

## Successful Children and Youth Policy Team

### December 7, 2016, Meeting Summary

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

#### SCYPT Members in Attendance:

Kimberly Adams, Gloria Addo-Ayensu, George Becerra, Bob Bermingham, Ron Chavarro (for Nanette Bowler), Karen Cleveland, Tisha Deeghan, Judith Dittman, Jack Dobbyn, Francisco Duran, Mark Ginsberg, Pat Harrison, Kelly Henderson, Cathy Hudgins, Tammy Derenak Kaufax, Dana Kauffman, Rick Leichtweis, Chris Leonard, Jane Lipp, Jeff McKay, Megan McLaughlin, Mary Ann Panarelli, Krysta Pearce (for Eileen Ellsworth), Ipsa Stringer, Douglas Tyson, Andrew Wehrlen (for Ed Roessler)

#### Update on SCYPT Membership

New members were welcomed to the team:

- Dana Kauffman, Director of Government Relations and Community Affairs for Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC);
- Mark Ginsberg, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development, George Mason University;
- Ipsa Stringer, Teacher, Bailey's Elementary School;
- Kimberly Adams, President, Fairfax County Council of PTAs (serving as SCYPT member until a permanent representative is appointed); and
- Karen Cleveland, President, Leadership Fairfax, Inc. (serving as SCYPT member until a permanent representative is appointed).

#### Announcements

- Mary Ann Panarelli announced the launch of the [Reston Opportunity Neighborhood](#) (RestON), a place-based initiative led by Cornerstones, FCPS, and Fairfax County Government.
- Francisco Duran noted that a joint FCPS-County meeting to focus on One Fairfax policy development was held on Friday, December 2.
- Pat Harrison announced that the System of Care Blueprint was presented to the Board of Supervisors last month.
- Judith Dittman shared that Alternative House recently leased its first apartment for youth under a new Housing and Urban Development grant. The region will conduct its first point-in-time count of homeless youth (using a broader definition than traditionally used by HUD) on January 25.
- Daryl Washington, of the Community Services Board, announced that the CSB has implemented a "soft launch" of youth walk-in screening and assessment services at Merrifield.

- Elizabeth Gaines, of the Forum for Youth Investment, shared that Pat Harrison participated in a recent FYI webinar on children’s cabinets, sharing information on the SCYPT and its work.

SCYPT Action Updates:

- The community engagement committee and the committee to look at SCYPT processes will meet on Monday, December 12; updates will be provided to the SCYPT by the next meeting.
- The committee to develop processes for early screening and interventions for behavioral health and family issues (identified as a need by SCYPT during the Attendance Plan discussions) will convene after the new year.

Action Item – SCYPT Response on Joint Board-Identified Priorities:

Jesse Ellis shared the directive from the Board of Supervisors to the SCYPT to present the BOS and the School Board with a work plan that allows the boards to address children-, youth-, and families-related priorities identified by the boards at their joint retreat in June. Based on input from the SCYPT Executive Committee, staff prepared a draft memo to the boards outlining existing, forthcoming, and needed work to address the priorities.

Jeff McKay noted that the proposed team to work on Capital Improvement Plan issues should be coordinated with the work on land use and broader CIP planning being proposed by a team separate from the SCYPT that is responsible for responding to the boards on financial priorities. Mr. Ellis agreed to add wording reflecting this.

Cathy Hudgins suggested there are many intersections among the priorities and the approaches listed to address them, and that coordination of efforts is necessary. Mr. Ellis noted that such coordination is the SCYPT’s responsibility and that he would add wording reflecting this.

There was discussion about the proposed recommendation to the boards to “fully resource” the plans noted in the section about addressing poverty, especially given known budget constraints and the fact that not all of those plans have been fully vetted by the SCYPT. Members agreed that SCYPT’s recommendations should be aspirational and not bound by specific budget constraints. It is up to the boards (and other decision-makers) to determine the feasibility of funding initiatives, but such initiatives need to be developed first. Nonetheless, given the vague and somewhat confusing nature of the proposed wording, members agreed that removing it would not change the substance of the response.

**With the removal of the “fully resource” line, the addition of the language on coordinating efforts overall and on the CIP work, and the addition of the upcoming School Readiness Strategic Plan to the list of plans that should be jointly considered as a coordinated approach to addressing poverty, the SCYPT voted without objection to approve the proposed response.**

**Additionally, Jack Dobbyn, Megan McLaughlin, Mark Ginsberg, Chris Leonard, Francisco Duran, George Becerra, and Kimberly Adams volunteered to join a new committee on community schools.**

## Discussion Item – Proposed School-Based Drug Counselors Program

Mary Ann Panarelli and Daryl Washington, Community Services Board Deputy Director, presented a proposed pilot program to address substance use issues in schools. The Board of Supervisors directed staff to revisit having substance use counselors in schools and for the SCYPT to review the proposal before sending it to the BOS. The proposal is still a draft, and SCYPT members were being asked for feedback prior to revising the proposal; it will be brought back to the SCYPT for endorsement at the February meeting.

The pilot proposal is for six high school/middle school combinations. This size pilot program allows for enough data to be collected to determine the effectiveness of the strategy, especially as compared to the old Student Assistance Program.

Rick Leichtweis noted that referrals to treatment (and involvement in treatment) are significantly down among youth. By the time many youth with substance use issues get to treatment, they require very intensive interventions. Judith Dittman stated that over-the-counter drug use is a major issue among youth in Alternative House's shelters.

Kelly Henderson asked how it will be ensured that staff coordinate with clinical staff and with community-based prevention efforts, such as those led by the Unified Prevention Coalition. Dr. Panarelli explained that the counselors will be a part of the school-based clinical team, along with the school social worker, school psychiatrist, and others. UPC, and their youth council, will be asked to help with messaging, communication, and outreach. Heather Davies, of the UPC, said the stigma of substance use may be stronger than that of mental illness. And because drug use can intensify mental illness, it is very important to communicate the prevalence and the hazards of drug – including marijuana – use. Tammy Derenak Kaufax noted that, as the alcohol, tobacco, and other drug curriculum ends in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, there may be opportunities to better incorporate UPC programming into high schools.

Megan McLaughlin asked if training school social workers would be a more efficient strategy than adding new staff, and if it would better ensure a treatment – as opposed to punishment – approach to substance use. Dr. Leichtweis responded that the entire system has been shifting to a treatment model, but the ongoing problem is that fewer people are seeking treatment. He believes this approach is a strong one, communicating that drug use is not OK and that treatment is available. Dr. Panarelli explained that the experience and skills of school social workers has been intentionally increased over the past three years, but their workload precludes the addition of such a large responsibility. The time required to become a certified substance use counselor is significant. School social workers have been trained to recognize signs of substance use, make referrals, and otherwise intervene. But their workloads would not allow them the time to do all of the other work the proposed counselors will be responsible for. The proposed pay grade for the new counselors was selected because it is equivalent to similar positions within the CSB.

Francisco Duran recommended including bilingual capabilities as a strongly preferred qualification for the new positions, especially given the large Hispanic populations at several of the proposed pilot schools.

George Becerra and Mark Ginsberg recommended incorporating ways to authentically engage with parents and families. Dr. Ginsberg also suggested including school counselors in the strategies.

Jack Dobbyn asked about the proposal's potential impact on disproportionate minority contact in the juvenile justice system. Dr. Panarelli stated that race will be included in program indicators to allow for such an analysis.

Members with additional feedback were encouraged to email it to Dr. Panarelli or Mr. Washington.

#### Presentation – Local Government Dedicated Funding for Children's Services

Elizabeth Gaines of the Forum for Youth Investment, shared research and best practices on how local governments are identifying and implementing dedicated funding models for children and youth services. Initial conversation began to frame these efforts within the context of the recently defeated meals tax referendum. The Executive Committee will have a fuller discussion and determine if next steps by the SCYPT are warranted.

#### Action Steps/Assignments

- Jesse Ellis will convene the workgroup on community schools.
- Jesse Ellis will revise the response to the joint boards, obtain Executive Committee feedback on the revisions, and send the final version as a memo from the SCYPT co-chairs to the School Board and Board of Supervisors.
- SCYPT members who have additional feedback on the drug counselor proposal should email their feedback to Mary Ann Panarelli and/or Daryl Washington.
- The Executive Committee will further discuss approaches to dedicated funding for children's services.
- Per Jeff McKay's recommendation, Jesse Ellis will add an equity focus to templates for reports, proposals, and presentations to the SCYPT.