



Executive Director's Report July 17-18, 2024 Council Meeting

Budget

- The budget report with expenditures through June 2024 is included in the packet. A final FY2024 budget report will be given at the October meeting along the FY2025 1st quarter report which will include expenditures through September 2024.

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD)

- NACDD and the White House celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Olmstead Decision. This event reflected on the progress that has made and work still ahead for individuals with developmental disabilities. You can find the recording of the event on [YouTube](#).

Action Plan and Annual Report

- The [Annual Report](#) for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2023 was completed and is available on our website.
- Public input was solicited on the FFY25 Action Plan the Council approved at the April 18th meeting. Comments received will be considered by the Council on July 18th.
- Updates to the Council's 2022-2026 State Plan were submitted to the Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD) on June 21st. The Action Plan for FFY25 will be submitted by the August 15th deadline.

Membership Update

- Per the Governor's delegated authority, he opted not to confirm the following appointed Council members: Mary Frances Avera, Missey Moore, Melinda Perrodin and Samantha Singletary. The Governor's office has asked the Council to provide three (3) nominees per seat to fill these vacancies. Deadline to apply for Council consideration is July 26th.
- Jamar Ennis was appointed by the Governor on July 7, 2024 as the new representative for the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs (GODA).
- Tory Rocca and Meredith Jordan's names have been submitted to the Governor as their terms have ended and are they eligible for reappointment.
- Reece Hoyt was selected to replace Christinna Beckett as the institutional/facility seat member. Her appointment to the Council by the Governor is still pending.
- Mike Billings was appointed on 10/7/2023 to fill a vacancy due to resignation. The term expired on 2/28/2024 and according to the Council's bylaws: "Vacancies shall be filled as they occur, from nominations obtained from the general public and Council members. Their terms shall be for the unexpired term of membership. If the unexpired term of membership is less than one-and-a-half years, the Council member is eligible to be reappointed for a consecutive term of membership." This reappointment by the Governor is still pending.



Staff Changes

- On June 13th, Brenton Andrus was promoted to the Deputy Director position.
- An advertisement to fill his Program Manager position through Civil Service was issued and over 75 applications were received! Review of the applicants and interviews will begin as soon as possible.

Ad Hoc Committees

- The Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee met on June 7th and July 1st to make recommendations on changes to the Council's bylaws. These recommendations will be considered by the full Council at the July meeting and are linked in the agenda.

Staff Professional Development

- Stephanie and I attended the OIDD 2024 Training and Technical Assistance Institute in partnership with the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and Administration on Disabilities (AoD) on May 7th, 9th, 14th and 16th. Sessions included: Leading for Engagement: Culturally Competent Practices to Engage People from Diverse Communities and Backgrounds, Leadership Development: Investing and Enhancing Council Member Leadership Skills and Leading through Key Leadership Transitions: Before, During, and After.

Legislative Update

- The Council's advocacy efforts prior to and during the 2024 legislative session resulted in outcomes that will benefit thousands of people with developmental disabilities and their families. Read the recap of the session: [2024 Legislative Session Impacts](#)
- All bills the Council tracked throughout the session: [Legislative Bill Tracking](#)

LaCAN

- The annual Legislative Debriefing was held for LaCAN Leaders and Families Helping Families (FHF) Directors where we discussed the outcomes of the 2024 legislative session and solicited feedback on LaCAN's activities before and during session, emphasizing what was most effective and what we can do to improve in the future.

Advocacy Activities and Provision of Information

Community Supports

- Advocated for the Office for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities (OCDD) to ensure families, local governing entities and support coordination agencies are aware that two levels of approval are required to be eligible for TEFRA (i.e. level of care and medical eligibility determination). Additionally, advocated for OCDD to ensure families are aware they can request a Screening for Urgency of Needs (SUN) be conducted in person.
- Met with the Division of Administration (DOA), Rep. McFarland and OCDD to advocate with the Arc of Louisiana to increase the night rate to match the day rate in intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) waivers. The funding was added to [House Bill 1 \(HB1/Act4\)](#).
- Advocated with the Arc of Louisiana to ensure the recurring revenue source (7% tax on gross sales of therapeutic marijuana) for the Disability Services Fund remains dedicated to disability services so services will be protected in times of budget shortfalls.



Education

- Provided information to the House Education Committee on [HB8/Act247](#) which prohibits the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) from approving or implementing an appeals process through the submission of a portfolio. Also provided information on [HCR44](#) which directs BESE to explore the creation of an appeals process for certain students who do not pass state-administered, End of Course (EOC) assessments required for high school graduation.
- Provided information to the Senate Finance, Senate Education and House Education committees on [SB313/Act 1](#) which creates the LA Gator Scholarship Program, an Education Scholarship Account (ESA). Also shared concerns about ESAs and the potential impact on the public education system.
- Provided information to the Governor’s Office on data key stakeholders would consider necessary to collect to determine the effectiveness of ESAs and its impacts on students with disabilities.
- Provided information to the Senate Education committee on [HB153/Act 198](#) which required several changes related to special education on the local level including training for school board members on special education, annual reporting by Superintendents and Heads of Charter Schools on specific Special Education data to local Special Education Advisory Councils (SEACs), increasing time for Due Process claims from 1 to 2 years and installing cameras in special education classrooms upon parental request within 90 days of the request.

General

- Shared information on NACDD’s Self-Advocacy Committee (SAC) meetings inviting self-advocate Council members
- Provided information through LaDDC News on the following:
 - [Public Comment South on Council’s FFY 2025 Action Plan](#), April 24, 2024
 - [Council Releases 2023 Annual Report on Impactful Initiatives](#), April 29, 2024
 - [LDOE Risk-Based Monitoring Performance Audit](#), May 22, 2024
 - [Council Issues Multiple Solicitations of Proposals](#), June 12, 2024
 - [25th Anniversary of the Olmstead Decision](#), June 14, 2024
 - [2024 Legislative Session Impacts](#), June 17, 2024
 - [Recruiting Strong Advocates for Council Membership](#), June 27, 2024
- Provided information through Facebook and Twitter on various issues of interest to people with developmental disabilities and their families.
 - Most notably was preparation for July Disability Pride Month “Share Your Story” social media campaign. These stories will be shared throughout the month of July 2024.

Meetings Attended by Council Staff

Time Period: April – June 2024

Brenton Andrus:

LaCAN Leader Call

April 4, 2024

Meeting with Governor Landry’s Office

April 19, 2024

House Appropriations Committee

April 23, 2024

Meeting with Division of Administration

April 30, 2024

OCDD State Advisory Council

May 8, 2024



BESE Meeting	June 3, 2024
LaCAN Leader Call	June 6, 2024
LaDDC Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee Meeting	June 7, 2024
People First of LA Annual Conference	June 13, 2024
LaCAN Debriefing	June 27, 2024

LaCAN Monthly Leader Call

Participated in the monthly LaCAN Leader call on April 4, 2024 with regional LaCAN Leaders and FHF directors. This call focused on reviewing the Council's advocacy agenda and legislation filed during the 2024 Regular Legislative Session.

Meeting with Governor Landry's Office

Attended a meeting with Governor Landry's Deputy Chief of Staff, GODA's Executive Director and Council staff management team to discuss the Council's concerns regarding ESAs. Advocated for students with disabilities and the impacts ESAs will have on their education. Advocated for all legislation establishing ESAs to be deferred.

House Appropriations Committee Meeting

Attended the House Appropriations Committee meeting to support LaCAN members during a Yellow Shirt Day (YSD) on April 23, 2024. The FY25 budget bill (HB1) was amended, but the \$9.4 million needed to eliminate the Flexible Family Fund Waitlist and the \$10.1 million needed to raise night rates in I/DD waivers was not included in the amendment package. The supplemental budget bill (HB782) did include an amendment to restore \$500,000 to the Council's budget for FHF Centers.

Meeting with Division of Administration (DOA)

Discussed the \$10.1 million to raise night rates in I/DD waivers. In attendance were LaDDC Executive Director Ebony Haven, Kelly Monroe and Ashley McReynolds of the Arc of La., Representative McFarland (House Appropriations Chair), Julie Foster Hagan of OCDD and DOA staff. DOA did make a commitment to include the necessary funding needed in their package of amendments to Senate Finance should the Revenue Estimating Conference recognize additional funding for Fiscal Year 2025.

OCDD State Advisory Committee (SAC)

Attended the OCDD SAC meeting where multiple updates were shared by OCDD. Most of the updates provided were on the budget, legislature, American Rescue Plan dollars and OCDD priorities and initiatives were also presented to the Council at its April meeting. Regional Advisory Councils also provided updates regarding services and needs in their communities.

LaCAN Monthly Leader Call

Participated in the monthly LaCAN Leader call on June 6, 2024 with regional LaCAN Leaders and FHF directors. This call focused on reviewing advocacy outcomes during the 2024 Regular Legislative Session and reviewing information necessary to plan and host community input meetings.

BESE Committee Meeting

Attended the BESE's Academic Goals and Instructional Improvement Committee meeting to support LaCAN members during a YSD. The committee reviewed a recent special education audit which sighted concerns for monitoring compliance. LDOE reviewed their action plan, and the Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) will also review this audit at its meeting in July.



The committee also voted to approve LDOE’s plan to revise the state’s K-12 Accountability system, which is used to assign grades to public schools and systems, despite overwhelming public input suggesting the new plan will hinder growth and achievement.

LaDDC Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Participated in the Council’s bylaws ad hoc committee where the committee members reviewed the Council’s bylaws, policies and procedures and recommended edits from staff (as requested). Unfortunately, the committee was unable to review all necessary documents and recommend changes, so a follow up meeting will need to be held.

People First of Louisiana 2024 Annual Conference

Attended the 2024 People First of Louisiana annual conference in Baton Rouge. Guest speakers were Mark Hublar and Katherine Klinitas. The conference focused on the power of storytelling and living up to your full potential. Participants learned how self-determination plays a crucial role in overcoming personal and social challenges and how to share their story about overcoming barriers. They were also motivated to try new things, set personal goals and committing to accomplishing those goals no matter what obstacles may be present.

LaCAN Debriefing

Attended the 2024 LaCAN Debriefing in Pineville. Council program staff, LaCAN Leaders and FHF Directors attend this debriefing annually to review the legislative session and advocacy achievements. LaCAN activities are also discussed to determine what aspects of each event or working, what needs to change, and how to improve current practices.

Stephanie Carmona:

Meeting with Governor Landry’s Office	April 19, 2024
OIDD Training & Technical Assistance Institute #1&2	May 7, 2024
OIDD Training & Technical Assistance Institute #3	May 9, 2024
OIDD Training & Technical Assistance Institute #5&6	May 14, 2024
OIDD Training & Technical Assistance Institute #7&8	May 16, 2024
OIDD Webinar: State Plan Updates/Amendments	May 23, 2024
Federal Cost-Sharing Call with ACL	May 31, 2024
FY2025 Planning Committee	March 11, 2024
SEAP Meeting	March 20, 2024
Peer-2-Peer Data Management	March 21, 2024

OIDD 1 Administration for Community Living (ACL) Updates

Attended webinar that gave ACL updates on special initiatives and priorities. Discussed Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI), Covid-19, and natural disasters

OIDD 2 ACL Office of Fiscal Operations (OFO)

Attended webinar about the DDC formula award, fiscal requirements, and cost allowability. Discussed the notice of award, financial reporting, cost management best practices and ACL match monitoring project.

OIDD 3 Tawara Goode, Engaging Diverse Communities

Attended webinar on cultural and linguistic competence, the difference between community outreach and community engagement, and historical trauma. There was a discussion on the role of cultural brokers, and they gave strategies to engage diverse communities.



OIDD 5 Leadership Development for Council Members

Attended webinar on leadership development and the benefits of furthering the leadership development of Council members. Discussed the practice of using Council self-assessments and different strategies for leadership development.

OIDD 6 Supporting the Journey of Developing Leaders with Developmental Disabilities

Attended webinar on developing leaders with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). People with developmental disabilities who are self-advocates and leaders discussed ways to support the self-advocacy journey for people with I/DD and further develop leadership skills.

OIDD 7 WE Amplified, Maximizing Influence for Collective Success

Attended webinar on collaborating with a shared goal in mind. Discussed how to effectively collaborate, communicate, to work together to succeed, including tips to do this.

OIDD 8 Leading through Key Transitions, Before, During and After

Attended webinar on how to prepare for key leadership transitions, ensuring stability during the transition, and strategies to use when coming out of a transition. Information on the mechanics of transitions will be laid out with a focus on what a Council needs to consider when experiencing transitions.

Webinar: State Plan Updates/Amendments

Attended a webinar on state plan updates and amendments, how to update the plan, and what changes are going into effect in FFY25.

Federal Cost-Sharing info call with ACL

Met with ACL fiscal officers to talk about federal match and timeshare. We discussed scenarios, the cost-share (match) formula, and ways to incorporate the language into our solicitations of proposals and future contracts.

Making a Difference through Advocacy in Education and Employment Training

Attended training at The Arc on education and employment. Lighthouse Louisiana also presented on planning.

Meetings Attended by Executive Director

- Meeting with Julie F. Hagan (OCDD) April 3, 2024
- LaCAN Leader Call April 4, 2024
- Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council April 8, 2024
- Meeting with GODA Executive Director April 11, 2024
- Council Committee Meetings April 18, 2024
- Full Council Meeting April 18, 2024
- Meeting with Governor Landry's Office April 19, 2024
- House Appropriations Committee April 23, 2024
- Meeting with OWHCH Executive Director April 23, 2024
- Meeting with ITACC April 24, 2024
- Meeting with Division of Administration April 30, 2024
- Meeting with Arc of La April 30, 2024
- LA DCW Strategies Center PLC Call May 1, 2024
- LaCAN Leader Call May 2, 2024
- Meeting with Julie F. Hagan (OCDD) May 7, 2024



- OIDD Training & Technical Assistance Institute #1&2 May 7, 2024
- NACDD State of the States Webinar May 8, 2024
- Meeting with LaDDC Chair May 8, 2024
- Meeting with La DD Network May 9, 2024
- Meeting with OIDD May 15, 2024
- Senate Finance Committee YSD May 17, 2024
- ACCESS Rule Webinar May 20, 2024
- ITACC State Plan Amendments Webinar May 23, 2024
- Federal Cost-Sharing Meeting with ACL May 31, 2024
- Partners in Policymaking Graduation June 1, 2024
- BESE Meeting (YSD) June 3, 2024
- LaCAN Leader Call June 6, 2024
- LaDDC Bylaws Ad Hoc Committee Meeting June 7, 2024
- Meeting with LaDDC Chair June 13, 2024
- LSU HDC CAC Meeting June 17, 2024
- OAAS Support Coordination Meeting June 18, 2024
- GODA/GACDA Meeting June 21, 2024
- Partners in Policymaking Debriefing June 25, 2024
- LA DSW Peer Learning Collaborative Call June 25, 2024
- LaCAN Debriefing June 27, 2024

Meeting with GODA’s Executive Director

Discussed 2024 legislative bills the Council had listed as priority 1 and 2. Discussed concerns for language included in certain bills including the ESAs.

Meeting with Office of Women’s Health and Community Health (OWHCH)

Discussed the potential to collaborate on accessible, educational materials on Women’s health. Also discussed bills being heard in the 2024 legislative session, and OWHCH agreed, if passed, they would be also interested in collaborating to ensure the materials created for SB55 ([Act 122](#)) and SB325 ([Act 332](#)) would be accessible to all women.

Meeting with Information and Technical Assistance Center for Councils on Developmental Disabilities (ITACC)

Met with ITACC to discuss concerns about Council membership and the new Administration. Discussed the language included in the DD Act which states the Governor has sole authority over Council membership and rotation, and the responsibilities of each state DD Council including being an independent advocate.

Louisiana Direct Care Worker (DCW) Strategies Center – Peer Learning Collaborative

Louisiana was selected to participate in the first cohort of the DCW Strategies Center State Peer-Learning Collaborative. Medicaid, OCDD, OAAS and the Council are participating in the collaborative to gather information from subject matter experts on how to recruit and retain DCWs based on work done in other states. This is a continuous collaborative effort.

NACDD State of the States Webinar

Data training for Council staff to discuss data sources and resources available for the Comprehensive Review Analysis (CRA) needed for the 5 year plan.



Meeting with the Office on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (OIDD)

Met with Louisiana's Program Officer to discuss concerns about Council membership and [SB462/Act 491](#) which allows the governor to appoint the chairman and any other officer of each board and commission whose appointment is not otherwise provided for in the present constitution.

LSU HDC CAC Meeting

Attended the Human Development Center's Advisory Council Meeting and provided information on the Council's 2024 legislative wins, FHF funding from the LDOE and the LDOE monitoring audit by the legislative auditor.

OAAS Support Coordination Meeting

Met with Alvarez & Marsal who partnered with the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) to perform an assessment of support coordination (SC) services in Louisiana. Information on practices, quality of service and performance was provided on SC services in Louisiana.

GODA/GACDA Meeting

Attended the Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs quarterly meeting and discussed the Council's 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda wins. Also provided information on recruitment for new Council members and the 2025 Partners in Policymaking class, upcoming LaCAN community input meetings and the Disability Pride Month social media campaign for July.

Partners in Policymaking (PIP) Debriefing

Attended the 2024 PIP Debriefing in Baton Rouge with Council program staff, Deputy Director, PIP Coordinator and Liz Gary (mentor) to review the successful aspects on the 2024 class and where improvements can be made for the 2025 class. Also discussed the logistics and preparations for the 2025 class and the PIP alumni event for FY2025.

