

## Successful Children and Youth Policy Team

### October 3, 2018, Meeting Summary

Key decisions and actions are in **bold**.

#### SCYPT Members in Attendance:

Kimberly Adams, Hassan Alkurdi, Leslie Atkins, Bob Bermingham, Nanette Bowler, Karla Bruce, Tisha Deeghan, Francisco Duran, Fred Grant, Mark Ginsberg, Kelly Henderson, Cathy Hudgins, Frances Ivey, Teresa Johnson, Alexis Kassim, Tammy Derenak Kaufax, Michelle Leete, Rick Leichtweis, Chris Leonard, Jeff McKay, Nandred Navarro (for Judith Dittman), Jeff Platenberg, Lyn Tomlinson (for Daryl Washington), Douglas Tyson

#### Administrative Item:

**One administrative item was presented as a consent agenda, which was unanimously approved by the SCYPT:**

- **The SCYPT charter was amended to add one new member: the Chief Equity Officer of the Fairfax County Government.** Karla Bruce, who serves in that position, immediately joined the SCYPT as a member.

#### Action Item – Endorsement of Behavioral Health Blueprint Funding Request

Jim Gillespie and Betty Petersilia, of Healthy Minds Fairfax, presented an update on the implementation of the Behavioral Health Blueprint, focusing on strategies that were funded and implemented in FY 2018. They presented a proposal for new funding to expand crisis response services (\$100,000), expand behavioral health treatment services for underserved populations (\$130,000), and establish a psychiatric consultation program for pediatricians and family physicians (\$100,000).

Jeff McKay asked if data shows that the proposed services would be adequate to meet demand, and whether they would save money in the long run. Mr. Gillespie replied that they wouldn't completely fill the gap, but they would allow us to begin to meet demand, with the hopes of expanding in the future. Further, the services would not necessarily save money, but they would make services more efficient and effective, and able to serve more youth, because they would help free up other existing services for youth with the greatest needs.

In response to a question about Medicaid and private insurance funding, Lyn Tomlinson stressed that the Community Services Board is continually working to maximize revenue from these sources.

Francisco Duran asked if the Short Term Behavioral Health program has been able to serve youth and families who speak languages other than English. Ms. Petersilia replied that it has, but that she didn't have numbers on hand. (NOTE: It has since been reported that, of the 123 students served by STBH in the 2017-18 school year, 16 (13%) were not proficient in English; 58 (47%) had parents who were not proficient in English. And language does not appear to be a key factor in whether referred students get treatment. Among the 173 students referred to STBH that year, the percentages were 16% and 46%.) Fred Grant asked which schools were included in the STBH program. Ms. Petersilia explained that schools are selected based on a combination of reported mental health concerns (via the Fairfax County Youth Survey), poverty rates (i.e., free and reduced price meals eligibility), and community capacity to serve youth. Schools currently receiving STBH services include Annandale, Bryant, Edison, Herndon, Hayfield, Lake Braddock, Lee, Mt. Vernon, Mountain View, Robinson, South County, Stuart, and Woodson High Schools; Glasgow, Hayfield, Herndon, Holmes, Key, Lake Braddock, Poe and Robinson Middle Schools; and Annandale Terrace and Herndon Elementary Schools. Mr. Grant asked if locations had been identified where there is need, but not capacity. Ms. Petersilia described their outreach efforts along the Richmond Highway corridor, conducting extensive and in-person outreach to potential providers, only to receive no response. Staff are currently exploring options such as in-home, telepsychiatry, and school-based services to increase flexibility in service provision and better engage the private sector.

Karla Bruce noted the emphasis on equity, but asked how the Blueprint addresses barriers to increasing capacity to deliver services and if there are models for increasing capacity (e.g., incentivizing providers to serve a specific community). Mr. Gillespie stated that this has been a key focus of late; a community conversation in September in South County brought together representatives of various sectors to discuss solutions to the area's "mental health desert." Betty Petersilia stated that 15 focus groups with teens and parents across the county informed the recently completed report on underserved populations, which will guide new Healthy Minds initiatives. Nannette Bowler asked how "underserved" was defined and if it was strictly referring to low income families. Mr. Gillespie and Jesse Ellis noted that the report, and the Blueprint itself, includes a mix of strategies and highlights strategies to address disparities based on income, geography, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, and ethnicity.

Tammy Derenak Kaufax asked if expanding the number of inpatient beds is a priority in the Blueprint. Mr. Gillespie noted there has been some expansion of late (including at Inova Fairfax Hospital), but that the Blueprint seeks to balance inpatient access with appropriate diversion and triage services that better serve youth at home. Mobile crisis response is one strategy that can help alleviate the need to inpatient services. Rick Leichtweis explained that it will always be difficult to provide enough beds, but that it's also not always the best option for treating youth with suicidal ideation.

Dr. Duran also asked if the psychiatric consultation program would serve English language learners. And Mark Ginsberg asked if \$400 per hour was too expensive, and 15 minute consultations too short, for the program. Mr. Gillespie and Dr. Leichtweis explained that the consultation program doesn't serve youth and families directly; the psychiatrist provides consultation over the phone to pediatricians and family physicians to help them better serve patients. The 15 minute sessions were recommended by pediatricians who have requested the service; Inova's consultations typically last 5 to 7 minutes. Dr. Leichtweis noted that "retail"

prices average \$300 to \$400 per hour; the budget was conservative and any contract will be negotiated, hopefully resulting in lower per hour costs and the opportunity to serve more youth.

Leslie Atkins urged staff to consider referral structures and ensure that providers outside of FCPS and the County (e.g., out of school time providers) have appropriate resources and information to refer kids to services.

Cathy Hudgins asked about the status of the new school-based substance use program. Mr. Gillespie replied that it is just getting started and is designed to address issues in the prior program that hindered staff's ability to follow up with youth and families. The goal is the better facilitate access to treatment.

Hassan Alkurdi wrapped up the conversation with a strong endorsement of the program, emphasizing that "sometimes underquality is worse than underserved," praising the program's focus on both quality and access. Mr. Alkurdi shared stories that reiterated the need, citing stigma and a lack of early intervention as issues that need to be addressed in order to better serve youth with behavioral health needs.

**Without objection, the SCYPT voted to endorse the funding request.**

#### Action Item – Endorsement of School Readiness Strategic Plan Funding Request

Anne-Marie Twohie, of the Fairfax County Office for Children, and Maura Burke, of FCPS, presented an update on the implementation of the Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan, focusing on strategies that were funded and are being implemented in FY 2019. They presented a proposal for new funding to expand family-child playgroups to support social emotional competency development (\$80,000), expand the pilot of the Early Development Instrument (\$15,000), expand pre-kindergarten program access (\$1,443,479), maintain VPI+ classrooms in FCPS (\$650,300), increase financial assistance in the Child Care Assistance and Referral program (\$1,000,000), and develop an early childhood mental health consultation program (\$170,000). They also discussed ongoing work to identify opportunities to broadly increase access to early childhood education.

Cathy Hudgins asked if efforts are focused on low income families or the entire community, as all parents need to be aware of how to prepare their kids for school. Ms. Twohie replied that much of the initial strategies are focused on increasing program slots for low income families, but that the plan is focused more broadly, and the new efforts will be aimed at universal access to programs. Ms. Burke noted that the new data that will be available through the Early Development Instrument and other sources will help inform universal efforts.

Tammy Derenak Kaufax noted that the state VPI+ grant is ending, necessitating the budget request to maintain those classrooms, and that there should be more advocacy at the state level for pre-k funding. Jeff McKay added that he is often asked why Fairfax County doesn't take full advantage of all the VPI funding they could receive from the state. Ms. Twohie explained that VPI is the state's pre-k program for at-risk four year-olds, and that Fairfax uses about 68% of the funding/slots available to the county. There are multiple reasons that it is difficult to draw down

more of that funding. First, Virginia sets the cost per pupil per year as \$6,000, which is significantly lower than the cost of providing care in Northern Virginia. There is a required local match of 50%, so Fairfax receives only \$3,000 per slot each year. Two additional requirements – that community-based sites have a licensed teacher and that slots must be filled and fully documented by October 1 – are difficult to meet given our diverse mixed delivery system. It was recommended that FCPS and Fairfax County collaborate on developing shared language documenting these challenges to share with legislators, and that the information be shared with the SCYPT.

Mr. McKay noted that there are a lot of “moving pieces” regarding the number of slots, the number of kids being served, and the length of wait lists. He suggested it would be helpful to have a “slots scorecard” to illustrate the current state. Mr. McKay also stated that the Board of Supervisors budget guidance to SCYPT is to propose a five year plan to implement universal access to pre-k, and that the plan should address capital needs and constraints.

Mark Ginsberg described the Strategic Plan and the funding requests as not a “cost,” but an “investment.” He cited a large body of research led by James Heckman showing a \$7 return for each \$1 invested in early childhood education. Frances Ivey discussed the importance of the investment, noting that early childhood is where the achievement gap starts.

**Without objection, the SCYPT voted to endorse the funding request.**

#### Information Items

Meeting handouts included updates on the SCYPT Community Engagement Committee and the SCYPT Community Schools Committee.