

# ADVISORY SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

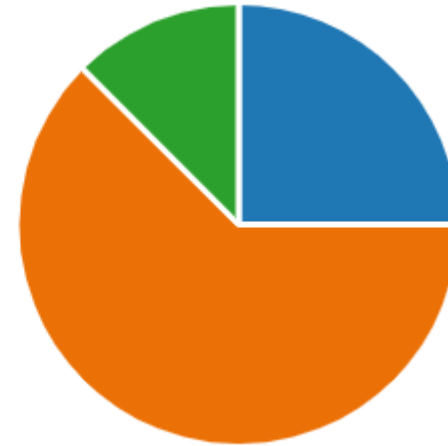
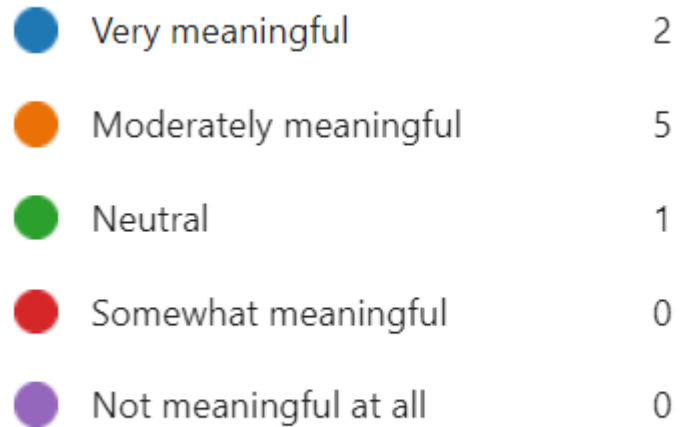
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

MARCH 2024

# When you joined the ASSB, what were your initial expectations for your role and responsibilities?

- To identify areas of need and improvement for social services for the County and be able to provide support and make recommendations
- Share how to amplify the message of resources
- To use my expertise in Social Services to make suggestions that could benefit service delivery for the department.
- I expected to work through established processes to improve the ways that DFS serves my district.
- I wanted to keep my Supervisor informed and provide my input on the great social services DFS and other county resources supply. We need to work on making sure that all that need it can get services.
- To gain a better understanding of the social issues and capacities of Fairfax County to address them and propose ideas to improve Fairfax County's programs.
- I honestly thought it would be more of reviewing documentation and the work of the DFS. Although I do appreciate folks coming in after their work hours to talk to us.
- Beyond a general sense of representing my home district, I had little insight into what my role and responsibilities would be.

# How meaningful do you find your experience serving on the ASSB?



# How clear is your understanding of the ASSB's role?

● Very clear	0
● Somewhat clear	5
● Neutral	0
● Somewhat unclear	3
● Very unclear	0



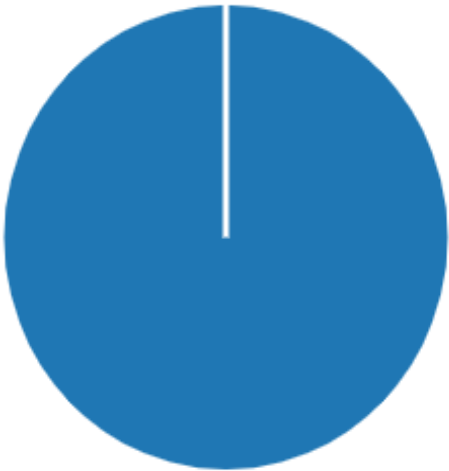
# How familiar are you with the formal and informal organizations in your district that serve individuals and families receiving social services?

● Not familiar at all	1
● Somewhat familiar with a few	4
● Moderately familiar with several	3
● Familiar with many	0
● Very familiar with most	0



# Would you like to build stronger relationships with key groups in your district?

● Yes	8
● No	0



# What resources or support would be helpful to you to better understand the social service needs within your district?

- Information that goes beyond the sharing of data.
- I am new to the board, but it would be helpful for department leaders or surrogates to attend meetings to shed light on their departments and what they do and what they need in terms of strategic planning.
- Reporting on services provided on a by-District basis.
- A good demographic report on the makeup of the people of the district would be useful.
- I'm a consumer of data and analysis, so I'm interested in the evolving nature of the Fairfax population, especially the poor, the immigrant population, and others in need of service. I've come to observe that poverty exists in pockets alongside wealth, so I'm interested in mapping out the needy population and better understanding its needs and potential.
- Having relatively recently moved to Fairfax, Virginia and being employed in DC, I don't have the intimate connections I feel others do. It's also harder for me to socialize in the associated fields because of work and family commitments
- Names of organizations/names of points of contact/information about regularly scheduled meetings or activities

# What do you believe are the most important priorities for the ASSB going forward?

- To efficiently and effectively contribute to the promotion of equity to the people of Fairfax County.
- Issues that impact equity, poverty, children and elder care.
- Priorities should be exploring best practices in surrounding counties to bring change and implement what works for others. Priorities should also be housing and childcare.
- Increasing the accessibility of services and visibility of positive impact.
- Help support the people who have lost Medicaid, work toward getting real affordable housing, find a way to check in on seniors living alone to assess their needs (if any).
- Analyze how the pandemic and demographic changes have affected the County's vulnerable groups; develop a clearer sense of its own mission and relationship with DFS; make recommendations for action by the County.
- I feel the DFS does great work, and it's good that the ASSB can hear about it and make comments based on both their expertise and laymen's perspectives. But as my colleagues said, it does feel a bit passive. I don't know if priorities can be shifted, however, given that we are "advisory."
- My district supervisor believes, and I agree, that coordination between county agencies and boards could be improved. The ASSB could serve as a catalyst for this. For example, DFS, the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, and perhaps other departments are active in job and career training, but DFS has appeared at times to focus on meeting minimum standards for client access to federal benefits, while NCS appears to focus on preparing capable people for self-sufficiency (that is, providing for themselves and their families directly, and taking pride in doing so, rather than simply relying on government payments). The ASSB could serve as catalyst for a shared vision in Fairfax County of federal benefits for those who lack other options, and real self-sufficiency for those who can achieve that goal. In another area, it appears the departments responsible for affordable housing and public transportation do not have much contact. Affordable housing is crucial to the health of the community, but to some extent as a means to an end rather than the end in itself. The end is for people to have good access to schools, health care, well-stocked food stores, jobs, and other factors of a healthy life. Many people in the DMV do not live in the jurisdiction in which they work, and so transportation is a critical component of community wellbeing. However, as has recently been made obvious, the Fairfax Connector - a money sink at the best of times - is not serving the community (or even, perhaps, its employees) very well. ASSB could take up a review and discussion of the combined role of housing and transportation on community wellbeing. Finally, more needs to be done with respect to DFS/ASSB communication with the community. DFS is achieving remarkable outcomes, but we are not doing as much as we can to share news of those outcomes with the BOS and the community.