 1, I think you said.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: That's for the SR147 task force for virtual participation.

BRENTON ANDRUS: Sorry. I am talking about the one (inaudible). That would be the one we would, I would imagine, be in support of that. And so we can do advocacy around it that's not necessarily LaCAN specific. It would just be a matter of kind of what it says and what we think we can accomplish. Like I said, either via staff or preference would be to get council members involved. Because again, you have more skin in the game. I mean, you are representative of yourself and your children and other members of the community. So I do think it's possible even if that is not on the agenda that we could still help and do some work around it.

RASHAD BRISTO: And I think the best course of action at this point, with that being said, Ms. DeJean, is submit this to a committee to see how (inaudible). But I'm going to yield the floor so you can make your comment.

LILLIAN DEJEAN: Are you finished? I don't want to interrupt. So with the HCR really, you're right. It



may not need to be on the legislative agenda and maybe if simply a committee or the council says that they support it. With the voting issue I don't think anything like that, in my personal opinion, with bill tracking with GODA for the past two years with being involved with voting accessibility, I frankly do not think that this accessible absentee voting would pass unless there's a very large force behind it like active LaCAN advocacy, like yellow shirt days. Because as you've seen on the voting system's commission there is pretty big push back from the community that thinks that machines are inherently fraudulent. So that would be one thing that if the council just says that they support but there's no public testimony, I think it would likely fail in committee at the legislature.

RASHAD BRISTO: I will entertain a motion in regards to submit it to, which committee would be of interest with this one, our subcommittees?

AMY DEAVILLE: Which one are we talking, the voting?

RASHAD BRISTO: Voting.

JILL HANO: SDCI.

AMY DEAVILLE: Self-determination.

EBONY HAVEN: We're not going to have another meeting.

RASHAD BRISTO: I'll entertain a motion to suggest.

EBONY HAVEN: You have two other hands.

RASHAD BRISTO: We have Ms. Egle, your hand is raised. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Jill, you have the floor.

JILL EGLE: So I absolutely agree with Vivienne with saying about LaCAN, LaTEACH. You know, to be honest, I think that there should be more self-advocates who have voices. And I know there's a lot of parents with, you know, special need kids and I went through Partners in Policymaking, and I know there's a change in the state because not next year but the year after they're about to embrace a new governor. So I think that there should be more self-advocate representation with the house and the senate for the DD Council agenda. And because to be honest I represent the DD Council and I represent the Arc of GNO. When have they ever passed the rate. The funding is so bad

when is that ever going to level out. Because I think it's the time to change in the senate and the house and the new governor. Along with DD Council and LaCAN and LaTEACH we should have more self-advocates in representation. What can we do to make this change?

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that, Jill.

JILL EGLE: I'm just worried, Mr. Rashad, because every time I advocated on behalf of DD Council or Arc of GNO it's just like I never know what's going to pass with the funding and everything.

RASHAD BRISTO: And that's a legitimate concern. That's why we have these discussions. That way we'll know exactly how to move forward. And everything is relevant to the concern. It's just a matter when it comes down to prioritizing what's going to be the most relevant. Legitimate concern. Thank you for that. Ms. Hano, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: I know that, and correct me if I'm wrong, I know that it is up to the council members to determine the actual legislative agenda. And it was recommended to put like very few items on our agenda. And then so I have it in the comments, but I'm all for this because voting rights are part of our state plan. I don't know is it yearly or five year? But I do agree with this. But that being said, it doesn't fall on our actual agenda even though y'all and staff members do determine the the priorities of our tracking list every year, correct?

AMY DEAVILLE: Yes, that's correct.

JILL HANO: Can we just put it out there for argument sake if this is not on our agenda can we put it out there? Can I recommend that staff follows this closely and this get a higher priority? Because like I said, and I'm going to emphasize all day, voting accessibility is on our state plan and the HCR14 task force was the first time I've ever really firsthand seen that. Like we were not saying we haven't in the past, but the first time I've seen firsthand that we were addressing the voting issues which is my passion in life. Do I say that about everything? I do, don't I.

RASHAD BRISTO: No problem, Jill. Let me say this.

Ms. DeJean is asking for legislative support at the end of the day. So the question is if we want to make a motion to add the concerns that have been presented to the legislative agenda. So with that being said, cause we got a lot of discussion. We're going down a rabbit hole. We have 15 more minutes to a break and a lot of people are getting restless. So with that being said, I'm willing to entertain a motion if this is something the council would like to add to the legislative agenda. I'm going to leave it up to the council. I'll leave it open if anyone's willing to move on the motion.

AMY DEAVILLE: So what's currently on the screen is what has already been voted on and is our legislative advocacy agenda as of right now. If the accessible voting does not end up on the legislative agenda, we will still track that item. And, you know, we can do some administrative advocacy behind the scenes if it's not the full council doing the advocacy or LaCAN being activated for advocacy as well. That's always an option too.

JILL HANO: Sorry, Rashad. I was too long winded, but that was my point. And if it's not on the agenda can staff make it a high priority item?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I wanted to make a motion to add just one more item to the advocacy agenda. It was one of the items that was on the recommendations from, is it LaCAN, the advocacy. What was it called?

SPEAKER: The community input.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: The community input. And one of those top three was in regards to funding for Families Helping Families and there was discussion yesterday around that, you know, it continues to be a yearly item and that it really, it needs to not be that. And so I think the motion that I would say is that we would have, we would advocate for recurring sustainable funding through the DD Council which goes to our Families Helping Families centers. And it seems the amount that we were asking for is a million dollars total, right. So that would be what I recommend the council do. And not just for this year, but it would be a sustainable, annual.

HYACINTH MCKEE: A million total. Like every year

allocate that 1 million for each FHF center or just as a whole?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: The money comes to the DD Council and then it's divided.

HYACINTH MCKEE: It was a half a million before. Now you're asking for a million?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: We've always gotten a half a million dollars.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Right. But the ask is for a million.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Because the past two years I think we've been advocating each year for an additional 500,000. So it's been equaling a million. If we need a million, we just need to get a million every year, be done with that advocacy item and not have to worry about that. Just know that our Families Helping Families, our resource centers are getting that funding they need.

HYACINTH MCKEE: So my question is for that, and I have, it was brought up about a benefit analysis being done and assessing if objectives have been met as well. Just asking, you know. Just having discussion. Is there any talk about ensuring that objectives are being met and that a benefit analysis will be done? That actually came from an FHF.

NICOLE LEARSON: Point of order, Mr. Chair.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes.

NICOLE LEARSON: If that's a motion it requires a second before discussion.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Oh, she's right.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Learson. So we have a motion on the floor. It's been moved by Ms. Polotzola to advocate for reoccurrence of sustainable funds for Families Helping Families resource center in the total amount of.

AMY DEAVILLE: I'm looking for the total amount. It's a little over a million. It's like 1,007,517. So I'm just looking for the exact.

RASHAD BRISTO: We have a motion on the floor.

VIVIENNE WEBB: I second.

RASHAD BRISTO: Second by Ms. Vivienne Webb. Now any discussion.

HYACINTH MCKEE: I just brought that up just as a

question, not to-- but I know there has been some dialogue that was brought up about, you know, benefit analysis ensuring those kinds of things. Just bringing it up.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: That's already done by our committee, right. That's what looked at community inclusion.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Right. But I just was bringing it up because when we brought this up yesterday that was brought up as a concern. A question, if you will.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: And I'm totally for making sure that it is being effectively and efficiently utilized. But I think we already have the mechanism to monitor that in place.

EBONY HAVEN: I can just add that it was added to the FHF contract for this current year that they're in. Their fiscal year starts in July. That the FHF centers have to include a statement at the end of the year on how they use those additional funds and how it has benefited their center. So I know Charlie was at the executive committee yesterday. He's the executive director for Bayou Land Families Helping Families. And he did provide information on how his particular center has used that additional funding and how it has benefited them. But there is a clause in the current contract that the FHF centers have to provide the council with a statement of how those additional funds were used and how they benefited the center.

RASHAD BRISTO: So we have a motion on the floor. We have a second. Do we have any more discussion in regards to the motion on the floor by any council members? Do we have any hands raised from any council members in regards to the discussion about the motion that's on the floor that has been seconded?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No hand raised from a council member, but we do have Ms. Corhonda Corley with her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Keep in mind that we do have a motion on the floor, and it has been seconded.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair and council. I'm actually in approval.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that.

CORHONDA CORLEY: I'm sorry. Something else had popped on my screen. No, I'm actually in approval of this motion because like Ms. Polotzola stated, often times we do go, and we only ask for 500,000. Last year during the legislative session senate we were in finance appropriations and questions were asked in regards to the 500,000 and to justify the reasoning for why we only needed 500,000. And I did mention when I spoke during that finance committee that if they had more funding that they could provide to our FHF centers that we would gladly receive it. I do think that it's important and that it's imperative that when we speak legislative wise that we do have some of the staff or some of the executive directors from the FHF centers to actually be there to speak on that legislative agenda item. And that's because the questions that they ask I referred them back to FHF EDs. I did not want to answer that because I am not an executive director for an FHF center. So I do think that it's imperative that when we do have legislative items like this one that have been re-occurring and we do use our FHF centers so much that if Ms. Polotzola would like to ask for 1.5-million I would gladly, gladly support that because our FHF centers are asked to do so much including disseminate information to our individuals with disabilities throughout the community. And we do know that Covid impacted their ability to do fundraising. So I do strongly urge, and I support it. But if Ms. Polotzola would like to ask for 1.5, I would gladly support that. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. So we have a motion on the floor. It's been seconded. Do we have any more discussion? Any council members? Any hands raised virtually from any council members?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Not at this time. Oh, I'm sorry. Ms. Jill Hano just raised her hand.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Hano, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Do we have any other data of how other centers have been spending these additional funds?

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any data?

JILL HANO: Like I know Dr. Michel said that he,

like he broke down what he's been doing on this funding. Do we have anything else like that on record?

AMY DEAVILLE: So, I mean, I can tell you what some of them have been spending the money on.

JILL HANO: Perfect.

AMY DEAVILLE: And Brenton, you can correct me when I'm wrong. The additional 500,000 that has been asked for over the last couple of years has been an attempt to try to restore funds to the FHF centers that were taken away during, I believe, the Jindal administration. And so this 500,000-dollars that they've been getting year by year kind of helped restore them to where they were prior to funds being taken away. Because the funds were year by year so far and they have not been able to guarantee having them for additional years they have not all been able to use the money in the way that they probably would most like to which is staff raises and compensation. But instead people have been, they've done different things. But some of the executive directors have been creative about bonuses, retention bonuses, things like that to help retain staff. And a lot of them have used for software upgrades that help with their data gathering and reporting functions as well.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that clarification. Refresh your memory, we do have a motion on the floor, and it has been seconded. Do we have any more questions or discussion in regards to the motion that has been seconded on the floor. Dr. Michel, you're recognized by the chair.

CHARLIE MICHEL: Just real quickly. First off, I appreciate the motion because it is something that is sorely needed. But just to give you a piece of mind. One of the things that we got the new deliverables, if you will, for that extra money. And one of the things that happened as a result of one of those deliverables was it helped us as ten centers across the state put a Band-Aid on the sinking ship that is 504. And if we're talking about developmental disabilities that is a huge thing. There is no support from the state department of ed right now. There hasn't been since I was a director of special education. We've been able to get together, many of us, we partner, we do it individually

and we've been able to provide training on 504, the parent rights, the school responsibilities and how it can help their students. We've been able to do that across the state. That is nothing that was ever able to be done before on any kind of a regular basis. So this is just one of the, I'm going to say, unintended consequences of it. But it is something that we desperately need to continue. And I said this yesterday, we more than doubled the number of parents and professionals that we train and a big part of that is because 504.

Additionally, one of the biggest increases we've gotten is from teachers of students who are in 504. They don't know if what they're being told to do is accurate. So we're able to hit this from all avenues. And I will say we did not use the DD Council's extra money for raises or bonuses or anything for the simple reason that it is one time money. If I got the money on a recurring basis, I would increase staff because we have that need. And probably would do something to address the wages of them. So anyway, I appreciate the motion. I hope that y'all will take this seriously because I will have to let people go or let a person go or cut hours if we don't get it. We just operate on a real tight budget. So I thank y'all very much.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. Michel. Do we have any more questions in regards to the motion that's on the floor that has been seconded?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We have Ms. Jill Hano with her hand raised and we have a few comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Hano, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Dr. McKee, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Here I am. I'm so confused.

RASHAD BRISTO: Go ahead, Jill. You're recognized by the chair.

JILL HANO: When were the 504 trainings added, Ebony or Dr. Michel or whoever knows the answer?

RASHAD BRISTO: Jill, what I'm going to do since we have a motion on the floor that takes us off discussion. I will have them reach out to you offline.

JILL HANO: Sorry, sir.

RASHAD BRISTO: No problem. Dr. McKee, you're



recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Thank you so much, Dr. Michel, for giving that. I think the biggest piece is when there is an ask, we do need executive directors to literally say what you're doing with the money. Certainly no one at this table, I would think, would be against providing more money to support FHF. I think the issue is we need more executive directors like yourself to speak up and say hopefully what we are, what you're doing with the money so that when you do have the ask it provides stronger support. What happens often times is just, you know, numbers are thrown out, but we have no analysis to say what's happening, okay. So I just want the executive directors of FHF to hear that. We need you to say what you're doing. We have a council member on right now saying what is the 504, when did that happen and it shouldn't be. Our council members should know that this work is happening and what you're doing.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. McKee. Do we have any more questions in regard to the motion that's been on the floor that's been seconded? Any questions from any council members in the room? Any hands raised virtually?

REKEESHA BRANCH: No hands raised at this time, but we do have a few comments. The first comment was from Ms. Susan Rhein. FHF agencies are audited yearly from the DDC, and we also have financial audits. Ms. Jill Hano stated that it's 507,517. Ms. Mimi Webb, she stated we had directors testify last session in committee during yellow shirt day. Corhonda Corley stated I'm being specific to having FHF education speak about the needs of funding to the senate finance committee which is the committee that deals with money. I strongly agree with Dr. Charlie. Dr. Charlie Michel should come state that for the senate finance. I attended and it was a wonderful presentation.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for those comments. Not seeing any more comments or anything from the public in regards to the motion that's on the floor. It's been seconded. Ready to call the question. Am I missing anything before I move forward? Do we have any opposition to this motion being added to

the legislative agenda? Any abstentions?

KIM BASILE: I abstain.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Basile is abstaining. Conflict of interest. Do we have any more abstentions? Motion be added to the legislative agenda. Passes. Question, do we have any more motions or anything that's going to be presented by council members about anything that's been presented within the last hour?

JILL HANO: It's only been an hour.

RASHAD BRISTO: Listen, with that being said, we're way past a break. Thank you, Ms. DeJean. Thank you, everyone. I'm going to go ahead and call a break. Everyone reconvene at 10:40 and we'll move into the executive director's report.

REKEESHA BRANCH: Ms. Corhonda Corley does have her hand raised. Do you want to address it after break or before the break?

RASHAD BRISTO: I've already called the break. People have already started moving. I apologize, Ms. Corley. I did not see your hand. I will recognize you as soon as we return from the break.

Okay. The time is 10:42 a.m. Calling the meeting back to order. Before we dismissed, I told Ms. Corley I was going to recognize her hand. I apologize I missed you before. Ms. Corley, you have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair and council. I did not hear whether or not we allowed public comment in relation to the two topics that Ms. Lillian DeJean brought up as it related to the study with Representative Miller and the voting. I didn't hear us give public comment and I wanted to give public comment on that. If the council will allow me to do that.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. DeJean is no longer present, Ms. Corley. I don't know if the comment would be of relevance at the moment. I apologize.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Yes, chair. Well, just for the record I would like to state that if the consideration by Ms. DeJean and whatever entity or organization she was considering doing that study with, if they're considering broadening it to where it just look at how it impact individuals not just by gender but just all individuals, race, ethnicity, etc. with rare diseases because my child does have rare disease and try to

advocate for himself regarding pain. And it is documented in his record that he was denied the medication and that I had to advocate for him along with other family members regarding pain so that he can get the pain medication. I do think that it would be a great topic to be considered by not only the self-determination committee, but by also the diversity, equity, inclusion committee because then it would become a diversity, equity and inclusive issue.

Self-determination looks at how it's impacting those that are self-advocates. But diversity, equity, inclusion looks at how it impacts not just those that are self-advocates, but every single person if they're being discriminated on the basis of diversity, the equity and the lack of inclusivity. So I do think that that should be something that should go to both committees as well as the issue regarding the voting and the accessibility to the early voting. I am aware of other organizations like Power Coalition that has been speaking up on behalf of individuals with disabilities to access voting rights. And we do have a task force for that that meet at the capitol. And so I do strongly encourage that we do utilize those two committees to actually look at those issues if the council would take heed to those recommendations. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes, ma'am. Thank you for those recommendations. I did have a conversation with Ms. Deaville during the break where we're going to follow up on those presented by Ms. DeJean as well. Moving forward there was a motion presented by DEI, a legislative agenda. Would you bring those up for me, please.

AMY DEAVILLE: It's not for a legislative agenda.

RASHAD BRISTO: Excuse me. It's about training. Dr. McKee motioned that the full council receive training on DEI practices by April 2023 and that it become a mandatory training for new members of the council. It was seconded by Vice Chair Nicole Banks. There was no objections or abstentions. Does the council have any questions in regard to what is presented for DEI training practices for our council with the deadline of being April 2023? No questions?

SPEAKER: We do have a hand raised, Ms. Jill Hano.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you Ms. (inaudible). Ms. Hano, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Is this a training we would do on our own or would you send us a link or like would we have to like meet and do a training? Or how we, how would this training be presented to us?

RASHAD BRISTO: The way this is just a preliminarily discussion.

JILL HANO: Oh, okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: It's not solidified. But the way that we're exploring to be able to make this happen anytime that we have a, so many of us meet we trigger open meetings law. So for that particular training we're exploring the option it maybe a council meeting, but we may just dismiss departmental reports for a meeting and just utilize that time for the training. But this is premature for me to say that, but just kind of put it in context. That's what I'm flirting with to answer your question. Do we have any other questions in regards to the motion?

SPEAKER: We have a comment in the chat from Ms. Vivienne Webb. She ask can we have it to be available virtually so all can attend.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes, ma'am. Like I said, just flirting with the idea. So basically, we would just do this on the day of a council meeting. In the afternoon after lunch we usually have our agency reports, we probably just dismiss that, and we would have the trainer to come in and do it then while everyone is already taking their time to be a part of the council meeting anyway. So it wouldn't be anything where we would call a special meeting for on a Wednesday or a Friday or whatever day of the week would be. It would be on a regular scheduled council meeting to answer your question. Do we have any more questions in regards to discussion about the DEI?

SPEAKER: Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair and council. I strongly agree and I strongly encourage the training.

I think it would be great for the training to actually be open to the public as well. We know that diversity, equity and inclusion is something that is being addressed nationally, but also that when people are not privileged to be friends with diverse communities or know the language that diverse cultures may use then it can be considered, looked at as micro-aggressive or as being disrespectful. And I'm going to use an example. I'm horse. I have no voice. So if I speak up because I'm starting, because my voice is going, is fading further and further away and I start to speak up I can be looked at and I have been called an angry black woman and that is extremely racist and bias. And it's not, and it's due to people not understanding that I already have a raspy voice even when I'm not horse. But they don't understand that because I am, like right now sitting in the living room of my home that has a ceiling that's higher than 20 feet. I may have to speak up a little louder to try to project to make sure people can hear me. So the diversity, equity, inclusion training I believe is not just beneficial to the council and to the staff, but I think it's also beneficial to the members of the community that actually attend the meetings because it would allow everyone the opportunity to learn more about diversity, equity, equality and inclusion. Micro-aggression, micro-aggressiveness all of that that comes with it so we can have harmony and peace and respect for one another as we continue to advocate for our individuals with disabilities to have more accessibility, accommodations and modifications in their lifespan. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that comment, Ms. Corley. Do we have any more questions, comments from council members in regards to the motion?

SPEAKER: Ms. Kathy Dwyer in the chat. She posted a question. She said could it be a training for the public, but mandatory for the council members to attend.

RASHAD BRISTO: I'm sorry. Will you read it one more time, please.

SPEAKER: Yes. Ms. Kathy Dwyer asked could it be a training for the public with it mandatory for the

council members to attend.

RASHAD BRISTO: Well, that's one of the reasons why it would definitely be open up to the public because it would be in this same setting during the course of a council meeting where the council members would already be present. As far as the term mandatory--

AMY DEAVILLE: Trainings don't follow the same open meetings law rule. So if we're gathered together for the purpose of a training that does not trigger an open meeting.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that. When you was asking about the question about being mandatory, I would just hope it would be something that everyone would want to take the initiative to be a part of just due to the fact that it would be professional development and self-development for the council. I hope that answers your question, Ms. Dwyer. Do we have any public comment?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. So I'm ready to call the question for the motion. Do we have any opposition? Okay. With no opposition, do we have anybody abstain? With no opposition or abstentions, motion passes. The second motion that the bylaws be reviewed to include that we have language that's inclusive of diversity, equity and inclusion practices specifically as it relates for members to hold seats on the council. Presented by, it was motioned by Dr. McKee, and it was seconded by Vice Chair Banks. Do we have any discussion in regards to the motion by any council members? Not seeing any hands.

SPEAKER: I'm sorry. Ms. Corhonda Corley has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ms. Corley, give me just one minute. Do we have any questions by council members before I go to public comment? No hands raised, Ms. Branch?

SPEAKER: No. There are no hands raised at this time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Now move into public comment. Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Thank you so much, Mr. Chair and council. I think that it's imperative that we actually allow this motion to pass as well as we know the federal, we received the letter from ITAC in regards to not having diversity, equity-- diversity and inclusiveness as it related to our hiring practices for the staff that works for our DD Council. And also it stated that we did not have that as it related to council members for the representation on the council. And I think that it is imperative because when we do not have that representation we're not following and adhering to what the federal DD Act actually requires. The federal DD Act as well as the ITAC and NADDC actually requires that when we do our one year and five-year plan that we also address these same issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. And so we have not been doing our due diligence and this is why it has been problematic as it relates to when people like myself actually attend meetings and speak up that we are rejected and given micro-aggressive attitudes. And that's not something that we want especially when I'm advocating for every single person regardless of race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, gender identity, etc. I just want everyone to be respected, but that the representation be there. And that's what's in line with the federal DD Act. So I strongly encourage that everyone allow this motion to pass as well. And you have my support, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for your comments, Ms. Corley. So we have a motion. Do we have anymore comments, anymore public comments?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ready to call the question. Do we have any objections? Do we have any abstentions? Not hearing any. Motion passes. Thank you very much. Now transitioning we'll move into the executive director's report by Ms. Deaville. Ms. Deaville, if you can for the sake of time, I'm going to ask that you be brief.

AMY DEAVILLE: I'll pull my report up. So just a couple of things. On July 5th (inaudible) for SB192 which is the post-secondary inclusive education bill. And SP45 which was cameras in special education

classrooms. So they were signed into law on July 5th at a ceremonial signing. We had a Partners in Policymaking graduation on July 16th where we were able to have an in-person graduation for both the classes of 2020 and 2022. Well, actually a couple of the graduates are actually here at this table. So we were finally able to have graduation ceremonies and it was a really nice day.

Federal reporting update. On September 30th our state plan was approved. And then on the same day we were also notified that our fiscal year 20 and fiscal year 21 program performance reports had been approved. So we are, all of our plans and reporting has been approved and we're up to date now. But the next program performance report is already due in December. So after this meeting that's where my attention transfers is the program performance. Anything about my report?

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Deaville. Are there any questions from council members about the report? Not seeing any in the room.

SPEAKER: No hands raised and no comment in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that. This report requires no action and will be placed on file.

EBONY HAVEN: We have a hand raised.

SPEAKER: I'm sorry. Ms. Corhonda Corley now has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Corley, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Yes, Mr. Chair and DD Council. I'm just inquiring on now since we've had an executive director for a little longer than a year will we, what will it look like as far as it relates to us having control back over the funding? I know that when Mr. Fleming resigned from being a deputy director and the interim executive director the funding then became the responsibility of LDH, and it was no longer our staffs' responsibility to be over our funding. And so I have a question in regards to that. And secondly, what as it relates to our hiring practices, have we started back hiring individuals inclusive making sure that we have self-advocates hired by our DD Council to be staffed as



well as diversity such as diverse backgrounds, culturally, etc. that's employed by the DD Council for our staff. Those are my questions. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you for that.

KIM BASILE: What do you mean we weren't over our own funding?

AMY DEAVILLE: As far as I'm aware the DD Council has always been over their own funding. We still oversee our own funding. The DD Council is technically a part of LDH and so our budget functions run through LDH. But control of our budget has always been with the DD Council as far as I'm aware of.

CORHONDA CORLEY: And, Mr. Chair, if you allow me to give a point-- I'm sorry. I was going to ask if you wanted me to give a point of clarity to what I meant by being over our funding.

RASHAD BRISTO: Hold on just one minute, Ms. Corley. Dr. McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: I'm good. I'm good. Thank you so much.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Corley, go ahead. You have the floor.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. And when I stated being over our funding if everyone can recall the meeting from, the meeting when Mr. Fleming resigned Ms. Courtney Ryland became our interim and because Ms. Courtney Ryland was becoming our interim Mr. Fleming did state that LDH was then going to be over our funding. And that's on the meeting if everyone go back and watch that meeting. That was in executive committee.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Corley, you started cutting out where your statements are choppy. Not able to make your comments out.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. I'm sorry. I could try to type it if you want me to try to type it. Okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: We can hear you now.

CORHONDA CORLEY: Okay. When Mr. Shawn Fleming resigned during that executive committee meeting Ms. Courtney Ryland became the interim and at that time Mr. Fleming stated that our funding would then be managed and controlled by LDH that we was not necessarily over it because we did not have an executive director. And because we were still in the process of electing an

executive director Ms. Courtney Ryland was not the person for the DD Council over it like Mr. Fleming and Ms. Sandee Winchell had previously been. So that was the reasoning for the questions. And that meeting is on our YouTube channel.

AMY DEAVILLE: I don't know what happened in that meeting, and I don't know what Shawn Fleming said, but what I can tell you is that Courtney Ryland had signatory authority and always had control over the budget in the same way that I do. He might have been referring to getting some additional help from someone who helps with some of our budget input. But that doesn't have anything to do with control over our budget. That was just over some administrative functioning.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for that clarity. Ms. Hano, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Just to elaborate and have it on record. Between Shawn Fleming resigning and Ms. Deaville getting hired we were not lacking an ED because Courtney was just as much an ED as Shawn Fleming was. And this conversation is making me uncomfortable because again, this is misinformation. Thank you.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Hano. So do we have any more questions in regards to the executive director's report that was presented?

SPEAKER: We have no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: It's been placed it on file. The report requires no action. The budget report. Next item up for business is the budget report. The chair recognizes Ms. Amy Deaville for the report.

AMY DEAVILLE: So this is first quarter expenses budget review so there's not a lot to see because we're only three months in. But we're tracking along. So one quarter in you would expect to see (inaudible) these year-to-date percentages expended somewhere around 25 percent. And that is where we are for most things. Where we're not at 25 percent or below is that staff instate travel which is high. That's actually a coding thing for our July meeting. I picked up some

expense for food, refreshments, things like that and when I was reimbursed by the state that's how they coded it. And in case it makes anybody happy, we got a 5-dollar refund. I put that 5-dollar in red. But yeah, so far budgetary spending is going well, and I monitor it closely.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Do we have any questions in regard to the report from the council members, the budget report? Not seeing any hands. Do we have any questions from council members in regard to the budget report that was presented by Ms. Deaville? Not seeing any hands. Do we have any public comment in regards to the budget report that was presented by Ms. Deaville?

SPEAKER: No comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you very much. Report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next item up for business is the reports. Our first report is from the Act 378 subcommittee. The chair recognizes Ms. Bambi Polotzola for the report. Ms. Polotzola, you have the floor. Can you please be brief for time.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yes, sir. The Act 378 subcommittee met yesterday. We do not have any recommendations. We spent time reviewing fiscal year 22 yearend data as well as the first quarter of fiscal year 23. That is with the programs within Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, Behavioral Health and Aging and Adult Services through the Arc of Louisiana. The reports can be found linked in our committee agenda on the council meetings website if you would like to review. While discussing OCDD's first quarter report concerns were noted about the large flexible family funds waiting list and the low amount of money being paid for those participating in the program. And it was noted that advocacy would be needed around this issue to increase state general funds if that was the desire of the council.

Also, per Act 73 of 2017 each LGE, which is our local governing entities, are required to budget at least 9 percent of their state general fund for developmental disabilities services. It was noted that South Central, Acadiana and Florida Parishes did not appropriate the full 9 percent for this first quarter of 2023. This was also concerning because South

Central and Florida Parishes were the two who did not spend the full 9 percent last fiscal year. So Ms. Tanya Murphy with OCDD plans to follow up with each of those LGEs in regards to their budget for developmental disabilities services.

OCDD also provided us with yearend individual and family support program priority requests and expenditure report. We noticed that South Central had 75 individual and family support requests last fiscal year that did not get reviewed which we felt was concerning. We also noticed the use of other for coding IFS services was used often. And we did a lot of work over the past couple years on this issue so that we can get an accurate account of services provided and the dollars spent on each service. So Ms. Murphy will follow up on those two concerns.

And then lastly, during the July meeting members expressed concerns for Northwest Louisiana's flexible family fund program specifically noting that they had enough available slots to move individuals off the program's wait list. The committee questioned what timely efforts were made by the LGE to fill the flexible family fund slots and what outreaches were being conducted to ensure all slots were filled. Efforts to recruit and fill those slots were noted in the final fiscal year 22 report. And it was noted that all the slots were filled for this first quarter. So they corrected that issue. And that's the end of the report.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Polotzola. Do we have any council members with questions about the report that has just been presented? Do we have any council members virtual that have any questions in regards to the report that's just been presented? Do we have any public comment in regard to the report that's just been presented regards to Act 378 subcommittee report?

SPEAKER: No comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you very much. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. The next item up for business is the report for self-determination community inclusion committee. Chair recognizes Ms. Chairperson Kim Basile for the report.

Ms. Basil for the sake of time I'm going to ask that you be brief.

KIM BASILE: You got it. We met yesterday and we have no recommendations to present to the council. Julie from the Office of Citizens with Developmental Disabilities submitted a very detailed report which will be attached to our summary early next week online. So if you missed our meeting yesterday you can go look at that next week and you will not have missed a thing.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any questions-- thank you, Ms. Basile for that report. Do we have any questions in regards to the report that was just submitted from any council members? Do we have any council members virtually have any questions in regards to the report that's just been presented? Do we have any public comments in regards to the report that has just been presented from the public?

SPEAKER: Ms. Melinda Elliot just asked can we see the agenda.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes, ma'am. Is that the only public comment that we have in regards to the report?

SPEAKER: Yes. That's the only comment.

RASHAD BRISTO: With that being said, this report requires no action and will be placed on file. Now time for the education and employment committee report. The chair recognizes Dr. Hyacinth McKee for her report. For the sake of time, Dr. McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Unfortunately our report won't be as brief. But I'm grateful that Ms. Basile did do hers briefly cause she knew what was coming next. Education and employment committee meeting met yesterday, and we have two recommendations to present to the council. I will say that we already discussed the first recommendation earlier today and we got full support from the council on that as it relates to LAPIE. So I will not go over that. That was the second motion.

But I will move onto the first motion that's recommended by the education and employment committee and it deals with the special school district and the committee's concerns regarding the ongoing allegation that staff members, especially staff with disabilities, feeling intimidated by the leadership. The issues

culminated this past Friday with the dismissal of the school for the Deaf administrator who is also a member of the Deaf community and a very qualified person for the position. So at this time the recommendation of the education and employment committee and the motion in front of you is the education and employment committee recommends that the Louisiana Developmental Disabilities Council sign onto the letter that the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf will send to the special school district regarding investigating a list of concerns. So we are offering this motion right now for full council consideration.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. McKee. So we have a motion on the floor. Do we have any questions, discussion from any other council members? Not hearing any in the room. Do we have any questions from council members in regards to the motion that's been presented by the education and employment committee? Do we have any public comment in regards to the motion that is on the floor in regards to the education and employment committee?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Ready to call the question. Do we have any abstentions from this motion?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: I abstain.

PATTI BAROVECHIO: I abstain.

RASHAD BRISTO: For the record will you state your names.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: I'm sorry. Julie Foster Hagan.

PATTI BAROVECHIO: Patti Barovechio.

MELINDA RICHARD: I should abstain as well. Melinda Richard.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Three abstentions. Do we have any objection? Not hearing any objection, this motion passes. Dr. McKee.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Thank you. And so again, we've already discussed the second motion regarding LAPIE and the ask for increase in funding for sustainability. So I'll move onto some other decisions that were discussed during the committee. Ms. Jordan from Department of Education will submit a report to the committee on

which districts have submitted a camera policy and which districts have not at the next January quarterly meeting, council meeting. The committee also requested that Louisiana Department of Education and LRS provide an updated report on their collaboration at the January 2023 council meeting. There was also announcements of some very other important meetings. An emergency BESE meeting will take place on November 10th at the Claiborne building to discuss accountability specific for students with disabilities. The Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline's next meeting is scheduled for December 8th at 10 a.m. in the Claiborne building. And the Student Behavior Mental Health and Discipline Task Force next meeting is scheduled as well for November 10th. So that's pretty much all for our report.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. McKee. Do we have any council members that have any questions in regard to the report that's been presented? Not seeing any hands in the room. Virtually do we have any questions from any council members that have any questions in regards to the report that's been presented? Ms. Cosse, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

BRENDA COSSE: Thank you, Chair Bristo. Did Dr. McKee mention the LAPIE advisory council meeting? Could we get that date also, please. Thank you.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: November 1st at 10:00.

HYACINTH MCKEE: So the next meeting for LAPIE is November 1st at 10 a.m.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: And they have another one that was just scheduled for December 15th.

HYACINTH MCKEE: And there's another one after that scheduled for December 15th. So November 1st and December 15th are the two next LAPIE meetings.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you for answering the question. Ms. Hano, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Sorry. I'm slow this morning. Who are you writing a letter to? Can you put the motions back up.

RASHAD BRISTO: Yes.

JILL HANO: Sorry y'all. This is embarrassing.

RASHAD BRISTO: No, no. Nothing to be embarrassed about.

JILL HANO: Okay. Okay. So you're sending a letter to the special school district, right, Dr. McKee?

HYACINTH MCKEE: Yeah. That is correct. We are signing onto a letter that the Louisiana Commission for the Deaf is already drafting and we are going to sign onto it and offer our support.

JILL HANO: Okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any more questions from council members in regards to the education and employment committee report? Do we have any public comment in regards to the education committee report that's been presented?

SPEAKER: There are no comments in the chat and no hands raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next item up for business is report of the Office of Public Health. Chair recognizes Dr. Barovechio for her report.

PATTI BAROVECHIO: Thank you. The Bureau of Family Health administers the title five grant that includes children and youth with special healthcare need programs. And if you look on the online version of the report there's several hotlinks to access additional information contained in the report. But just to highlight is that children special health services still provides clinical services and direct care in all regions except region one and seven to meet the specialty care needs in provider shortage areas. So if families need to access this, they can go to the LDH web page and find out information and eligibility for these services.

Additionally, the bureau sponsors a family resource center that is now statewide. Prior to Covid it was a standalone facility on the campus of Children's Hospital in New Orleans. With Covid we moved it to a virtual resource. A family can contact us for basically any need. Whether they have a child or a youth with a special healthcare need or not the resource center is open to all families in the state. It is open Monday through Friday. They can contact the



family resource center by phone or by email to request information and support.

Otherwise, we have several other programs that are underneath our purview including the early hearing detection and intervention program. There is family support services through the guide by your side program. We also partner with Families Helping Families to ensure that at the community level children and youth with special healthcare needs and their families have access to the services and supports that they need. Whether it be peer support or resource and referral services. Any questions?

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. Barovechio. Do we have any questions in regards to the report that's just been presented? From any council member? Do we have any questions from any council members that are virtual for the report that's just been presented? Do we have any public comment in regards to the report that's just been presented by Dr. Barovechio?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Moving forward, the next item up for business is the report from the Office of Aging and Adult Services. I yield the floor to Ms. Melinda Richard.

MELINDA RICHARD: That's right. Good morning. I'm Melinda Richard. I go by Mindy so some of you heard me introduce myself that way. You have our report as of September 30th. There are a few things that I would like to point out to you. We've been working very hard to eliminate the wait list for our community choices waiver. We are down to 859 individuals who have no other services and are waiting for services. When someone gets onto that registry wait list, we're focused right now on getting an offer to them as quickly as possible. And we are down now to it's somewhere between four and five weeks which is remarkable progress for our team over the past several years.

In addition to that, there are 4,970 people, under 5,000. Which it used to be 30,000 plus is my understanding. I'm new in this role so I'm giving

credit to the people who've done this work prior to me. But those are the people that are still on the CCW wait list, but remember only 859 are not receiving some other type of services like long-term care support services. I will say that we have a project that we're going to be kicking off because a lot of times we send offers out and we don't get responses back to our offers as timely as we would like which impedes the ability to get people on services sooner. So we'll be looking at our communications and seeing whether our information that we send out is really clear and if it's apparent what needs to happen next. So we'll be working on that in the coming months to try to improve that communication strain there.

In addition to that, for our traumatic head and spinal cord injury program in the last legislative session we were given additional money so that we could open some additional cases. So we are working through that wait list with the money that we have available. We have sent offers out and we're working through the processing of those applications. I think that's about it as far as pointing out we're on track with our adult protective services. You know we watch those numbers. We don't like to see numbers go up, but we do like to see that we are getting reports when reports are necessary. And, you know, with Covid we did see a decrease in some of those numbers and some of that's rebounding as well. And I think that's just people getting back to interacting more etc. etc. So that's not necessarily a good thing, but we like to know that we're aware of what's going on. And that's the conclusion of my report unless you have any questions.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Richard. Do we have any questions from any council members in regard to the report that's just been presented by Office of Aging and Adult Services? Ms. Polotzola, you're recognized by the chair.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I have a question and a request. Traumatic head and spinal cord injury, is that the program where people get like 50,000-dollars?

MELINDA RICHARD: That's correct.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Can you just tell us about that a little bit.

MELINDA RICHARD: Sure. Happy to. So there are certain qualifications that you have to meet to be in that program. But a person can apply for it. It's up to 15,000-dollars a year in benefits for a lifetime maximum of 50,000-dollars. And it can be used for-- there are no income limits on that program which makes it different from a lot of the programs that we have. But you do have to have had a head or a spinal cord injury. So there are different things that many times the money is spent for things that will allow somebody because of this traumatic injury to be able to get back to daily activities. Renovations to their home, etc. And so we are working through the backlog that's accumulated through the years. But there remains a bank of people that are still on that program until they spend their 50,000-dollar limit and they go off and someone else comes on.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Did you say there was an age limit?

MELINDA RICHARD: I believe the age limit is only 59 years old, but I would have to verify that.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. And then my next is a request and that would be for Julie and OCDD and OAAS. And I received a question during this past quarter in regards to the number of waivers that are by region. Do we know that? And so I had to go back and look because we get regional numbers through our Act 378, but we don't get regional numbers on like these services, our waiver services. And so I was wondering can you guys do that, give us how many people receive waiver services by region? Okay. And also like demographic information because like our SPAS program they give like the racial demographic. I think that would be important as well as gender demographic. Like for the whole state. I mean, I don't want it to be like so individualized that we can identify people. But I think that would be an important information to have to ensure that we're just asking about equity of services geographically as well as racially or ethnically.

SPEAKER: And age as well.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Just to clarify so I can make

sure that I'm understanding it correctly. So for all of our waivers in OCDD and OAAS, sort of like what's the breakout by region and then by demographics for the people in each region.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Well, I don't know if you can. But I was going to say like statewide you have 10,000 waivers and you say we have 3,000 people who identify as African American, 50 that are Latino and whatever that are Caucasian. Like I would say statewide unless you can do it by region, I'm not opposed.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: I would have to find out. I don't know how we keep that information, so I just need to find out how we keep that information.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any other questions in regard, comments in regards--

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: One more just clarification. Will this be something that you would want us to present at the full council meeting or at one of the? Just clarification.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Could you start putting that in your report?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Okay.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Because in our Act 378 committee we look at those things. Or even like when Arc of Louisiana presents their SPA report we ask those type of questions. I know it's a much smaller program. But if there's something that looks like, you know, there's racial disparities, which there's not in the SPAS program, or geographic disparities we'll have that data to ask those questions.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any other comments? Any comments from council members in regard to the report that's been presented?

MELINDA RICHARD: I can follow up. There is no age limit on our THSCI program.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any public comment in regards to the report that's been presented?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next report, Human Services Development Center. I don't see Dr. Wilson.

Is there a designee or proxy in his place? Okay. The report was submitted?

AMY DEAVILLE: A report was submitted. I knew that he could not attend, and he had said he may send a proxy. I don't know if there's anyone virtually that's a proxy, but if not, the report is on the website.

RASHAD BRISTO: Unless there's someone identifies as being a representative for Dr. Wilson the report is on the website. We'll proceed to Louisiana Rehabilitation Services. Melissa Bayham.

MELISSA BAYHAM: Thank you so much. My report is the brightest report, the bright pink one. So you will see in my report first on preemployment transition services, which is our program for students with disabilities, we currently have 3,048 students that we're serving statewide in that particular program. And we currently have 14 active third party cooperative arrangements. Those are contractual arrangements with school districts to provide those services for the school districts that do not have those particular contracts. We have our community rehabilitation programs that provide services in the other school districts.

You also see statistics that are requested by the council in our quarterly report including the number of individuals that we're serving. So we currently have 8,494 open cases in vocational rehabilitation. 2,657 in preemployment transition services. And I want to explain that cause it might be a little bit confusing because I just said 3,048. So we can serve individuals who are potentially eligible for the vocational rehabilitation program in the preemployment transition services program. So the reason why that number is different because some individuals have full vocational rehabilitation cases, and some are being serviced as potentially eligible.

I also have for you by region the number of open cases of individuals with developmental disabilities. As well as the number of individuals who were closed rehabilitated. So for the quarter we closed 40 individuals. Meaning that they were in competitive integrated employment for at least 90 days when we closed their cases.

We also have a report for the rehabilitation employment development specialists which is our in-house job developers. So you'll see the statistics on those. And you'll see there is no-- there's a couple regions that are not reflected and that's because we have vacancies in those particular regions for that position.

You will see the next Louisiana Rehabilitation Council it always directly follows this particular meeting. It's next Thursday October the 27th at the Courtyard by Marriott. And I also on the report it talks about the statewide disability inclusion job fair. As of the report we hadn't had the job fair, but now we have so I have some statistics that I would like to report on the job fair. And I mentioned this yesterday, just want to thank, again, Healthy Blue for sponsoring this particular event. It was very successful. We used they call it the Brazen platform. And this is, I think, the third virtual job fair that LWC used, Louisiana Workforce Commission, used Brazen and they said it was the most successful job fair so far on this particular platform. We had 39 employers and 96 job seekers that actually participated. And 59 percent of the individuals who registered as job seekers attended the job fair. There were 220 chats. Eighty-five candidates considered for the future. Forty-four job seekers will be screened further, and five interviews were conducted. So this was our virtual job fair, and we hope to do it again next year and hopefully it will be bigger and better.

Also, want to say thank you to the council for the letter that was sent to the civil service commission regarding our recruitment and retention issues in LRS. We really do appreciate the council's efforts on that as we continue to try to improve or reduce our vacancies.

The last thing I want to mention is that we are currently working on an RFP for rate setting for our employment services. The last time we did rate setting for all of our employment services, like an actual in-depth rate setting, was I think in 2000ish. So we've done different rates since then, but as far as across the board looking at all of our rates it's been

quite some time and we don't have the fiscal staff that we did back then. So we are in the process of writing the RFP and hopefully that will come out soon so that study can be done.

And I would mention one other thing. We had the disability innovation fund STEM up project that we're doing with Southern University in Baton Rouge. We've been conducting focus groups and things of that nature. But Southern is in the process now of actually hiring the career pathway coordinators that will work directly with our participants as they try to either obtain or advance in employment in STEM occupations. So that is my report. If you have any questions or anything else you would like me to discuss.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Bayham. Does anyone have, do any council members have any questions in regards to the report that was presented by Louisiana Rehabilitation Services? Not seeing any in the room. Do we have any council members virtual that have any questions in regards to the report that was presented by Ms. Bayham for Louisiana Rehabilitation Services?

SPEAKER: There are no hands raised and no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. And there's no public comment in the chat in regards to the report. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next item up for business is the report of Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. Chair recognizes Ms. Julie Foster Hagan for the report. And Ms. Hagan, you'll be the one to take us to lunch.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: We'll see if we can finish before lunch. My report is probably the longest report, but being the Developmental Disabilities Council that's expected, I suppose. So in the report the first three pages really just provide a summary of data relevant to the services that we provide through our Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities. Bambi, what we'll do probably is add the data that you guys have here is just data through over time that the council has asked us to provide. So we'll look at how we can break that data out further on the waiver participants for kind of a point in time. And add that to the data that's presented to you guys.

In regards to the employment section we are super, super excited that we finally got approval of our statewide transition plan for the home and community-based settings rule. It's been about seven years in the making and it has been a lot of really hard work. So for those of you who may not be familiar with the home and community based settings rule, it's a rule that the centers for Medicare and Medicaid services published quite some time ago that requires our office as well as Office of Behavioral Health, Office of Aging and Adult Services to really take a look at our services and make sure that our service supports people to be integrated into the community and to be a part of the community. Whether that be where they live, where they work, where they have activities.

And so we, for the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities, the majority of the things they talked about on the residential services side we are okay. Where we've been focusing our efforts for the past seven years have really been on employment service and day habilitation services for people. And so all states had to submit a transition plan for how the state will transition to be in compliance with this rule. We received approval about two weeks ago. And so we are, there were a lot of states who didn't, so we weren't kind of like the last one. But it just took some time, I guess, for CMS to get there. And then when Covid hit, and people weren't really able to go to work or go to day programs that put an impact on folks. But what centers for Medicare, Medicare services said is that I believe it's March, March of 2023 is the drop date. States must be in compliance or else we are at risk of losing federal funding. So we've been really trying to get across that bridge.

We are now in the process with our OCDD staff, the local governing entity staff going to all of our day program and employment providers to assess compliance. And if we do find some that are not quite there then trying to see what can we do to really help them cross that finish line, you know, before March of next year.

CMS just announced a couple of months ago if you do have a few providers that are not in compliance that a state can ask for a corrective action plan. So once



we do an assessment with all providers, we'll make a determination by the end of December if we, in fact, do need to ask CMS for a corrective action plan. Or if we believe everyone will then be in compliance with that March deadline of next year. So again, we were excited to finally get that approval.

Many of you may have heard we talk a lot in here about the public health emergency and some of the exceptions and flexibilities tied. But on October 13th they did extend the federal public health emergency for Covid another 90 days which puts us through mid-January. And now we're kind of still waiting to see. So they've also said they'd give us a 60-day notice before it stops. So we'll be watching in November. If they don't say that it's going to end in January, then we would expect that it would continue through January and then we'll wait to see what they say in January. And in terms of how long it goes.

For us in OCDD the big issue tied to that is that we do have some flexibilities in place for our waivers that will continue. Most of them, not all of them, but most of them continue until six months after the end of the public health emergency. So some of the activities around virtual visits and family members as paid caregivers is sort of the biggest topic areas. And so we have had at the last meeting I mentioned we were pulling our focus groups back together for those two topics. We've been meeting with them all last month and you can see that some of our DD Council staff are on those meetings and have had input. We've also had some members here today who've been working with us through that workgroup. So we will plan, we're kind of closing in on our final feedback sessions. We will then take back and make some decisions in terms of our processes that we will have to move forward. And we will plan in January, probably around January to be doing some statewide meetings. We want to make sure that everybody's clear on what will happen when we do get to that six months after the end of the public health emergency. So we'll definitely share with DD Council once we get those scheduled. Because we want everybody to be aware so that they can plan, you know, for what needs to happen for their own individual

situation.

We also continue to do work, there was an ask at the last meeting as it relates to the American Rescue Plan Act that I provide a little, some additional information about what that is. And so we've tried in the report to really better define what we mean by each of those activities, and we'll keep that there and then continue to report on the status of those initiatives.

And then the last section of our report relates to our access to behavioral and medical intervention in the community. Our OCDD resource center and our OCDD programmatic unit do a lot of work to really try to build community capacity for community practitioners to be able to better support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. So that section advises on the activities that those groups have done. As well as what we've done. Our mission in the resource center is to help keep people living in their community. And to be able to provide what we need to not not really through direct services, but through consultation and technical assistance to help people continue to be able to live in the community and be a part of the community. So that last section really details some of the work that's being done for us to be able to help promote that. So that's a quick summary of my report. But happy to take any questions.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Hagan. Do we have any council members that have any questions in regards to the report that's just been presented?

HYACINTH MCKEE: I do. I have one quick question. Julie, about the START, Systemic Therapeutic Assessment Resources and Treatment, I know that you guys are working to have something by March of 2025, but where are you with this right now? Have you guys started?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Sure. So it took us a bit to get the contract approved. We just this week got the contract approved for us to begin. For us to start working with START. I keep having to say begin instead of start. So the contract was approved so we now this week are calling them to say okay, when can we get this going. Because the first thing they'll do is come in, we'll provide different stakeholders. Which, of course, I'll reach out to the council for, you know,

suggestions there. But they just start by meeting with people to try to get a feel for what's working, what's not working in our state. Where do we really need to target. So I'm assuming we'll be able to start that around January. But again, with the contract approved we've now got-- they assured us, they had about, they had because other states also used American Rescue Plan Act to engage with START, we had begun discussions with them before this opportunity came. So we were kind of the first state in the queue so we've been trying with what we can to push the contract along as quickly as we could so we could stay the first state in the queue. So we actually did get the contract quicker than normal. So hopefully we are next up, and we can go ahead and get those, the engagements with the stakeholders scheduled early next year.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Okay. Great. And then I just had one other question about the training and education activity. I was just wondering what are the Louisiana university programs that, what are the four university programs? Do you know?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: I do not, but I can find out for sure.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Okay.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any other questions from council members in regards to the report that's been presented?

SPEAKER: Ms. Jill Egle has her hand raised as well as Ms. Jill Hano. I believe Ms. Jill Egle was first.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Egle, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL EGLE: Okay. When you guys say in compliance, example, providers and, you know, next year what is going to be the 2023, how are the rates ever going to level out with DSPs so the shortage things can be for the best. Cause you know this has been going on lord knows how long. I just want good turnout. Especially like the Arc of GNO. Good, qualified, trustworthy background, people that are honest. You know, I just want things to layout. So what are we going to do in 2023 and beyond so things can be leveled out?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: So do you mean in addition, more of a rate increase?

JILL EGLE: Yeah. Can it be like 20-dollars an

hour for DSPs or does the State of Louisiana don't have that funding?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: I can't answer that. It would require the legislators, legislature during the legislative session to allocate additional state general funds to us so that we could provide those additional rate increases. And right now it's at 9-dollars. So to get to 20-dollars it would be probably a substantial financial ask to be able to get the rates that high.

JILL EGLE: I totally understand. It's just that a lot of the people, you know, IDD, Arc of GNO, anywhere it's like they're facing, you know, like we can't do a lot of community outings right now because even though Covid died down, there's not a lot of options. And a lot of my people that I know can't even always afford stuff. And I just feel like, you know, as much as I want to represent and make the change, what can we do?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: So in addition to the rates there was also a resolution passed and we're trying to do some studying of barriers to hiring direct support professionals. We also jointly with the Office of Aging and Adult Services in our business plan last year, and it will continue this year, that we look for opportunities to address the direct support workforce recruitment and retention challenges. We've done some work with Louisiana Workforce Commission. We'll continue that. I think we've done some work. I think we're all trying to figure out what are the things we can do. And what are the targets. And there's multiple kind of studies or activities that we're doing to try to help inform that. Both here at the state level in Louisiana and at the national level they're also trying to look at what are the things we might need to do to help address that, the workforce challenges.

JILL EGLE: Ms. Julie Hagan, I appreciate your leadership at the OCDD cause you've gone far and beyond. And I just know, you know, I know that Arc of Louisiana they do a lot. I don't know if you met the new executive director of the Arc of GNO, Dr. Ross. I think things are changing in the right direction. And I so appreciate what you do and thank you for your

service.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Thanks, Jill. And I did meet Dr. Ross.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Hano, your hand is raised. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

JILL HANO: Does anyone else see my hand in the mirror. Look how cute it is. Sorry. I say everything I think. But Julie, you said something about a contract with the START program.

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Yes.

JILL HANO: When did that happen?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Did you say when did that happen?

JILL HANO: When did Louisiana get their contract approved with the START program?

JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: This week.

JILL HANO: Okay. All right. Cool.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. Thank you, Ms. Hano. Do we have any more comments in regards to the report that's been presented by any council members? Not seeing any. Do we have any public comment in regards to, in the chat regards to the report that's been presented?

SPEAKER: There are no comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Thank you, Ms. Hagan. If there's no objection we will recess for lunch. And we'll return at 1:00. Hearing no objections.

Okay. Welcome back, everyone. The time is now 1:01. Call the meeting back to order. Just a few housekeeping for those who are in the room. Make sure that your phones are on vibrate, silence. If you have a call, please step away to take the call so it doesn't distract from the council meeting. Also, for those that are virtual, council members, ask that you turn your cameras on to identify that you are present. Just to make sure we do have a quorum I'm going to go ahead and ask for a roll call so we can make sure that we can proceed having the correct amount of council members present. I yield the floor.

EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Banks.

NICOLE BANKS: I'm present.

EBONY HAVEN: Dr. Barovechio.  
PATTI BAROVECHIO: Present.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Basile.  
KIM BASILE: Present.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Bayham.  
MELISSA BAYHAM: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Cosse.  
BRENDA COSSE: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Crain.  
CHERI CRAIN: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Egle. Ms. Gonzales.  
HANNAH JENKINS: She's here. I'm trying to get her  
moved over to panelist.  
EBONY HAVEN: Okay. Ms. Guidry. Ms. Hagan.  
JULIE FOSTER HAGAN: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Hano.  
JILL HANO: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Harmon.  
ANGELA HARMON: Present.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Hymel. Ms. Jordan.  
MEREDITH JORDAN: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Dr. McKee.  
HYACINTH MCKEE: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Polotzola.  
BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Richard. Mr. Rocca.  
TORY ROCCA: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Mr. Rovira. Ms. Stewart. Ms.  
Tarver. Ms. Taylor. Ms. Washington.  
RENODA WASHINGTON: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Ms. Webb.  
VIVIENNE WEBB: Here.  
EBONY HAVEN: Dr. Wilson.  
BAMBI POLOTZOLA: I think it's supposed to be Mr.  
Taylor. That's Erick Taylor.  
EBONY HAVEN: Mr. Taylor. I'm so sorry.  
ERICK TAYLOR: I'm here.  
EBONY HAVEN: And I see Ms. Egle. You have 18  
present, so you have a quorum.  
RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. We do have a quorum. So  
thank you, again. Hope you had a great lunch. We're  
going to go ahead and proceed with the council meeting.  
I'm going to make an amendment because Ms. Polotzola

has another obligation that's going to require her to be gone within the time slot that was allowed for her to present. At this time the next item up for business is the report of the Governor's Office on Disability Affairs. The chair recognizes Ms. Bambi Polotzola. You have the floor.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Hi, everyone. Mine is on the green. On the front page we are promoting the Governor's Outstanding Leadership and Disability award which is our GOLD awards and the inclusive art contest. Nominations need to be in October 31st as well as art submissions by October 31st. It is a big event every year. Really, really nice. So if you know people who you would like to nominate you can either click on the link if you're online or at the bottom of that first page there's the link that will bring you to the nomination, to make nominations.

And for the-- you can kind of see, we kind of talked about a lot of these things already. But like the State Interagency Coordinating Council for Early Steps. One thing I want to say about that is they need parents of children 12 and under who have disabilities to serve on the council. And the council it's not a large commitment. It's not like the DD Council, two days. It's actually only two hours every three months that the council meets. So it's not a large commitment. And if that parent would need an ADA accommodation to participate virtually that is allowed. So if you know any parents who would be interested in that, I don't think I have Alicia's email on there. You can email me or Alicia Violin who's in my office who oversees this council.

And then we do have a new assistant director in our office which I'm really glad to have KJ Henry. She's been with the governor's office since he took office. But she was in constituent services. Which is a great skill to have in our office cause she's really good at knowing the resources and that type of thing for the calls that we receive. And I think that's it for my report. I'll take any questions.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Ms. Polotzola. Do we have any questions from any committee council members in regard to the report presented? Ms. Meredith

Jordan, you're recognized by the chair. You have the floor.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Bambi, I know y'all do a really nice recognition for the individuals in these contests. Is that a public event?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: We have it at the old state capitol and it's going to be December 7th. So we are limited in space. So typically what we do is the honorees, and you can see there's 14 awards. We allow them first off to be able to invite people. And we invite like our council members and that type of thing. So it's kind of like semipublic. We've never turned somebody away. But typically there is a limit on space. And I think it's like maybe 200 people. We do the inclusive art contest like right before we recognize those individuals and then the governor comes and takes pictures with everybody and then we have our GOLD awards. It's a really nice event.

And I'll just point out one change to our award we've always had a youth of the year award, but this year we named it the April Dunn Youth of the Year. We thought that would be an appropriate honor and certainly an honor for whoever is the recipient of the award.

HYACINTH MCKEE: What's the date again?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: It's December 7th. It's on a Wednesday. It's at 1:00. December 7th is the Wednesday then I have the right date. Yes, December 7th at 1:00 at the old state capitol. Oh, and it will be streamed so people can watch it that way. We'll put that out in our newsletter and promote it.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Hano, I see your hand. You're recognized by the chair.

JILL HANO: All of y'all subcommittees, I'm drawing a blank, where can I find like meeting summaries or like even what y'all have been doing like in each? Cause I noticed when I was reading Amy's report that a lot of staff sit on or attended the committees for-- I'm drawing a complete name of the...

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: GACDA, the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs.

JILL HANO: That. Where can I find like summaries or like what's going on with like or (inaudible) from



all the committees?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. We post it on the Division of Administration, like the boards and commission's website where everybody's supposed to post their meeting notices and meeting minutes. And so I don't have that linked in the report, but that's where we post that information. But our GACDA meetings will be the week of December, I think it's December 12th through the 15th. And we'll have--

JILL HANO: I'm sorry. Go on.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Yeah. So we'll have, we have the committee meetings. So we have an accessibility committee. We have an education committee. And a legislative committee. And then we have our full council meeting. And so we have virtual options for all of that. And really anybody can participate. It's a pretty open type platform.

JILL HANO: Can someone from the staff put the link in the chat, please.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: For the boards and commissions?

JILL HANO: Yes.

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: Okay. If they can find it, yeah. One other thing that Jill brought to mind, the Emergency Management and Disability and Aging Coalition, which is EMDAC, they have a link there. But we also are looking for people with disabilities to be engaged in that. It's very, very important that we have, you know, people who've experienced disabilities be engaged. While we have a pretty robust membership, it's a large coalition, but I feel like we need to have more people with disabilities like in kind of like a more prominent role in that. And anybody can join. But I'm just saying like specifically we would like to have more people with disabilities to be in those discussions about disaster and how we respond and prepare for disasters in the state.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any other questions from council members in regards to the report that's been presented by Ms. Polotzola for GODA? Ms. Gonzales, you're not muted, and we hear your background. Okay. Mr. Taylor, I see your hand. You're recognized.

ERICK TAYLOR: What you saying when you say engage people with disabilities?

BAMBI POLOTZOLA: To participate. Just do whatever's needed. We don't need like-- cause it's a coalition. EMDAC is not like a council where there's a lot of ridged rules and we kind of have it that way. Cheri is in one of the leadership roles. We want to have-- so we don't meet as often, but I do send out emails. We have meetings periodically. So yeah. You look like you're interested. Seem like I should put your email on the list. You're on the list now.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any other council members with any questions in regards to the report that's been presented by Ms. Polotzola? Do we have any hands raised virtually?

HANNAH JENKINS: No, sir. No hands raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Do we have any public comment in regards to the report that's submitted by Ms. Polotzola?

HANNAH JENKINS: No comments in the chat either.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Moving forward. Next up for business is the report for Department of Education. Ms. Meredith Jordan for her report.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Okay, y'all. So we had a busy start to the school year, so I'll go through each of these items here on our report. So we released the back-to-school guide for parents of students with disabilities and we shared that out with our Families Helping Families centers to kind of keep that as a tool in their toolbox as they are often helping parents navigate IEPs. What are some of those things going back to school that I haven't been in an IEP meeting in a while. We had a break over the summer. What are some questions that I can ask. What do I ask about assessment. What do I ask about programming. So I linked that guide there. We also have it translated in multiple languages. So if you have any parents or families that you feel like this would benefit, definitely feel free to share that resource.

So I'll talk about a couple of events that we've been launching. So I'll switch to the next piece on my report which is around our SPED fellow academy. We have launched cohort three of that year long professional development series for new special

education directors in our state. So we really target directors who have zero to three years of experience. And so in those initial years really walking them through a cycle of learning. It's a yearlong cycle of learning. They identify, they are required to complete an executive learning project during that year where they identify, basically, a problem with practice in their school system and we walk them through that theory of action, how to develop that, how to take a look at a problem, determine a root cause and come up with solutions around that.

This particular cohort is our largest yet which I'm really excited about. I know I really pushed on our team. I don't like to turn anyone away. So it's always hard for me to tell people no when they're asking for support and development. So we had 17 applicants and we accepted 17 individuals. So we have 17 in that cohort. We are also expanding this work and initiated our first cohort of, again, I'm terrible, I didn't turn anybody away, at the cost of my team and a lot of work, but they're also excited about it, 21 individuals are in what we are calling an aspiring leadership cohort. So as we know folks for various reasons are leaving these positions, leaving school systems. We also need to be ready to recruit, (inaudible) and retain the next round of special education leaders in our state. So this root group will also go through a yearlong cycle of learning. In some cases we may mix them with some of the veteran directors who are in our fellow academy. But we're really excited about this cohort. They are excited and a very inspirational group of people who are willing to and want to step into SPED director and leadership roles in school systems eventually. So we are happy about that. So there are 21 people in that particular cohort. That cohort will, like I said, will not be as rigorous. They're going to have a mix of virtual and in-person. Our fellows are all in-person. All of their cycles of learning are in-person. Of course, we're walking them through those executive learning projects. We have them pitch those to various panels of experts throughout the year until ultimately in May or June, in June they will pitch their final project

and what it is they have begun or will launch in their school system to solve whatever their problem of practice was.

But those 21 individuals will also have some opportunity to interact with them. They will not be required to do an executive learning project. So it's a little bit scaled back support. But perhaps these individuals when they are promoted and get into a directorship, they will kind of have their feet wet a little bit and will want to also then get in our fellows academy which will dive a little bit deeper with them as a new director. So we're really excited. This is huge. It is a lot of work for my team. But it's something that we feel we have to continue to support our school system level special education leaders across our state.

The next event that we have that I wanted to update you all on back in August we partnered with LASEA our Louisiana Association of Special Education Administrators to put on a two-day event for a group of individuals that we haven't supported in quite some time. And those are pupil appraisal staff in our school systems. So educational diagnosticians, school psychologists, people acting in those eval coordinator roles as students are coming up for evaluation and determination of eligibility around special education. This is the group of people that we pull together and led some development on. They were really excited about it. They were really thankful. They are hoping that it becomes an annual event. We haven't committed to that yet, but it's certainly something you all know how extensive it is to get up and running a lot of these events. But our partnership with LASEA for this really helped us be (inaudible). And we had over 200 pupil appraisals. Some of them brought their special education supervisors who also lead some of those pupil appraisal teams. And so we had over 200 people at that two-day event in August.

I also wanted to bring to this group I know last time there were some questions and I've received some questions about Superintendent Brumley's teacher advisory council and the representation of, to make sure there were special education represented on that

council. So they held their first meeting-- I went to the agenda that tells you also the individuals who were selected to be on that council. They held their first meeting in September. There are 22 educators from every BESE region in our state. And they are going to meet quarterly. We do have individuals who have special education certification on the council and also at least one, maybe two educators who also have gifted and talented. So, you know, for those students who need, you know, extensions and challenges in a different way. So I wanted to bring that. I know that was a question around this group and for some community members to make sure those populations were represented on that council.

Next, I wanted to, you all are probably very well aware of the big (inaudible) initiative and push in our state around a reading revival and really supporting all of our youngest students to make sure that they are reading on grade level on time. One of the things that we are doing and partnering with our literacy team is to offer a couple of different supports. We now have legislation that requires all educators and administrators in K3 to have specific training and signs of reading. But one group of professionals that we had fielded questions around, right, were around paraprofessionals, support staff, interventionists. What about those people. How do we support them in supporting students who struggle to read. And so we have launched some professional development targeted just at those individuals and paraprofessionals and support staff. So I wanted to bring that support here. And I linked to some of those resources and that support series for professional, for paraprofessionals and support staff.

We have also launched, I think you all are familiar with our high-cost service grant program. We are on our annual cycle. Have launched our first round of that grant that really supports our school systems in school serving students with the most challenging needs. They are able to submit applications. We have a portion of our state set aside that is required by OSEP for us to create a high-cost service program. And so that is funded through our IDEA 611 state set aside

dollars. And school systems now are launching their first round of applications. And so they can request to fund specific excessive cost. For example, high dollar tech equipment for students who need communication devices. Who need special transportation. Who need one-on-one para support or specific individuals to support them. School systems can apply to receive additional funding to support those high-cost needs. So we are launching that. School systems are going to be submitting their applications this month.

The next piece here is something that I always bring here, I brought here last year. I think you all are used to being notified when we launch our waiver request to the US Department of Ed and the Office of Special Education Programs, OSEP. So there is a federal requirement that states cap participation in alternate assessment at 1 percent. Historically for years we have exceeded that cap. Some years we are at 1.6. Some years we're at 1.5. Some years we are at 1.4 percent most recently. And so it really depends on student population, student enrollment, where that participation falls every year. And so we are applying again for a waiver. And we are, we have launched our notice of intent. So we're asking everyone, you know, if you want to share this information. The public can submit comments around that waiver by emailing our special education email address here. We would like those comments by the end of the month. We will be submitting our waiver in November, and we'll attach those to that waiver. That will help us get that approval that we need to ensure that our students have the access to the assessment deemed appropriate by their IEP team.

And then lastly, wanted to tell everyone we launched our Related Service Advisory Commission that was established by Senate Resolution 31. It has 14 members, and this commission is charged with examining the ratio of service providers to students, the impact on related service implementation in our state. And we are realizing some of the overlap that we are going to have to work with the team that is doing the House Resolution 173 that we've noticed is also working on

ratios. For example, for social workers, for school psychologists. So we are working on a plan to make sure we are communicating because that work sounds like it is being duplicated across our related service commission and the work of the House Resolution 173 group that's also looking at student behavior, health, welfare those types of things. But part of that is around social workers and school psychologists. So we're going to have to make those connections.

So membership on our related service commission includes expertise in social work, OT, occupational therapy, school psychology, autism, speech pathology. We have family support represented. Behavior analysis. We also have a special education administrator. We have a representative from the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs on that commission. We met for the first time on September the 7th. And we will be meeting again in November. And so our first meeting was really around looking at the regulations, discussing goals, looking at current policy around these ratios and kind of getting input from all of those different levels of expertise.

We also use sort of a common, you know, a swat analysis. What are our strengths in our state, what are our weaknesses, where are there opportunities for us to make an impact. And so we compiled that information. Once the group recorded all that, we did some small group discussion. We'll bring that back along with at our next meeting we'll be looking at a lot of the data that we are going to pull out of our data system that will show us what are the majority of the related services look like in our state. If we can, what's being provided on a consolidated basis verses having full time employees. We're going to be also-- the commission is going to develop a stakeholder survey because a lot of information we just need to poll school systems to see how many of these individuals do you have employed verses are you having to contract out some of these services. And what is the impact of that. What does that look like. So we will meet again in November.

And then just to kind of announce to you all here our next SEAP meeting is the 16th. So definitely

wanted to share that date with everyone here too. And that concludes my report.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. Thank you, Ms. Jordan. Are there any council members have any questions about the report that's been presented? Okay. Not seeing any. Do we have any council members that have questions? I see Vice Chair Banks, your hand is raised. You're recognized by the chair. You have the floor. Vice Chair Banks, you're still muted.

NICOLE BANKS: I'm sorry, y'all. Okay. So I was listening to the advisory council, and you said that you guys just now have that in place, correct? Is that a diverse council?

MEREDITH JORDAN: For the Related Service Commission that membership was set out in legislation.

NICOLE BANKS: So people had to vote up on this?

MEREDITH JORDAN: No. So the organizations that were named, nominated or told us who they wanted to represent that organization on the panel. So there was no vote on membership.

NICOLE BANKS: Oh, so it's not diverse and it's not, you know, equality. You know, cause that's what we all strive for, right. Or is that not what you guys do up on that council? On that board, I'm sorry.

MEREDITH JORDAN: It's all set out in legislation. We had no say. Like I said, there was no vote. It was here are the organizations that you have to reach out to to nominate a person to represent on the council.

NICOLE BANKS: No really stipulations to have a diverse selection. It's just whoever they set and whoever they chose, right?

MEREDITH JORDAN: That's it. Yes, ma'am.

NICOLE BANKS: Everybody is really represented and everyone's best interest up in this particular issue that we're trying to tackle with this board how do we know that that is going to take place?

MEREDITH JORDAN: We're going to do everything we can. I'm working with the two, we have two cochairs that we are working to support to move forward the work of that legislation as it is outlined. It is very specific as to what that commission is to do and the recommendations that they should take care of. I'm going to do everything I can, Ms. Banks, to support



them to do what it is that is outlined to do.

NICOLE BANKS: Okay. Well, that was my only question with everything, you know. But you guys are doing good work.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Thank you.

NICOLE BANKS: You're welcome. I yield the floor.

SPEAKER: I just had a question. I thought we were working on 1508, revise 1508?

MEREDITH JORDAN: Potentially that could be a recommendation, yep, on those ratios. 741 has some ratios in it.

RASHAD BRISTO: I'm going to interject for a minute. I'm going to preference something. For those of you who are virtual we may have a hiccup with our system in the next 13 minutes. It's logging off to do automatic reset of the computer. If that be the case as soon as we can get it back up, we'll get everything back online. But I just wanted to make you aware that they're doing their best to try to make sure they can put it on snooze. But technology is about like some people I know. Sometimes just won't do right. Do we have any more questions in regards to the report that was presented?

REKEESHA BRANCH: We do have a statement in the chat from Ms. Kathy Dwyer. Did I hear correctly special education teacher representation on the teacher council are two gifted/talented teachers. And when did we lose the related services commission.

MEREDITH JORDAN: Yes. So you did hear correctly, Ms. Dwyer. There is special education certification and gifted talented represented on the superintendent's teacher advisory council. And what was your second question about related services?

REKEESHA BRANCH: When did we lose the related services commission.

MEREDITH JORDAN: It just started. So it's not lost. It just started in September.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Do we have any more questions in regards to the report presented by Ms. Jordan for Department of Education, any council members? Not seeing any. Do we have any more public, anything from public chat or comment in regards to the report that's just been presented?

REKEESHA BRANCH: Not at this time.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. Thank you, Ms. Jordan. This report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next item of business is report from Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs. Ms. Crain. The chair recognizes Ms. Cheri Crain. You have the floor.

CHERI CRAIN: Thank you. My report is yellow, and it was the one that was not in the folder. Sorry. So currently at the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs all of our councils are back up and running after Covid. A few shutting down having spurts of Covid and having to close for a couple of weeks. But they are all currently open and running. Our ombudsman care, long-term care ombudsman started a new problem, and it is called LA PEER, Louisiana Program for Empowering Every Resident. We started the program as a series of interactive training sessions for long-term care residents. The program trains individuals on long-term, in long-term care facilities to advocate for themselves through a six-part empowerment program and teaches them to help their fellow residents to improve day to day life in their home, in the facility. The residents are trained to think in terms of advocacy and act as problem solvers through critical thinking.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Crain, I apologize. I'm going to have to interrupt you for a minute.

CHERI CRAIN: Sure.

RASHAD BRISTO: Because of technology, so the computer doesn't shut itself down I'm going to call a break so they can go ahead and hook up another monitor, hook up another system. So for those that are online to make sure we don't lose this meeting I'm going to go ahead and call a break. I'm going to ask everyone to reconvene-- okay. I'm going to call a ten-minute break. I apologize again for interrupting you, but I didn't want it to shut down and have a larger problem.

CHERI CRAIN: I'm good.

RASHAD BRISTO: Okay. We're going to call back to order. Thank you so much for understanding. From the Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs. So Ms. Crain, thank you for allowing me to interrupt you. My apologies.

CHERI CRAIN: Sure. I was kind of just talking about the new program that we have under our ombudsman where the residents are trained to think in terms of advocacy and act as problem solvers through critical thinking. Louisiana is the third state in the nation to establish this train the residents of self-advocate program.

The peer program takes on its own style and flavor in Louisiana, or course. We started it in June of this year and Louisiana's first LA PEER graduating class with certificates of training on June 30th at the St. Jude's Health and Wellness in New Orleans. The first facility in Louisiana to embrace the program. The initial focus was in the New Orleans area, but the goal is to expand the program throughout the state. There are 257 nursing homes in Louisiana with the consensus count of over 22,000 residents. The ombudsman staff and volunteers currently are less than 50 for the entire state. There is a need for self-advocacy program like LA PEER. Our funding that we received in order to start this program came through the ARPA two funding which gave us the opportunity to also contract with LA PEER trainer to actually train the residents in the program and try to drum up more volunteers throughout the state. So we're really excited about that and to see how far that goes.

And then on the second page I wanted to talk a little bit about our elderly protective services. We do give some statistics. As of July 1st, 2022, we have opened 1,264 cases. So if you realize that is only a three-month period. Of those cases 118 were classified as high priority. 769 cases were classified as medium priority. So I did give a breakdown on the types of reports that we do receive. If you add those cases up that are on the type of cases which includes caregiver neglect, extortion, physical abuse, self-neglect. It does come up to more than the 1264 cases. The reason is is in a quarters time we may open so many cases, but we do close way more than that because of the previous quarter kind of rolls over. We open one quarter, and we might not close it till the second quarter. We did receive some ARPA funding for that program as well. So we are working on training staff more. We are also

working on training law enforcement and a few other entities. We're looking at attorney general offices throughout the state to coordinate with them as well.

Then we have our aging and disability resource centers. They're still working on a Covid grant for vaccines. They still have that going and trying to promote the boosters and stuff. So there's really nothing new going on there right now.

And then into our MIPPA program, which is the Medicaid services, low-income program and then our savings plan. So we closed out one grant which was from 2020. Our 21 was extended 12 months and then we just started our new grant October 1st which will go through June. So we have, that's like nine mini grants even though they're capped three. So a lot going on there to help those seniors with their Medicaid enrollment which opened October 15th and it will run through December 7th every year.

Other than that, that's really the end of my report. Other than just mentioning that, you know, we still work with EMDAC as Bambi said earlier which is the Emergency Management for Disabled and Aging Coalition. And that is about it. Nothing else new right now.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. Thank you, Ms. Crain. Do we have any council members with any comments or questions about the report that has just been presented by Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs?

HANNAH JENKINS: Jill Hano has her hand raised.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Hano, you're recognized. Jill, you have the floor. You're recognized.

HANNAH JENKINS: You're muted, Jill.

JILL HANO: Okay. Sorry.

RASHAD BRISTO: No problem.

JILL HANO: You said something the long-term care ombudsman program was under some other initial-- I don't know. You got a new program under the long-term care ombudsman program?

CHERI CRAIN: Correct. So the state ombudsman has always been a program and we receive funding, and we started this new program under that, yes.

JILL HANO: Okay. And what's the name of the new program?

CHERI CRAIN: It's Louisiana Program for Empowering Every Resident. And for short it's LA PEER.

JILL HANO: Peter?

CHERI CRAIN: PEER. P-E-E-R is the acronym.

JILL HANO: Okay. Thank you.

CHERI CRAIN: You're welcome.

RASHAD BRISTO: Any other council members with any questions in regards to the report that's been presented? Not seeing any. Do we have any public comment in regards to the report that's been presented by Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs?

HANNAH JENKINS: There are no hands raised or comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: All right. So with that being said, thank you, again, Ms. Crain. Your report requires no action and will be placed on file. Next item up for business is the report of the Bureau of Health Services Finance and Medicaid. The chair recognizes Ms. Tara LeBlanc.

RASHAD BRISTO: Good afternoon, everyone. I am Dr. Shannon Bibbins.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Dr. Bibbins. I apologize for overlooking you.

SHANNON BIBBINS: No worries. I'll be sitting in for Tara LeBlanc in representing the Bureau of Health Services Financing also known as Medicaid. We are an agency under the Louisiana Department of Health. The report that has been submitted has been identified as the turquoise report and I will give the updates. I'll start off by mentioning our fiscal year 2022 LDH business plan. Just for record, fiscal year 22 is comprised of dates July 1, 2021, through June 30th of 2022. And so we are in the process of finalizing the final outcomes report which will be released to the public later this month, October. And so the report will detail the number of deliverables that were completed as well as the goals that were met during fiscal year 22. I am proud to say that over 95 percent of the business plan deliverables were completed and 36 of 42 goals were met.

So I will highlight those Medicaid goals which were met. We had five initiatives and five goals that were met which include developing a comprehensive

dental program for adults over the age of 21 enrolled in an IDD waiver. Increase the number of adult Medicaid members with controlled high blood pressure and diabetes. Establish university partnerships in fiscal year 22 to conduct projects that identify and address three challenges or opportunities in LDH. Next, launch the workforce development training program and train 100 individuals in the pilot phase with 25 percent of the pilot enrollees being a current Medicaid recipient. And then award MCO contracts, that's the managed care organization contracts that incorporate broad stakeholder feedback and suggestions resulting in increasing accountability, improve health management and reduce health disparities for individuals assessing Medicaid services.

As you can see within the report, we also highlighted some other areas in agencies. Some of this may have already been reported. I know Julie presented her report on OCDD and some of the other agencies may have some of this information included as well. But as the Bureau of Health Services Financing, we do work to partnership with other agencies to make sure that those Medicaid recipients and those waiver recipients are able to receive services.

In addition, the fiscal year 2023 LDH business plan is going to be released simultaneously with the final outcomes from fiscal year 2022. And as I mentioned the plan is to release that before the end of this month. But just for record, some of the areas that the department will be focusing in on will be maternal health, behavioral health, healthcare workforce, chronic disease and continuing to focus on improving internal LDH culture, strengthening external partnerships with stakeholders and improving transparency and compliance. And then we include some additional initiatives that are listed in the report.

One other key focus area right now is provider enrollment. And so CMS has mandated provider enrollment and it applies to any provider that provides care to Medicaid members. And so the deadline for those providers to submit an enrollment application has been extended-- sorry. Was extended to September 30th. We're now past that date. And so we're really working

with providers providing additional training, encouraging the providers to get those applications submitted. Because claims will be denied beginning December 31st of this year for providers who have not completed the enrollment process. So again, we're working very closely trying to encourage all providers to submit those applications prior to then.

So that concludes my report right now. I wanted to highlight those things. You do all have a copy of the report and I will now accept any questions that anyone may have.

HYACINTH MCKEE: At this time are there any questions from the committee for Dr. Bibbins report? Do we have any questions from the virtual attendees from the DD Council on this report?

HANNAH JENKINS: There are no hands raised or comments in the chat.

HYACINTH MCKEE: Okay. Hearing none, this report will be accepted into record as it stands. Our chair has returned.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you so much. Moving forward the next report will be presented by Disability Rights Louisiana. The chair recognizes Tory Rocca. You have the floor.

TORY ROCCA: Thank you. Appreciate it. So this report is a summary of the activities of our community living ombudsman program. It's the program in which trained advocates known as ombudsman advocate for people with developmental disabilities who live in the over 500 state licensed privately run group homes across state. On behalf of some residents we met with OCDD staff regarding SUN screenings for group home residents seeking waiver placement. There were concerns that some of the residents were not being found eligible for waivers due to issues with SUN screenings. So we're working with OCDD staff on that.

Between June 1st and October 1st our ombudsman filed 10 complaints with LDH's health standards section who are in charge of (inaudible). The complaints included two sudden and questionable deaths of residents. One allegation of severe understaffing. Eleven allegations of neglect of resident health. One allegation of lack of access to medical care. Two

allegations of improper behavior planning. Three allegations of unsafe building conditions. One allegation of financial concerns or misuse. One allegation of physical assault by another resident. One allegation of physical assault by staff. And one allegation of neglectful evacuation conditions. The report is very short this month so that's it.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you, Mr. Rocca. Does anyone have any comments or questions in regards to the report presented by Disability Rights Louisiana? I don't see any council members with any questions. Do we have any virtual? Not seeing any council members. Do we have any public comment in regards to the report that was presented by Disability Rights Louisiana?

HANNAH JENKINS: No, sir.

RASHAD BRISTO: Not seeing none this report's information will be recorded into record. We've already taken a break. I'm going to bypass that. We're ahead of schedule for public comment. But before we go any further am I missing anything? Just want to make sure. So at this point do we have any public comment?

HANNAH JENKINS: There are no hands raised or comments in the chat.

RASHAD BRISTO: With that being said, since we have no public comment, we will move into announcements. Next quarterly meeting will be held January 18th and 19th of 2023. Does anybody have any announcements? The chair recognizes Mr. Jim Sprinkle of Families Helping Families Crossroads.

JIM SPRINKLE: (Inaudible).

EBONY HAVEN: If you want to repeat your comment.

HYACINTH MCKEE: We need that on record.

JIM SPRINKLE: I'm Jim Sprinkle director of Families Helping Families region six and held numerous other positions over the last 22 years. And I wanted to say this is one of the finest meetings I have been to in such a long time. I have been to almost every DD Council meeting for the last 22 years and everybody here seems happy, upbeat. The dark cloud is gone, and God bless you all.

RASHAD BRISTO: Thank you. Any other announcements? Since there's no further business--



JILL HANO: Ebony, check your email.

EBONY HAVEN: I will, Jill.

RASHAD BRISTO: Ms. Haven, check your email. Since there's no further business, if there's no objection, we will adjourn this meeting at 2:04 p.m. Thank y'all so much for your time.