



CRP Quarterly Meeting  
October 28th, 2021 – 11AM to 1PM  
See Calendar Invite for Zoom Login

## MEETING NOTES

- Call to order; read rules and conduct of the meeting - Chair
- Roll Call – Chair
  - Cameron Adams (Chair CRP)
  - Lucinda Alexie (Vice Chair CRP)
  - Retchenda George-Bettisworth (CRP)
  - Wendy Barrett (CRP)
  - Sharon Sparks (CRP)
  - Travis Erickson (OCS)
  - Denise Duff (State Ombudsman)
  - Denali Daniels (Coordinator)
  - Logan Daniels (Coordinator)
  - Tricia Minnick (UAF Practicum Student)
- Chair moved the order of agenda items to better accommodate attendee's schedule.
- Literature Review for Worker Retention
  - Chair noted that the CRP was not quite ready to discuss the literature review that they had started, stating the lack of academic articles as an obstacle slowing the process.
  - Chair asked OCS what information they are looking for during the round table talks, what are the gaps, and who should participate?
  - Travis provided the following considerations:
    - Introduced the case study description of the mentoring program which was done in collaboration with UAA and OCS to determine if the mentoring program is affecting worker retention.

- The round tables would be great to just hear what staff has to say from a different perspective than a worker reporting up to their supervisor.
- Idea of making part time positions to help fill the gap in services due to the lack of staff.
- Timeliness of the roundtables are right in the middle of change taking place and the struggles of OCS workers in certain communities.
- Some of the solutions of the near-term issues is creating an opportunity to create long-term problems.
- Participation in the round tables from front line workers, ex-employees could provide great input, community partners, key partners in each community (law enforcement, medical, etc.).
- Travis reviewed the staff survey and highlighted sections to focus on:
  - Page 16 – what would help OCS retain staff: If you read all of that it will be a great grounding as the CRP start their efforts around worker retention
  - Page 27 - Staff experiences about personal wellbeing, highlighting the questions “I’ve considered leaving the agency to reduce stress” with a 78% yes response rate.
  - Page 28 – Last statement of OCS supports my wellbeing
  - Page 29 – Support of OCS Staff, Pandemic is stopping staff get together and it has shown to be important to staff moral
  - Page 32 – Staff believe their manager cares about them.
  - Page 42 – Respondents reasons for continuing to work at OCS. Focus on PSS and CCLS columns.
  - OCS is trying to get an increase in career ladder opportunities by including a 3<sup>rd</sup> level of front-line workers. They just got approval from the commissioner’s office to begin researching how this would look. \$10,000-\$13,000 more pay at the 3-level compared to the 2-level.
  - Page 46 – Table 23, great information for the CRP to think about as they help tackle work force issues. This shows that people most prepared to take on the OCS work are social workers but most of the OCS workforce do not have a social work background.

- The state of Alaska has moved to a competency-based hiring process as opposed to a qualification based one. The jury is out on how this will impact the OCS workforce.
- Chair asked if there was accreditation that OCS required. Travis mentioned that they do not have a required accreditation.
- Chair asked about the meta-analysis and the efforts that OCS is making now to address the challenges they are facing.
- Travis mentioned that things like the mentoring program, the idea of expanding the career ladder, offering bonuses for front line workers (has not worked well), HB 151 although they cannot retain workers to fill the slots that opened through the bill, OCS has a safety officer which has helped to handle safety better at OCS, Travis mentioned that the front-line workers turnover rate is still at 59%.
- Higher level staff are sitting in on harder meetings so that lower-level staff feel supported. An idea that OCS has is to create a mental health clinician internal to OCS though no steps have been taken on this.
- Suggestion that the CRP help to have community-based conversations to help rally people behind helping OCS through the challenges they are facing now.
- On-call isn't working well by all front-line staff and OCS is trying to figure out how to create an on-call job in itself as opposed to having regular staff also have on-call duties.
- OCS is trying to be flexible in supervising and staffing and recently they have had to move to supervising from a distance. This means that they are recruiting from across the state as opposed to from within a community. It is needed to fill vacancies now but can cause issues within the community in the long run.
- If the CRP can get to root causes so they can work to create root solutions.
- Sharon asked what RDO stands for, Travis responded that it stood for regular day off.
- Sharon asked about looking into employee benefits to help mitigate stress and what has worked in the past, how are changes implemented if any, and noticed that the findings of the evaluations from the surveys in the report were from pilot programs and not from what is normally implemented at OCS.

- The employee assistance program for staff is a challenge to use as there are multiple roadblocks and people eventually give up because they cannot get to a provider.
- Magic has occurred from time to time. For example, in Utqiagvik they just hired a new supervisor and they have brought unprecedented stability to that office, and they are fully staffed. This is not the norm though and many other offices are struggling.
- The mentorship program and team decision making have been widely looked at as good all the way around and they are widely accepted.
- For the research on the pilot programs this is due to OCS starting small and rarely bringing those pilot programs full scale.
- The struggle for workers is being felt around the state and in many departments.
- Lucinda asked about adding questions around why people think about leaving OCS to the survey that OCS does annually.
- Retchenda asked about the shared positions in OCS where one worker would take the case load for 6 months, then another would take over for 6 months and then rotate back to prevent burnout and keep people in the same community.
- Travis responded that they have tried it a few times, but they have never been able to keep those positions filled. We could include both part time and job share in the employee survey to see what people are interested in.
- Coordinator stated that the survey starts early in the year and asked if it was calendar or fiscal?
- Travis responded that it was calendar and surveys usually go out around February.
- Coordinator asked if it was in house, and Travis stated that it was.
- Ideally the CRP questions are different questions than the survey they host and get to the roots of problems like why don't people want a career at OCS and why don't men usually work there?
- Chair noted that a community survey instead of an OCS internal one would gain some insights like why people graduating don't want to work there.
- Retchenda asked if the CRP could get access to the reports from the exit surveys.

- Travis mentioned that a report is supposed to come out around the end of the year for the exit survey from the past year and once it comes out, he can send it to the CRP.
- Chair tabled this discussion in the interest of time and pushed the round table discussion to a later date.
- Approval of September Retreat Meeting Notes
  - Sharon moved to approve meeting notes and Retchenda seconded. None opposed.
- 2021 – 2022 Work Plan: Quarter 1 and 2
  - Coordinator shared the draft Work Plan and reviewed what was accomplished in Quarter 1 and what was upcoming for Quarter 2.
    - Updating the membership application, they should meet with the ombudsman to ensure that the sectors in the application match the states options.
    - Open Meetings Act is being tackled and the first post on the state website is coming.
  - Chair noted that there should be a draft of language to describe what the public comment is for and for the CRP to be ready with resources to direct them to.
  - Coordinator asked about further clarification of the action to review the PIP and CFSR. It was agreed that the documents would be shared in dropbox with the panel in the short term, noting a long term login would be considered for the CRP website, and that briefings on the two documents would be scheduled.
  - Connecting with other CRPs to learn about how they operate was also noted as an upcoming activity.
- Round Table Dates and Meeting Design
  - Postponed to November meeting
- CRP Attendance Tracker
  - Chair showed the new tracking document to the Panel.
- Public comment\*\*
  - There was no public comment.

- New Membership Applications (Executive Session)
- Other panel business - Questions?
  - Retchenda asked about when the round tables were going to be scheduled. They will be scheduled when the literature review is complete.
  - Discussion on when to host round tables and how to conduct them will happen at the next CRP OCS meeting.
  - Coordinator to draft a schedule for the CRP to look at. This would happen outside of a regular meeting.
- Adjourn – Chair
  - Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:53 PM

*\*\*Public testimony occurs at the end of the agenda; however, agenda topics do not have specified times. We encourage members of the public to listen to the entire meeting to hear the discussions of the CRP members.*