



## **LB 1173 Statutory Workgroup Meeting**

### **MINUTES**

**September 7, 2023**

The Nebraska LB 1173 Workgroup as established by the Nebraska Legislature met September 7th at DHHS offices, 5220 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Lincoln, Nebraska, and via Zoom for the purpose of conducting business consistent with the statutory language of LB 1173, having given notice through release to news media and official public notices published in the Lincoln Journal Star.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM CST. John Stephen from The Stephen Group, the consultant hired pursuant to LB 1173 to assist the Workgroup in meeting its deliverables, called the meeting to order and advised that the meeting was held as a public meeting and was being recorded.

LB 1173 Voting Workgroup members present: DHHS Division Director of Children and Family Services (Interim) and DHHS CEO Tony Green; DHHS Division Director of Behavioral Health (Interim) and DHHS Division Director of Developmental Disabilities Tony Green; Omaha Tribe of Nebraska Attorney Alexis Zendejas; DHHS Director of Medicaid and Long-Term Care Kevin Bagley (virtual); DHHS Director of Public Health designee Sara Morgan (virtual); Santee Sioux Nation representative Danielle Lepointe (virtual); Commissioner of Education Dr. Brian Maher (virtual); State Court Administrator and representative of the State Judicial Branch Corey Steel; Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska representative Miskoo Petite (virtual); Ponca Tribe of Nebraska representative Stephanie Pospisil (virtual).

LB 1173 Ex-Officio (Non-Voting) Members present: Monika Gross, Foster Care Review Office; Senator David Hansen; Brian Bartels, Office of Sen. Hansen (virtual); Jenny Skala, NCFF (virtual); Ryan Stanton, Compass; Maureen Larsen, Governor's Office; Amanda Adams, NE Children's Commission; Peggy Siemek-Ache, Nova; Kari Rumbaugh, Probation; Janece Ferris, Release Inc.; Ivy Svoboda, NE Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers; Teresa Hunter, Family Housing Advisory Services (virtual); Patti Jurjevich, Region 6 Behavioral Healthcare (virtual);

Internal DHHS staff present were Cedric Perkins; Greg Brockmeier; Andrew Keck; Amanda Docter; Khalilah LeGrand; Michelle Nunemaker; Laura Opfer; Echohawk Lefthand; Michaela Hirschman (virtual); Kari Pitt (virtual); Anita Wisecup (virtual); Ann Linneman (virtual); Kasey Boes; Camas Holder; Dr. Alger Studstill.

Others present were: Bill Stanton, Casey Family Programs; Heather Nelson, NE Alliance of Child Advocacy Centers; Mary Jo Pankoke, NCFF; Lisa Battenhorst, Boys Town; Felicia Kellum, Annie E. Casey Foundation (virtual); Monica DeMent, Better Living (virtual); Lincoln Arneal, NCFF (virtual); Julie Pham, Office of the Ombudsman (virtual); Jill Holt, NICWA (virtual); Kitty Washburn, NICWA (virtual); LaDonna Jones-Dunlap, NDE (virtual); Lane Carr, NDE (virtual); Zainab Rida, NDE (virtual); Mikayla Findlay, NE Legislative Fiscal Office (virtual); Brian Rader, Christian Heritage (virtual); Dr. Marquisha Frost (virtual); Ericka Lewon, UniteUs (virtual); Sadie Wilson, NDE (virtual); Alyssa Waring, UniteUs (virtual); Misty Flowers, NICWA (virtual); John Stephen, The Stephen Group; Richard Kellogg, The Stephen Group; Austin Kupke, The Stephen Group (virtual); Brooke Holton, The Stephen Group (virtual).



The agenda proceeded as follows.

- **Approval of the Agenda/Minutes (Action Item)**
  - **A motion was made by Tony Green to accept the agenda and minutes, which was seconded and approved by vote, with all voting aye and none voting nay.**
- **Review of Status Report/Discussion**
  - No comments or questions were made on the August Status Report.
- **Themes from Lincoln Community Forum**
  - John Stephen, The Stephen Group, presented a number of themes from Community Forums held in Lincoln as well as stakeholder meetings held in Lincoln.
  - Themes included comments on need for enhanced family finding, access to community enhanced support and how it could reduce removals/family finding especially important in Tribal cases; how de-stigmatizing asking for help can help with Family Engagement, with the comment "It is not us vs. them - it is us."; and the recommendation to develop path that is alternative to child welfare system asking parents to voluntarily participate in available services for their children (ex: MCOs, EDN, Head Start, HFA)
  - One theme noted was that universal home visiting services available to all families now in Lincoln; discussion followed on this offering, with a clarification by Sara Morgan at Dept. of Public Health that this home visiting program in Lincoln is limited to newborns, new families to help them get settled. Funds for universal home visiting is local funding, some city/county COVID dollars, also have medical based model funding most likely.
- **Early Childhood and Early Identification Programs**
  - Dr. Brian Maher, Dr. Zainab Rida, and Lane Carr, from the NE Department of Education (NDE) gave a presentation on the Nebraska Department of Education offerings for "Education as Primary Prevention."
  - The following links were provided to accompany the presentation:
    - <https://vimeo.com/threepillars/review/797059006/f0f9f6ae12>
    - <https://www.education.ne.gov/stateboard/legislative-priorities/>
  - Following Dr. Maher's Opening Comments, Mr. Carr presented NDE's mission and policies and their alignment with child welfare related efforts, including chronic absenteeism. He highlighted the interdependence of Education and Health, and how education is a social determinant of health. Through this presentation it was stressed that "Schools *must* be seen as a key primary prevention partner" to reduce involvement in the child welfare system
  - Dr. Rida presented on Evidence-Based Practice: Full-Service Community Schools, highlighting four pilot sites in Nebraska (Fremont, Schuyler, Grand Island, and Dakota City) being offering in collaboration with Nebraska Children and Family Foundation Community Collaboratives. These pilot sites are focused on Early Childhood Development, Remedial & Academic Enrichment Activities, Family Engagement, Community-Based Supports, Wellness, Juvenile Justice &



- Delinquency Prevention, Workforce Readiness & Development, and Mentoring & Other Youth Development Programs
- Other Policy Considerations presented were Board Legislative and Regulatory Priorities: 1. To Address Reading on Grade Level; and 2. To Reduce Chronic Absenteeism. NDE is looking forward to opportunities to partner and take the “ecosystem” seriously, to address issues affecting children and families throughout the system in Nebraska.
  - A question about the community schools was raised asking what level of education they are running—the pilots are in elementary, middle, and high school across the four sites
  - Questions arose as to what data are available to demonstrate the efficacy of the community school model
    - First, whether there were data on if rates of child maltreatment have gone down for children served in these schools. Dr. Rida responded that as a pilot they are still in the process of the final evaluation and are hoping to have data to share by the end of the year, with the aim that the pilot would create a framework or blueprint to do this work in other parts of the state. Greg Brockmeier from DHHS indicated that the data would need to be looked at and analyzed as rates of maltreatment have been reduced across the state for a number of reasons because of multiple factors as play.
    - A second question regarded the efficacy of these community schools across different racial and ethnic groups. Dr. Rida replied that the goal outcome of these programs is to improve attendance for students at these schools. While in Nebraska, the one-year pilot makes it difficult to study chronic absenteeism and the school’s effects on it, in other states, the data does show a reduction in chronic absenteeism, including across different racial and ethnic groups. Dr. Rida agreed to share this data with the workgroup.
    - Mary Jo Pankoke from Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (NCF) indicated that there is a federal grant opportunity for Full-Service Community Schools that states can apply to for either statewide implementation or just in one area. A previous attempt to apply statewide in Nebraska came close to being accepted but was not, but there has been a re-application for statewide implementation with a significant award of \$50 million over 5 years. They should know by the end of the year if the application was successful
- **LB 1173 Final Report Framework, The Stephen Group**
    - John Stephen, The Stephen Group presented an outline of the work products due to the Legislature under LB 1173 and revisited the requirements for the practice and finance models
    - Foundations have been made with prior work, and energy built through the community forums throughout the state for LB 1173 process. Have generated several themes from community forums and stakeholder input
    - Suggested framework is Child Welfare Practice Model with suggested Engagement Strategies to support the integrated model (those specifically listed in LB 1173) and Finance Model Framework to support Practice Model and future Transformation, including evaluation of Title IV E claiming
    - Draft outline was shared for final report to generate feedback from the work group



- **Workgroup Feedback/Participation/Decision Making Process**
  - Tony Green indicated that system partner involvement is necessary in the report to move the word forward. This piece will be throughout report.
  - Discussion occurred on the importance that the model be intersectoral, and that this aspect will be unique to Nebraska as opposed to other draft models considered. In this practice model there are engagement strategies, not just DHHS, this is specific to Nebraska.
    - Practice model development will need strategy to have opportunity to discuss with all impacted parties. Strategies need to include that whenever there is major policy change being considered in the future, there is collaborative approach and conversation and decision making.
  - Discussion occurred on next steps: proposed that for October work group meeting, see entire recommended framework and details in proposed outline; can have robust discussion then. Immense task for producing this across next two meetings. Have ad hoc members for feedback, now need to move into development with the workgroup.
    - Have to allow community to provide comments and let public know when it's time for comment. Have to stay true to promise that we would bring final pieces back to community to give input.
  - NICWA has asked to provide feedback and input via report and are interested in having report be a part of what is submitted for LB 1173.
    - Jill Holt from NICWA offered to provide reflections from organization on themes noted to date and provide additional themes and thoughts. Do not represent any one tribe but have tribal members on their board. Tony Green would like their feedback be part of report and framework, not an addendum.
  - Discussion occurred on best way to achieve this input and timing of collecting public input on the final draft. Commitment to be transparent and sharing, wanting to make sure nothing has been missed.
  - The Stephen Group will provide the Workgroup with a working draft before the October meeting.
- **Public Comment**
  - No public comment was offered
- **Adjourn (Action Item)**
  - **A motion was made to adjourn the Sept 7 LB 1173 Workgroup meeting, which was seconded and approved by vote, with all voting aye and none voting nay.**
  - The Workgroup adjourned the meeting at 3:29 PM CST.
  - The next workgroup meeting will be held October 19<sup>th</sup> at 5220 South 16th Street, Lincoln Nebraska from 2 to 4 PM CST.