

Executive Director's Report

April 2021 Council Meeting

OIDD Regional Engagement Call

Office of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities/Administration for Community Living staff advised that a new contractor is being selected and will prioritize developing a data platform to collect federal reporting information. There is a possibility that a No-Cost Extension of 2020 federal funding may be available for each State DD Council to apply for. Louisiana applied for and received the 2019 No-Cost Extension back in August 2020. If this additional extension becomes available for 2020 funding, an application will be submitted for Louisiana's Council.

NACDD

The National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities hosted a meeting with all Council Executive Directors to discuss the current rule on Period of Performance. Currently, Council's have 2 years to obligate federal funds once granted, and 1 year to liquidate those funds. This Period of Performance change was implemented in July 2019. Several Council ED's expressed a desire to advocate and/or appeal for this change to be reverted back to a 3-year Period of Performance (instead of 2 years). Efforts toward requesting this change with the proper authorities are still ongoing. NACDD announced they will be hosting the 2021 Executive Director's Annual Leadership Summit in Providence, Rhode Island, from October 17th – October 21st.

Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline

Representative Jason Hughes is filing [HB411](#) during the 2021 legislative session based on recommendation from this Council. The Advisory Council has created subcommittees (workgroups) to address Master Model Plan templates, the accountability for implementation and consistency of student discipline laws, and creating a survey for Local Educational Agencies regarding compliance with following Model Master Plans.

Collaborative Efforts

Directors, staff, and Council Chair participated in a meeting with Louisiana School Board Association to reestablish a positive working relationship between both agencies and to address concerns with collaboration efforts moving forward. Subsequent meetings with the Director were held to discuss Accountability changes being proposed by Louisiana Department of Education and consideration to support advocacy efforts against these changes.

The Arc of LA, Community Providers Association, and Independent Living Centers met with Council staff, and the Executive Committee, to discuss joining efforts to advocate for the same legislative items. After multiple meetings, not all parties could agree to advocate for the same issues. However, all parties indicated a desire to want to collaborate sometime during the Fall each year to discuss future collaborative efforts that are aligned with possible similar agenda items.

Council Chair and Interim Executive Director were requested by Empower 225 and the Governor's Commission on Human Trafficking to assist with advocacy efforts with legislation to increase sentencing of individuals found guilty of human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation of persons with a disability. As specific language for the bill had not yet been developed, Disability Rights of LA was recommended to be included in assisting with creating appropriate language for this proposed legislation.

Meetings Attended by Council Staff

Marilee Andrews:

January 7 – OCDD Services Visual Workgroup

The workgroup reviewed prioritization matrix of 19 recommendations for OCDD along with compiled priority scores from workgroup members. The following were the top 4 rated recommendations in priority order:

- 1) How does the Tiered Waiver System work?
- 2) How does the HCBS work?
- 3) Waiver process outlined in detail that includes eligibility determination and timelines with offer
- 4) How does the EarlySteps process work?

January 14 – State Interagency Coordinating Council Quarterly meeting

Referrals and child count are overall down in response to COVID-19 school closures

- Referrals – Reported by month; downward trend from 2019 – 2020
- Child Count – January 1, 2020: 5,395 children; January 1, 2021: 4,629 children

EarlySteps guidance remains that allows home visits with an updated telephone screening process and updated infection control requirements.

March 4 – OCDD Services Visual Workgroup

The workgroup reviewed and provided feedback on OCDD's waiver fact sheets (Children's Choice Waiver, New Opportunities Waiver, Residential Options Waiver, Supports Waiver).

March 11 – Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) Account Advisory Council

LA ABLE Account Update

- Active Accounts: 399
- Account Balances: \$2,097,193.91

The ABLE Advisory Council approved recommendation that the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority authorize publication of the final rule to implement final federal regulations issued by the Internal Revenue Service on October 1, 2020.

Brenton Andrus:

February 11 - Implementation of Act 421 Stakeholder Group

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) hosted a statewide stakeholders' group meeting to provide updated information on LDH's proposed implementation of Act 421 Children's Medicaid Option program (TEFRA). At the time of the meeting, CMS approval had not been received, but the department was engaging in constant communication with CMS particularly about the program's budget. LDH was in the process of finalizing agreements with the local governing entities who will perform the level of care assessments. Discussions were had about the department's communication plan to notify stakeholders of this new program. Advocates also advocated to ensure Act 421 services remain in place until waiver certification occurs for those families that transition from this program to a home and community-based waiver.

February 23 – Governor's Advisory Council on Disability Affairs Legislative Committee

Multiple groups and organizations shared information about their legislative platforms for the 2021 Legislative Session. Presented the Council's 2021 Legislative Advocacy Agenda to the committee and members of the public.

Meetings Attended by Interim Executive Director (January 1 – March 31, 2021)

- January 13 - DD Council Orientation (with Council staff)
- January 14 - Meeting with Louisiana School Board Association (with staff)
- January 19 - Education & Employment Committee (with staff)
- January 19 - Executive Committee (with staff)
- January 21 - DD Council Quarterly meeting (with staff)
- January 27 - Louisiana Rehabilitation Council Orientation
- January 28 - Louisiana Rehabilitation Council meeting
- February 1 - NACDD Obligation/Liquidation meeting
- February 3 - Meeting with The Arc of LA, CPA, and IL (with staff)
- February 10 - Education & Employment Committee (with staff)
- February 10 - Executive Committee meetings (with staff)
- February 12 - Advisory Council on Student Behavior and Discipline
- February 24 - OIDD/ACL Engagement Call
- February 25 - Region 9 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 1 - Meeting with The Arc of La, CPA, and IL (with staff)
- March 3 - Region 8 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 9 - Region 1/10 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 10 - Region 4 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 12 - Region 2 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 16 - Region 5 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 16 - Meeting w/ Empower 225
- March 17 - Region 6 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 18 - Region 7 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 23 - Region 3 Legislative Roundtable (with staff)
- March 24 - LSBA Meeting RE: Accountability
- March 29 - FY2022 Planning Committee (with staff)
- March 30 - Meeting with LSBA RE: Accountability and advocacy
- March 31 - FY2022 Planning Committee (with staff)