



Alaska Citizen Review Panel

Members

Diwakar K. Vadapalli, Chair
Dana Hallett, Vice-Chair
Margaret McWilliams
Bettyann Steciw
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The Alaska Citizen Review Panel evaluates the policies, procedures, and practices of state and local child protection agencies for effectiveness in discharging their child protection responsibilities. The Panel is mandated through CAPTA 1997 (P.L. 104-235), and enacted through AS 47.14.205.

CRP Panel and OCS Teleconference Summary

Tuesday, May 10, 2016

Attendance

Meeting Chaired by: Diwakar Vadapalli

Panel members in attendance: Rebecca Vale, Dana Hallett, Margaret McWilliams, Donna Aguiniga (first part of the meeting)

OCS staff: Christy Lawton and Travis Erickson

Staff: Ellen Ganley and Brenda Holden, Information Insights

Agenda

2016 Staff Survey Report

- Diwakar shared the 5 recommendations of the report, ~~the participation levels and responded to questions and response rate.~~
- Diwakar clarified that an early question asking for staff position did not sort or exclude answers. Travis requested that information be divided by regions. Question by question summaries will include breakdowns.
- Travis replied to a question asking how this survey compared to past surveys done by their internal evaluation unit. Travis felt that although they don't have the final report yet, he feels like there is more information or maybe it was more rounded out. This reminds Travis of the importance of slowing down long enough to present the findings with the right people in the room. He hopes to do the same with the leadership staff.
- Christy asked if these recommendations are from the class or the CRP. Diwakar stated that the recommendations are summarized from survey results. The class authored the report as commissioned by CRP and partnered with OCS. Christy stated that it may differ if the survey recommendations are internal vs. external as more recommendations from CRP - and if she would want the recommendations as part of a public document. Recommendations and suggestions about the report should be submitted to Diwakar in writing as soon as possible.

- Margie thinks it is good and reflects what they've heard
- Travis appreciated the information on new employee training and some positive comments about their experience there. He hopes to look at how to look at that more next year, including more about what education and experiences staff bring to OCS and then how the training meets their needs. The Anchorage model was a bigger time investment so he would like to see if we can correlate any positive or negative outcomes. Somehow incorporate exit interviews to compare with those who stay. Three out of six workers mentioned very positive experiences.
- Three OCS employees sent emails to Diwakar stating that they felt much more secure in providing input and trusted the confidentiality safeguards this process provided.
- OCS needs to think about preferences for next year, and any potential changes or additions. Christie and Travis thanked Diwakar and students. They are interested to see how management team reacts and learn of staff comments they heard and perhaps could be shared at the next meeting.

OCS update on Tribal-State strategic plan distributed

- Final narrative is still out for comment and feedback for another week. After final edits and revisions, the report will be distributed to tribes and their leadership from commissioner. Waiting further discussions from the Commissioner before setting up work groups. Looking at potential compacting similar to health care and how that might work for child welfare services. If we compact, will prioritize work group efforts to work on this. CRP and the public are welcome to get involved. Contact Christy if interested and say how you want to get involved. Will likely have a tribal leader and nontribal leader as co-chairs of each group.

- Diwakar stated that CRP demonstrated competence and commitment to OCS-tribal relations over the years. These issues have been on CRP's radar. Diwakar was surprised that CRP was not suggested by OCS.

Diwakar asked Christie to respond to two questions:

- Why was CRP not seen as a meaningful contributor to this effort?
- What role does DHSS/OCS envision for CRP in this effort, going forward?

Christy responded that Why was CRP not consulted while the planning was happening? The concept is from the Commissioner and invitation for who should be at the table was referred to tribal partners and the Commissioner. They were trying to get primarily tribal leadership in the room and those that serve tribal agencies to inform us. Christie said CRP was on the list but didn't make the cut. She wonders if participants knew CRP's role – there might be a gap in general community and tribal leadership. Christy doesn't know why First Alaskans did not forward Diwakar's requests for updates to her.

- CRP demonstrated that tribal issues are on CRP's radar. Diwakar was surprised that CRP was not suggested by OCS. Christie said CRP was on the list but didn't make the cut. She wonders if participants knew CRP's role – there might be a gap in general community and tribal leadership.

- What role does the Commissioner or OCS see CRP's role going forward? Christy doesn't see the CRP role any bigger or different than anyone else's. Perhaps participate in work groups such as community outreach may be good for CRP. OCS is taking the lead from tribal leaders and are not calling the shots in typical ways they may operate.

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Alaska CRP and OCS senior leadership meet monthly to maintain mutually respectful and healthy communication and promote understanding of mutual roles. These regular monthly meetings began in mid-2012 and are not open to the public. Minutes are confidential.



- Diwakar commented that it is important to distinguish between the general community members and CRP as a mechanism for community participation. OCS needs to be more intentional in involving CRP in the planning phases of various initiatives.

OCS update on budget, including CRP budget

- Christy doesn't know anything different than last time. Joint committee has prioritized oil and gas bills. No information is available on OCS supplemental request, which is critical. Right now Christiey does not assume there will be any reduction in CRP budget but, everything is still up in the air.
- CHRISTY LEFT THE CALL

Update on CFSR preparation.

- Travis said in the period under the review right now, so don't have anything specific to say.
- Diwakar asked if CFSR will have a local community team and hopes CRP is on the list. Travis assured that CRP will be on a list for local focus groups when it is created. Diwakar expressed concern that CRP should be viewed as a partner by OCSChristie. The CRP mechanism is different than anything else in OCS. Travis felt that these monthly teleconferences is one of demonstrating that our OCS-CRP relationship is different than anyone on the street. CRP is a special entity with a specific role and interest in what is going on. We communicate much more than any other organization. Diwakar would like to see CRP more intentionally involved in planning than just receiving updates. Travis recommended that this can be on future agendas so OCS can share what they are learning from the CFSR process.

Debriefing:

- Discussion on how CRP should handle the report and recommendations (or whatever it should be called). CRP could vote to adopt the report and recommendations as CRP recommendations and/or CRP could include the recommendations as part of their annual report.
- CRP needs to remember Travis's appreciation of the survey and information and his intentions to share it in a more informative manner with staff as well as interest in fleshing out the survey next year.
- Re: tribal relations meetings, Rebecca sent her interest in participating in a work group to Christiey and plans to ask from notes from the first meetings.
- Would OCS staff be better prepared for these calls if CRP asked OCS to identify topics for these agendas?
- Retreat dates were confirmed.
- Next quarterly CRP public meeting is during the national conference, but Diwakar wants the teleconference to proceed on schedule, even if he and Dana may not be able to participate. Diwakar will review past suggestions for a guest speaker to include in the agenda.

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- The next CRP/OCS call will be the second Tuesday in June.

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