

St. Mary's County Department of Social Services
Board of Directors Meeting
February 26, 2013

Attendance:

The regular meeting of the Board of the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services was held on February 26, 2013. Board members in attendance were: Richard Buckler, Chairperson; Cynthia Brown, Susie Fowler, Leisha Wood, Lynn Fitrell, Ella Somerville, Carol Ann Pingleton and Wanda Brown. Also present were Ella May Russell, Director, Keisha Atlee, Foster Care Program Specialist. Absent: Pamala Emplit.

Minutes:

The minutes for the January 22, 2013 meeting were approved.

Education Session:

Keisha Atlee, Foster Care Program Specialist, presented information on the State initiative – Ready by 21--which is part of the Youth Matter Practice Model. The practice model is a youth engagement initiative to improve permanency outcomes for older youth. Of the 127 children in Foster Care in St. Mary's County, 44 are ages 14 to 20. Benchmark goals for these youth include education (ensuring youth have high school diploma/GED); stable housing (youth will reside in stable living situations); health care (youth will be linked to appropriate services to address physical and behavioral health needs); financial stability (youth will have financial resources through employment or entitlements, will have an adequate credit score and will have identification documents); mentors (aged out youth will have ongoing support and should have a network of supports as they transition to adulthood).

This initiative is already active on the Southern Shore, Anne Arundel County and Prince George's County with great success. St. Mary's, Charles and Calvert Counties are forming a tri-county collaborative to implement the Youth Matter Model and will be hosting a kickoff event mini-conference in the late summer for youth service providers and community partners. Agency staff have been selected to work with this project and have already met for planning purposes.

Chairperson's Report:

No report.

Director's Report:

Personnel

Retirements: Catherine Swales' retirement event for her working into her 50th year (retiring 3/1/13) went very well and was well attended by many other retirees. Penny Moneymaker (Family Support Worker) will be retiring 3/1/13 also. Karen Noel (Family Investment Worker) will be retiring 7/1/13.

New Hires: We have filled the Adult Services Supervisor position with returning employee, Kristi Larson, who will be returning (from Walden) on March 20th. Two new foster care workers will start on March 6th.

Thomas Haina is still working and continues to show progress. He is particularly happy to work with the statistics that we need. Jeanne Schmitt is doing well and will be returning the end of March.

Family Investment

WPR: Our WPR for January was 57% and we think we're going to 75%!

We have been addressing the affects of sequestration to the agency and the added customer flow. Our TANF funds have not been cut.

Re-accreditation

Seven counties are going through the reaccreditation process with CWLA, St. Mary's included.

Health Officer St. Mary's County

The new Health Officer, Dr. Brewster, has been meeting with various directors in the county. Dr. Brewster views the health of the community as a whole—including housing, education, etc. She is energized and making changes.

E-mail System Change

We will be going to Google chrome with our e-mails with a projected cut-over for the end of March.

New Business: Lynn Fitrell noted that Director Russell will be the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award by the St. Mary's County Commission for Women with a banquet ceremony on March 14, 2013. Board Members were invited to attend and contact information was provided.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

The next meeting will be on March 26, 2013.