

## MINUTES

### Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana Wednesday, February 19, 2014, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Indiana Government Center South, Conference Room C

**Members present:** Justice Loretta Rush, Indiana Supreme Court; Mary Beth Bonaventura, Director, Indiana Department of Child Services; Mike Dempsey, Director, Division of Youth Services, Indiana Department of Correction; Senator Travis Holdman; Lilia Judson, Executive Director, Division of State Court Administration; Representative Rebecca Kubacki; Larry Landis, Director, Indiana Public Defender Council; Susan Lightfoot, Chief Probation Officer, Henry County; Debra Minott, Secretary, Family & Social Services Administration; Kevin Moore, Director, Division of Mental Health & Addiction; David Powell, Executive Director, Indiana Prosecuting Attorneys Council; Representative Gail Riecken; Glenda Ritz, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Indiana Department of Education; Greg Zoeller, Indiana Attorney General.

**Guest Presenters:** Senator Carlin Yoder, Chair, Child Services Oversight Committee; Michael Williams, Program Coordinator for School Social Workers, Indiana Department of Education; Reba James, Deputy Director, Permanency and Practice Support, Indiana Department of Child Services; Steve Baker, Principal, Bluffton High School; Susan Lockwood, Director, Juvenile Education, Indiana Department of Correction; Kellie Whitcomb, Director of Reentry & External Relations, Indiana Department of Correction; Laurie Elliott, Executive Director, Youth Law Team of Indiana; Claire Fiddian-Green, Special Assistant to the Governor for Education Innovation, Center for Education and Career Innovation; Julie Whitman, Vice President of Programs, Indiana Youth Institute; Brady Brookes, Legislative Director, Indiana Department of Child Services; Jeff Bercovitz, Director, Juvenile & Family Law, Indiana Judicial Center.

**Commission Staff present:** Amber Holland, Indiana Supreme Court; Anne Jordan, Angela Reid-Brown, Indiana Judicial Center; Ruth Reichard, Kathryn Dolan, Mike Commons, Indiana Supreme Court, Division of State Court Administration.

1. Welcome. Justice Rush thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
2. Approval of Minutes. The minutes from the December 11, 2013 meeting were approved by consensus of the Commission.
3. Discussion: Child Services Oversight Committee. Senator Yoder reported the Child Services Oversight Committee (Committee) was established during the 2013 legislative session in response to issues involving the Department of Child Services (DCS). The Committee held two meetings in 2013 and submitted an annual report and recommendations to the Commission as required by the statute. Senator Yoder reported legislation introduced during the 2014 legislative session would eliminate most legislative committees formed over the past 30-40 years, including the Child Services Oversight Committee. In talking with Justice Rush, Senator Holdman, Representative Kubacki and others, Senator Yoder came up with the idea to put the Committee under the purview of the Commission.

Under this proposal, the Committee structure will be very similar to what was established by the legislature. The membership will stay the same; the Committee will continue to make recommendations to the Commission; review bi-annual data reports from DCS; review reports from the DCS Ombudsman; and submit an annual report before November 1 of each year to the Commission. The Commission Executive Committee will now appoint the chair of the Committee who will serve a two-year term and will be responsible for keeping records and minutes. The Committee will meet bi-annually instead of four times per year.

Dave Powell moved to accept the proposal to make the Committee a part of the Commission. Larry Landis seconded the motion. Justice Rush said the Committee would be the fifth task force of the Commission. She explained the Committee would operate differently from other Task Forces in that the Committee would have a designated membership and charge. Representative Riecken said this proposal gives the Committee an opportunity to address an issue raised by the United Way and facilities regarding criminal history checks. Director Bonaventura said the Committee is important because it educates the public about the work that DCS does. Representative Kubacki asked the Commission to consider appointing a vice-chairperson for the Committee. Justice Rush said the Executive Committee would consider the request. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Educational Outcomes Presentations.

- a. Justice Rush reviewed a table prepared by Mike Commons listing the data each Commission member's agency currently collects on educational outcomes.
- b. **Michael Williams, Program Coordinator for School Social Workers, Indiana Department of Education (DOE).** Mr. Williams provided an overview of services for vulnerable youth, alternative education opportunities and court involved youth.
  - Services to Vulnerable Youth. DOE serves 1,933 public schools and over one million students. Those students include vulnerable populations such as McKinney-Vento or homeless students (13,418), incarcerated students (731), truant students (56,581), suspended students (117,585), expelled students (3,755) and students with chronic health conditions (425,000). Mr. Williams provided enrollment statistics for both public and non-public schools by grade level.

Mr. Williams defined student services and described the types of services available to vulnerable youth. Such services include student assistance services, related services, educational and career services, school social work services, special education services, health services, medication services and services provided to eligible students under the McKinney-Vento Act.

Student assistance services are provided to prevent or alleviate problems that interfere with student learning and are provided at the elementary and secondary school levels. Student assistance services may be provided by a certified school counselor, certified school psychologist or certified school social worker. Assistance must include prevention, assessment, intervention and referral. Assistance may also include suicide prevention and intervention, bullying prevention and intervention, crisis prevention, intervention and response, school safety, homeless youth and counseling. David Powell asked if substance abuse and mental health services are provided because they were not included on Mr. Williams' list of services. Mr. Williams said mental health and substance abuse services are provided and could be added to his list.

Related services may include counseling regarding career planning, planning for a student's course of study and assisting the student to understand and cope with a disability, cope with personal problem or crisis and develop and implement a behavior intervention plan.

Educational and career services include study skills and tutoring, achievement testing, advising, scheduling and career services. Services are provided by certified school counselors and are provided at the secondary level, but should be provided at the elementary level as well. Indiana's school counselor ratio for the 2011 to 2012 school year was 620:1; however, the American School Counselor Association recommends a ratio of 250:1.

Special education services include comprehensive and coordinated early intervening services and providing educational and behavior evaluations, services and support throughout the child's educational experiences.

Health services include but are not limited to, prevention, assessment, intervention and referral services. According to a 2013 survey of school nurses, approximately 71,926 students take medications throughout the day, another 69,233 students have emergency medications at school and 402,333 students (nearly half of all public school students) have chronic health conditions including diabetes, asthma and allergic reactions. Justice Rush and Director Bonaventura wondered how Indiana compared with other states in terms of the numbers of children with chronic health conditions.

Services to homeless students are provided under the McKinney-Vento Act. The focus of the McKinney-Vento Act is to provide school access, school stability and support for academic success. Each school system has a local homeless education liaison. Students who qualify for services include children awaiting foster care placement, students living in a public or private place not designated for humans to live, such as parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, or similar settings, migratory children and unaccompanied youth living in the these circumstances. Mr. Williams reviewed data on the number of homeless students enrolled in local schools since the 2008-2009 school year. While the number of enrolled homeless students has steadily increased, the funding from the federal government to assist this population has remained flat.

Mr. Williams reviewed the definition of habitual truancy and chronic school absenteeism. Habitual truancy includes students who are absent 10 days or more without being excused. Chronic absenteeism includes students who are absent from school for 10% or more of a school year for any reasons. Chronic absence is an early warning sign for academic trouble and may be used to predict dropout rates. School corporations must report the number of students chronically absent and habitually truant in its annual performance report. Mr. Williams reviewed truancy, suspension and expulsion data. Director Bonaventura asked if there was a state standard for truancy policies; Mr. Williams said yes. The Department of Education only began tracking truancy data within the last few years. Mr. Williams also noted the numbers of females expelled or suspended has been growing over time.

Mr. Williams provided recommendations for serving vulnerable youth. These recommendations include increasing the number of school counselors, increasing pathways to higher education, increasing funding for homeless student education efforts and ensuring students have access to a registered school nurse during the school day.

- Alternative Education Opportunities. Mr. Williams explained alternative education is designed to meet the needs of at-risk students who are not succeeding in the traditional school setting. These programs help students master the Indiana Academic Standards and the programs must comply with educational laws and rules or seek appropriate waivers. The Alternative Education Grant provides funding for alternative education programs for grades 6-12. There are 206 alternative education programs throughout the state. Some programs offer after school or evening sessions to students in lieu of suspension or expulsion, some programs are specifically for middle school students, other programs are designed for young pregnant girls or those who already have children and want to finish high school in an alternative setting and other programs offer drug and alcohol treatment programs and counseling. Credit recovery is another type of alternative education program. Credit recovery is an educational service that most schools offer to students who have failed a course or who are in danger of not having enough credits to graduation on time. Most credit recovery

programs are on-line and allow students to work at their own pace. Mr. Williams provided recommendations for alternative education, including increasing funding for alternative education programs at all grade levels, and providing funding for alternative education programs for grades 4-6.

- Court Involved Youth. There are 23 Juvenile Detention Facilities and 4 juvenile correctional facilities in Indiana. All incarcerated students between the age of 7 and 18 are required to receive educational services. The average length of stay for a student in a detention center is 16 days and the average length of stay for a student in a juvenile correctional facility is six months. During the 2012-2013 school year, 731 students were mobilized from detention to incarceration with the Department of Correction (DOC). On any given day, DOC has about 500 youth incarcerated in long-term juvenile correctional facilities.

DOE works with the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) program. The goal of JDAI is to reduce the average daily population in detention centers. The focus of JDAI is on placing the right youth, in the right place, for the right reason, for the right amount of time. JDAI reduced youth detention from 9,266 in their baseline year to 5,123 youth detained in 2012, a 45% reduction. Fewer youth detained should reduce the high school dropout rate. The dropout rate has seen a steady decline over the past four years. During the 2008-2009 school year, the dropout rate was 7.7%, and in the 2011-12, school year the rate was 5.8%. During the same period, the graduation rate has increased from 82.7% to 88.4%. The dropout rate is based on entry in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and is a four-year cohort.

Superintendent Ritz noted in the 2008-2009 school year there was a change in the dropout rate calculation and the graduation rate includes graduation waivers. Superintendent Ritz also stated school accountability also affects the dropout rate. In addition, some kids are counseled to be home schooled rather than dropping out, but there are no requirements to notify DOE when a student is being homeschooled. She therefore believes the true graduation rate is about 80% when graduation waivers are deducted.

Mr. Williams provided recommendations for court-involved youth, including standardization of intake information across all detention centers, creating education portfolios, which follow youth to detention centers, and standardizing education activities during detention and follow-up regarding educational progress after the child returns from detention and/or DOC.

Mr. Williams concluded his presentation by providing an overview of the DOE Outreach Division. He encouraged those in attendance to visit the Department's "Compass" site for more data on graduation and dropout rates (<http://compass.doe.in.gov/dashboard/overview.aspx>). David Powell said that, by the time a child reaches DOC, it is probably too late in terms of educational assessment. Instead, children should be assessed for educational needs/level at their first contact with the juvenile justice system.

- c. **Reba James, Deputy Director, Permanency and Practice Support, Department of Child Services.** Ms. James presented education facts regarding children in foster care. She reported foster children have significantly higher rates of school disciplinary referrals than their peers do, are more likely to be retained a grade than their peers, graduate at a lower rate than the general population, often suffer delayed enrollment when they enter care or transfer schools, are less likely to enter or complete a postsecondary educational program, and on average, perform well below grade level.

Ms. James provided information on the FosterED pilot program. The pilot program was part of the National Center for Youth Law's FosterED project. The pilot started in the 2011-2012 academic year in Marion County. The pilot lasted 9 months and handled over 75 cases. DOE and the Indiana Youth Institute collaborated with DCS on the program. The program expanded statewide on August 1, 2012, and created 16 Education Liaison positions within DCS. As of November 2012, over 500 cases have been handled. DCS, DOE, local school districts and CASA's support the program. As of Monday, 2,470 youth have been served by the Education Liaisons. All education liaisons have education degrees and are former educators; most have Master's degrees. Education Liaisons collaborate with DCS Family Case Managers (FCMs), families, students and schools to ensure that the educational needs of children in DCS care are met which will lead to more positive outcomes in their lives. Some of the services provided by the Education Liaison include participating in child and family team meetings, case staffing, planning sessions and school meetings to help create an education plan to assist the child; connecting FCM's and families to community agencies committed to providing educational assistance; and, identify education services and resources.

Some of the most common referral reasons include 1) overall special education issues; 2) requests for education evaluations; 3) transportation when child has to change schools; 4) change of school placement and transfer of records, especially credits; 5) post high school planning. Education Liaisons help develop and provide training to DCS, foster parents, students and schools on various educational topics. Education Liaison services are available to all children who are involved in Children in Need of Services (CHINS) cases; however, services are only available to youth with a probation case on a case-by-case basis. Probation officers can contact Anita Silverman at DCS to request assistance. Justice Rush asked Director Bonaventura if DCS would consider making education liaison services available to all vulnerable youth who are court involved. Director Bonaventura commented that DCS does provide and pay for services for delinquent children by way of residential treatment and treatment provided in the home to the child and parents when appropriate. She said DCS is looking at all of its services and how those services can be expanded to include delinquent children.

Representative Kubacki asked, since the program was based on a California program, if Ms. James had outcome information from California to which we could compare our state's progress.

- d. **Steve Baker, Principal, Bluffton High.** Mr. Baker provided an overview of programs and services available at Bluffton High School to address the needs of at-risk students. A student is considered an at-risk student if he or she is at-risk of dropping out of school or are at-risk of not reaching their academic potential without additional resources. Bluffton High School has only had one student drop out in the past ten years. Mr. Baker, who previously received the Principal of the Year award, said that they have four battles: getting kids to school (a big part of his day); poverty (he opined that this was a reason for difficulties, but not an acceptable excuse); dropouts (he said this occurs when a student loses hope; the student cannot see past the present day); and being proactive in a reactive system. Bluffton High School is proactive in addressing the needs of at-risk students. All new teachers are required to receive training on *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby Payne. In addition, the school has an At-Risk Liaison, offers a basic skills class taught by a teaching assistant with a Psychology degree, implemented study tables after school and conducts regular parent meetings. Parental involvement is mandatory; the school's role is sometimes to help teach parents how to raise their children. Schools need relationships with both the students and their parents. Mr. Baker has a homeroom of freshmen for which he is responsible; his homeroom is made up of the top 10-15 at-risk children from the middle schools in his district. He also hired an at-risk liaison who is a former teacher, who goes into the students' homes daily. The liaison is very busy in a school of 1,400 students. His school also employs a licensed psychologist who runs a basic skills class to teach students how to study. Mr. Baker also has a credit

recovery program, a weekly meeting about each at-risk student and after-school study tables. His school also offers an alternative school attended by teenaged parents who need to work.

Mr. Baker shared anecdotes with the Commission, and stated that there are many organizations in the community that care about education, but they are not always on the same page. That is why the school has had the most success by hiring its own liaisons for at-risk students. He believes that if the families can receive help, then the students will improve. David Powell asked Mr. Baker for his definition of “at-risk.” Mr. Baker replied that he defined the term very broadly, to include any student at risk of dropping out or not fulfilling his or her potential and who was without the resources to do so. He specified that “resources” did not necessarily refer to money. He tries to identify the at-risk students in middle school. He offered reasons for why the number of at-risk students is so high: the economic downturn, a lack of jobs, and a lack of meaningful educational training for jobs.

- e. **Susan Lockwood, Director, Juvenile Education; Kellie Whitcomb, Director of Reentry & External Relations, Department of Correction, Division of Youth Services; and Laurie Elliott, Executive Director, Youth Law T.E.A.M of Indiana.** Ms. Lockwood provided an overview of the education services available in secure settings. The Indiana Department of Correction (DOC) has juvenile facilities in LaPorte, Logansport, Pendleton, and Madison. On average, 45-60% of DOC students qualify for special education services and on average, 60% test below 6<sup>th</sup> grade on math and/or reading. Facility schools are accredited by AdvancEd as comprehensive special purpose schools. DOC is not a legal school corporation. Educational services are paid out of the DOC budget. Juvenile facilities offer high school curriculum aligned to the Indiana Core 40, career technical programs and high school equivalency programs. Each facility employs a transition coordinator that helps facilitate transfer of school records and updated transcripts.

In 2012-2013, there were 1,393 students receiving educational services in a DOC facility. Nine hundred twenty four students (924) were enrolled for at least 90 days, and 60% of the 924 students qualified for special education services. The average length of school enrollment was 122 days (approximately one semester). In addition, 970 students earned high school credit, 26 students re-enrolled in public school upon release, 253 eligible students received a GED, 94 students enrolled in post-secondary education, 63% of those with at least 90 days of instruction gained at least one grade level in reading, and 47% of those with at least 90 days of instruction gained at least one grade level in math. In response to a question from Justice Rush, Ms. Lockwood explained that the students’ ages ranged from 12-22, but the normal age range for residents of juvenile facilities was 12-18. Their teachers are licensed and highly qualified; some are licensed for special education, and some are licensed as superintendents and principals. These facilities provide educational services even though they are not funded as schools by the state. Many of the children they see are behind because they have not been at school for some time; once they spend time in the DOC facility, they improve and show measurable gains in reading levels.

Ms. Whitcomb reported that DOC is responsible for establishing detention standards and for inspecting detention centers. The inspection reports are on the DOC website. There are 1,113 secure detention beds in Indiana and there were 14,955 admissions in 2013 (the latter figure includes repeat admissions).

Ms. Elliott reported that there were 4,500 youth sent to a juvenile detention facility in 2013. Thirty-nine percent (39%) of those youth entered and left detention in 2 days or less, and thirty-one percent (31%) were detained longer than 14 days. Educational programs are provided in local juvenile detention facilities in a number of ways. Some teachers may be employed by the county with minimal involvement from the local school corporations; local school corporations may provide teachers under the public school calendar and private facilities may employ their own teachers with minimal involvement from the local school corporations. Ms. Elliott explained there is a legal duty to provide

educational programming, but there are no clear requirements and no standardized curriculum requirement. As a result, youth are not receiving the state mandated number of hours of instructional time applicable to public schools, are not receiving academic credit or able to progress toward a high school diploma and education gains made while a youth is in detention are frequently not communicated to public school. She reported that there is often difficulty in getting records from schools and in reporting to the schools on the progress that the child has made while in detention.

Ms. Whitcomb and Ms. Elliott discussed new recommended education standards for detention centers. The recommended standards require a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the court where the detention center is located and the local school corporation. The MOU should cover funding allocations, transfer of education records, special education service delivery, grade and credit transfers, access to on-line education programs, evaluation of the detention education program and a plan for suspended/expelled and out-of-county youth. The recommended standards also require detention centers to provide a comprehensive education program that operates a minimum of 210 instructional days per year. At least 6 hours of educational programming should be available for youth in grades 7-12 and at least 5 hours of educational programming for youth in grades 6 and lower. Enrollment, screening and participation in educational programming should occur no later than 3 days following admission. All teachers shall possess appropriate certification or licensure. Other recommendations include providing remedial reading services to identified youth, a curriculum that allows a youth to progress toward a high school diploma, IEP goals or High School Equivalency Exam; special education programs that align to student's IEP; and detention staff to provide academic progress information to the juvenile's home school district within 7 days of discharge to allow for evaluation towards high school credit. Justice Rush asked to whom these recommendations are made, and Ms. Whitcomb answered that they go to Commissioner Lemon. Currently, the DOC is trying to determine the fiscal impact of the recommendations. Justice Rush asked if the recommendations would be binding on counties operating detention centers, and Superintendent Ritz queried Ms. Whitcomb on the mechanics of how these recommendations would be implemented.

- f. **Claire Fiddian-Green, Special Assistant to the Governor for Education Innovation, Center for Education and Career Innovation (CECI).** Ms. Fiddian-Green reported in Indiana today, one in six Hoosiers lacks a high school diploma or equivalency, only 33% of Hoosiers have a college degree, last year more than 10,000 high school graduates needed remediation in college, only 4% of Indiana's two-year college students completed on time and only 12% graduated within three years and good paying jobs are going unfilled due to the skills gap between employer expectations and workforce qualifications. She said there is a link between educational outcomes and the state's future economic well-being.

In August 2013, Governor Pence issued an Executive Order establishing the CECI to address the economic future and well-being of students. The CECI brought together the staff and budgets of the Career Council, Works Councils, Education Roundtable and State Board of Education. The Indiana Career Council maps and analyzes skills and assets. The Works Councils are regional bodies located throughout the state. The CECI is a unique agency among states.

The CECI's mission is to improve learning outcomes for Hoosier students and adult workers by aligning statewide efforts to connect the education and workforce-training pipeline with the needs of Indiana's employers, and supporting the expansion of innovative and highly effective education and career development initiatives. The CECI addresses the entire spectrum of education and career preparation, from pre-kindergarten through higher education and beyond.

Ms. Fiddian-Green stated fifty-nine percent (59%) of the state budget is dedicated to education and workforce development and that CECI collaborates with the Department of Education, Commission for Higher Education, the Department of Workforce Development and other state and external partners. She also reported that CECI is part of a national focus by governors and legislative leaders to integrate state efforts in education and workforce to deliver significantly improved outcomes.

- g. **Commission Discussion: Next Steps.** Commission members discussed possible next steps regarding educational outcomes. Justice Rush commented that education data is not currently available on kids in care in Indiana. She said the Commission might want to consider assigning the task of collecting educational outcome data on children in care to the Data Sharing and Mapping Task Force.

Lilia Judson stated that she was part of an Indiana team that participated in a School to Justice Summit sponsored by Casey Family Programs in 2012. The Indiana team was made up of representatives from the judicial system and the education system. One of the focal points at the summit was the glaring lack of educational data between the justice and educational systems. The Indiana team came up with a number of recommendations. If an educational task force is established, the task force could consider working on the recommendations from the summit. Ms. Judson also stated there is a need for a systemic way to integrate juvenile justice, child welfare and education data. There is currently no integration of data. The systems may each have aggregate numbers, but they do not track the child.

Susan Lightfoot remarked that probation does not have consistent data. Probation could do a better job of keeping statistics if there was a statewide database and funding to hire additional staff to collect the data.

Representative Riecken inquired how data could be obtained on children who are outside of the public education system. She said there are an increasing number of children enrolled in private, parochial, charter and home schools. She is also interested in obtaining more information on homelessness and children with chronic illnesses.

David Powell remarked that there is a need to obtain data on all children, even those that do not enter the child welfare or juvenile justice systems. He also said an agreement is needed on what information will be collected and how.

Glenda Ritz stated DOE is in desperate need of reading data. The only reading data available is IREAD data, which is a pass-fail assessment. She also remarked that we need to have a dialogue on assessments that will generate data points that follow each child throughout the years. Justice Rush agreed, and said that from a juvenile justice standpoint, the data would be helpful for drafting case plans.

Justice Rush said she would like more information on children with chronic health needs in schools and that she would like the Infant Mortality and Child Health task force to study this issue. Director Bonaventura would also like to know the causes of the chronic health needs.

Mike Dempsey stated it is critically important to connect the dots with kids who get involved with the juvenile justice system. There is a serious lack of education services available to a child in detention and we must find a way to fix it. The detention standards are a start, but support is needed to get the standards passed and funded. DOC, DOE, DCS and detention facilities all need to collaborate to make sure services are in place for these kids.

He believes most of the kids who do not graduate are bright students who are just behind in school. He believes they end up dropping out because they are so far behind and cannot figure out how to catch up,

so they just do not go to school, which puts them in the juvenile justice system. He said it is very frustrating from DOC's perspective with the lack of resources available to make sure these kids have the educational services available to them.

5. Update from the Data Sharing and Mapping Task Force. *Lilia Judson, Executive Director, Division of State Court Administration, Indiana Supreme Court; Julie Whitman, Vice President of Programs, Indiana Youth Institute.*

Ms. Whitman reviewed the *Educational Outcomes for System-Involved Youth* and *FosterYouth* handouts. She said the handouts are not based on Indiana data because Indiana data is either not available or is not readily available. Ms. Whitman highlighted a couple of key points from the handouts: one arrest doubles a youth's chances of dropping out of school; one court appearance makes it four times more likely the child will drop out of school. The average child in foster care attends five different schools. Ms. Judson and Ms. Whitman asked if the Task Force should start looking at data sharing as it relates to education. Commission members replied yes.

Ms. Judson and Ms. Whitman reported that work on the mapping project continues. The database will be housed with the Indiana Office of Technology, and when the project is complete, there will be an interface for public access and an interface for court users. The Task Force has consulted with Attorney General Zoeller on liability issues that may be associated with the database. The Task Force recommends that the Commission make the database accessible to researchers and universities to study the data and draw possible conclusions. Ms. Judson also reported that she has invited Casey Family Programs to sit in on Task Force meetings to provide technical support, along with the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute.

6. Legislative Update. *Brady Brookes, DCS Legislative Director; Jeff Bercovitz, Director, Juvenile & Family Law, Indiana Judicial Center.*

Brady Brooks and Jeff Bercovitz reviewed the following bills impacting vulnerable youth: SB 80-Interim Study Committee Structure; SB 227-Alcohol and Medical Emergencies: Crime Studies; SB 408-Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS); HB 1006-Reconciles Conflicts Between HEA 1006-2013 and other bills; HB 1014-Dissolution in Cases of Domestic Violence; HB 1110-Department of Child Services; HB 1222-Adoption Committee and Tax Credit; HB 1279-Various Motor Vehicle Issues; SB 19-Access to Juvenile Court Records; and SB 27-Petitions for Adoption.

7. Future Topics. Representative Kubacki would like to address the dynamics of family violence, particularly sex crimes against children. She said this recommendation comes from Representative Christina Hale. Representative Hale has done a lot of research on the topic of sexual abuse against children and she would like to invite Representative Hale to present some of her research findings. Justice Rush suggested inviting Abby Kuzma with the Attorney General's Office to give a presentation on sex trafficking, crimes of violence and sexual violence against children. Justice Rush noted many of the CHINS cases are due to violence in the home. Director Bonaventura said research shows that being a witness to domestic violence is abuse. DCS is working to address that issue by providing services to children who have been affected by violence. Larry Landis said the subject is part of the trauma informed care movement that recognizes that children's exposure to trauma can affect their future development. If there is a presentation on violence, trauma informed care should also be included in the presentation.

Susan Lightfoot would like the Commission to consider studying caseload standards for probation officers. She said probation is trying to do a better job of addressing any educational, social, family, mental health and substance abuse issues that a child may have. However, the number of cases probation officers are dealing with is overwhelming. In a sample of juvenile probation officers from 12 counties across the state,

caseloads ranged from 68 to 162 children per probation officer. In addition to their traditional duties, probation officers are taking on extra work, such as administering the MAYSI-2 and conducting risk assessments on the juveniles they supervise. Justice Rush stated there has not been a push to get probation caseloads down like there was for DCS Family Case Managers several years ago. She said now may be a good time address the issue since the Commission is trying to get a better picture of the children who come into probation.

Mike Dempsey said he likes the concept of education liaisons and thinks the juvenile justice system could benefit by having education liaisons as well. He said that kids are generally left behind educationally once they enter the juvenile justice system. Many of the kids who go to DOC are some of the most educationally challenged of any system, but DOC does not have sufficient resources to address those issues. DOC may not be the right entity to address the educational challenges.

Representative Riecken expressed concern that mental health priorities are not being addressed. Kevin Moore stated mental health issues certainly need more attention. He said addressing the needs of vulnerable children and their families is cross-system work because families are often involved in multiple systems with multiple issues. He stated there are models from across the state of mental health services being embedded in local school systems. He thinks it would be important to learn how those models work from both the school and provider perspective. Director Bonaventura suggested having a presentation about the Children's Mental Health Initiative.

8. Other Matters. Ruth Reichard reviewed priorities identified by the Commission that have not been assigned to a task force. The unassigned priorities fall into four main categories: juvenile justice, education, youth in foster care and mental health.

Justice Rush reported that a protocol has been set up for each of the task forces. She also stated that an executive committee member would serve as a liaison on each task force.

9. Future Meeting Dates: Indiana Government Center South.

- April 16, 2014 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
- June 18, 2014 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
- Sept. 17, 2014 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.
- Nov. 19, 2014 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M.