

Child Wellbeing Task Force

Meeting Notes: June 24, 2020

- 2:00pm** **Greetings and Opening Comments, Commissioner Schwinn**
The Commissioner explained the goal and intention of the Task Force, thanked members for their participation and engagement, and noted the professional and personal connection she has to the work.
- 2:10-3:00** **Introductions, Task Force Members**
Each member introduced themselves by sharing their role, interest in serving on the Task Force, and vision for what the group can accomplish.
- 3:00-3:15** **Objectives and Operations, Katie Houghtlin**
Members reviewed, provided input, and discussed the intended objectives for the group. Discussed meeting cadence, subcommittee opportunities, and approach to local implementation.
- 3:15-3:25** **Action Items, Katie Houghtlin**
Members provided initial input and discussed the approach to the Report. Discussion of the Wellness Checks will be moved to the Wednesday, July 8th meeting.
- 3:35-3:30** **Synthesis of Next Steps, Katie Houghtlin**
Based on time constraints, we are moving the conversation of Wellness Checks to the 7/8 meeting agenda. Please share any data on wellness checks in advance to Katie.Houghtlin@tn.gov
- COVID-19 related data
 - Education and community related responses to pandemic support
 - Wellbeing check protocols
 - Draft statements or summaries to include in the report

Questions Posed by Task Members:

- **Beth Goodner** - Is there already a plan to coordinate with Mental Health?
- **Shawn Kimble** - We must be mindful of how we are working to collect data. Are we unintentionally furthering the gaps in communication, representation, and participation if we are over relying on technology based survey data and research?
- **Shawn Kimble** – How will we continue and expand mental health services? Much of the access to many of these services was coordinated through schools.
- **Naomi Asher** – Can we make clear the differences between rural and urban needs?
 - **Senator Ferrell Haile** – I would recommend we divide the report into urban v. rural districts
- **Linda Brown** - Who are families seeing for psychological evaluations and different therapies during this time?
- **Sam Wigand** – Could this group do a survey or aggregate other surveys around student/family anxieties about school return?
- **Kim Henderson** – How can we simplify the guidance and put in a format that is shareable to families and communities?

Recommendations for Report Data and Topics:

- **Beth Goodner:** Report on increased incidents of abuse: physical, sexual, and overall neglect

- **Samantha Wigand** - In the report, you must consider mental health issues, namely how ACES/toxic stress, basic needs, unemployment, etc. are increasing mental health issues. Additionally, think about lack of broadband in rural communities. There is an overall lack of services in rural communities.
- **Melissa Hudson-Gant** – Consider food and housing insecurity, physical safety, and access to technology.
- **David Jordan** – The digital divide must be address, and we could consider telehealth/telecom as part of the solution. The full funding for the whole child is needed.
- **Flora Tydings** – access to technology is critical
- **Kim Henderson** – be specific about who has supplied the data and input; include perspectives from different stakeholders (parents, communities, schools, etc.)
- **David Jordan** – it is important to access data on youth and the support of whole child needs like educational data, TANF, etc.
- **Katie Harbison** - make sure we include the challenges/needs of our youngest children, not just school aged children
 - **Angela Webster** agreed, and noted the particular needs surrounding those at the age to transition for TEIS to "big school," and support for educators on how best to support whole child needs of the youngest children.
- **Alexis Gwin-Miller** - Communication from parents and student voices are important.
 - **Kim Henderson** seconded the comment, noting the parent/family experience is critical as well
- **Guy Barnard** – For framing, we should include well-being disparities of all the above categories both within the State *but* also compared to baseline measures from past in TN and current/past across US - have gaps narrowed, widened etc.
- **Angela Webster** – In the report, include the social emotional and relational health focus; access to supports for families with young children; a plan for interface with students and families that is mindful of student's developmental needs
- **Kristen Robinson** - consider the impact on children (education, health, safety) in the 48 residential facilities across the state
- **Linda Brown** – we could include a list of support groups for families to discuss educational concerns for children with special needs.
- **Juliana Ospina Cano** – Be sure to include the academic and socioemotional impact on English Learners and immigrant-origin students and families impacted by COVID-19. Additionally, we must think about the following: 1) Considerations related to absenteeism as it relates to COVID-19 families. Students and parents testing positive in the summer/ fall 2020 2) Cultural misconceptions and fears 3) Impact of food insecurity/lack of access to high quality medical care for students and families. 4) Dissemination of guidance/recommendations that is family-friendly (i.e. language and literacy level)
- **Beth Goodner** – We should consider the lack of access to medical care: either due to fear of going to the emergency departments, lack of transportations or lack/reduced outpatient provider availability. (Dentist, other specialty providers and general medicine). This reduced availability was much more prevalent several weeks ago. This may increase as the next COVID wave presents.
- **Molly Blankenship**: Also, it may be good to include data/stories around the impact on students plans/preparedness for postsecondary/career.
- **Samantha Wigand**: Our objective should be to inform legislators and providers and help align support across the state - *not* reinvent the wheel in every community
- **Kim Henderson** - the data, successes, inequities, and problems should *drive* the conversation, not provide solutions
 - **David Jordan** agreed, noting that the group should let the data lead to action and guide funding
- **Kristen Robinson** – We should consider the efficacy of virtual learning for students with disabilities, and note access to related services and behavior supports
- **Alexis Gwin-Miller** - Some national gathering of voices is happening here (www.justaskusmovement.org) – we may be able to use our connections for some of their data
- **Angela Webster** – We ought to look at the impact on child care programs, including those school based.
- **Chapple Osborne-Arnold** – We’ve found that most families had internet access, but no devices besides cell phones
- **Nancy Dishner** – Connectivity issues are of critical concern. We must reinforce the need to address broadband access to ensure connectedness. It is also critical for the economy as well.

- **Guy Barnard** – Of note for the discussion of wellbeing checks – they need to go beyond the child. I've been doing a lot of assessment work in social determinants of health, and thinking a real time pulse check on food security, financial security of family, change in family structure / grandparent contact, access, as well as physical health/bereavement etc. of all the child's support system are important

Recommendations for Report Objectives and Framing:

- **Guy Barnard** - have the end / next steps in mind -- if much of the guidance that the Committee and the Department will provide is "optional" then the Postmortem report is an important motivation for action. It should clearly lay out the gaps to close, so that subject work from the Committee is viewed as helpful in closing the gaps.
- **Molly Blankenship** - If the report can clearly lay out lessons learned, gaps that must be close, persistent problems, that can spur action - maybe shining a light on strong community responses/what it means for the long term/what has better equipped certain communities to respond, etc. comes later along with the set of recommendations