

MINUTES
Braam Oversight Panel
SeaTac Red Lion, Rainier Room
SeaTac, WA
December 10-11, 2007

Monday, December 10

Panel Members: John Landsverk (Chair), Jan McCarthy, Jess McDonald, Dorothy Roberts

Panel staff: Carrie Whitaker

Plaintiffs' Attorneys: Casey Trupin, Bryn Martyna, Bill Grimm, Erin Shea

Assistant Attorney General: Steve Hassett

DSHS Staff: Cheryl Stephani, Ross Dawson, Deborah Purce, Lee Doran, Jody Carpenter, Steve Wickmark, Tim Hunter, Robin McIlvaine

Others: Linda Mason Wilgis, Robert Nelson, Laurie Lippold, Jim Theofelis, Ron Murphy, Alisa Moore, Jennifer Strus, Traci Russell

Note: The minutes are a general summary of discussion and do not attempt to document every comment.

The meeting was called to order at 1:15pm.

Introduction

John Landsverk welcomed the group and remarked that it had now been 3 years since the Panel's first meeting. He noted that the Panel had recently received additional data from the Department reflecting performance through fiscal year 2007, and he noted that significant progress has been made with respect to the availability of data related to the Braam outcomes. He indicated that the Panel's major recent activity had been drafting revisions and updates to the Implementation Plan, which was adopted in February 2006. He noted that this process was intended to clarify the plan as needed, incorporate agreements between the parties related to measurement and other issues, and streamline the plan where possible. He indicated that this would be a major topic of discussion during the Panel's meetings.

John also noted that Panel member Jeanine Long would be unable to attend the meetings due to a family matter.

Presentation from Children's Administration (CA)

Cheryl Stephani provided an updated on recent Children's Administration activities. Cheryl noted that CA staff had been busily responding to the recent storms and flooding. Staff continued to work to address the needs of children and families served by CA in the affected areas.

Cheryl summarized a number of activities and initiatives that have developed over the past several months:

- CA has implemented structured decision making for risk assessment. This new approach will be incorporated into FAMLINK.

- CA is moving ahead with implementation of the solution-based casework practice model. Mentors and coaches have been hired and are being trained.
- The Department is working with Partners for our Children (POC), the new center developed in partnership with the University of Washington School of Social Work and the private sector. Priorities for the work with POC include foster home recruitment and retention (including an evaluation of the Mockingbird model), reunification standards, placement stability, and solution-based casework outcomes.
- The advisory committee on disproportionality created through legislation during the 2007 session met for the first time in November, and will address its first task of examining data (to be produced by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy) over the coming months.
- During the 2007 session, a separate piece of legislation called for a committee to study the need and feasibility of a tiered system of foster care. The committee is expected to provide its recommendations on January 1, 2008; these recommendations will likely call for a specialized foster care category to serve children with special needs, such as medically fragile youth.
- 2007 legislation also called on the Department to meet quarterly with foster parents around the state. The first meetings have now occurred in each region.
- A task force is presenting its recommendations related to legal representation for dependent children to the Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care.
- Discussions have begun regarding development of a judicial academy. Current discussions focus on identifying training needs and options for delivering these trainings.
- An education summit focused on the needs of children in foster care was held recently, and involved the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Attorney General's Office. Topics included data sharing between DSHS and OSPI and the educational advocates program. A youth and alumni summit was also convened recently.
- The workload study has been finalized, and the Department will be using the study to develop strategies to improve efficiencies and address the identified gap between resources and expectations.
- The Department has contacted Judy Meltzer and the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) for assistance with the Braam requirements and outcomes. The Department hopes to work with CSSP to develop proposals to the Panel for revisions to the Implementation Plan informed by what has been effective in advancing the goals of settlement agreements in other jurisdictions.

Comments from plaintiffs

Casey Trupin commented that the recent FY07 data report represented a significant improvement in the availability and presentation of data. He commended Lee Doran and Jody Carpenter for their efforts. He noted that plaintiffs had been pleased to see data indicating a decrease in practices such as placement of children in adult mental health facilities and overnight placements in DSHS offices, apartments, and hotels. He also cited improvements in placement stability, and noted that these gains suggest that progress can and is being made. Casey expressed concern about the availability of foster homes (ratio of foster care beds to children), CHET screenings within 30 days, sibling separation, and monthly visits. He noted that plaintiffs still intend to return to court within the next month due to performance concerns in a number of critical areas. Casey stated that the workload study confirms that the system has a significant way to go in order to achieve appropriate caseloads. He also noted that he felt that the

Department's recent press statements had suggested that the foster parent survey data related to caseworker visits were not reliable, and had offered a misleading alternative data approach. Finally, Casey noted that the plaintiffs were supportive of the Panel's proposals for revisions to the Implementation Plan and looked forward to further discussion of these issues.

Revision of Implementation Plan

Issue: The original Braam Implementation Plan was released in February 2006, and the Panel shared draft revised versions of several sections of the plan in late November 2007. The Panel and parties discussed the Panel's proposed revisions and clarifications.

John Landsverk noted that the Panel had done significant work in reexamining the Implementation Plan. The Panel had considered whether each outcome still made sense and had used available data to revisit the annual benchmarks and to propose revisions in many areas. The Panel had also worked to clean up and clarify language. Drafts of the introduction to the plan, as well as the placement stability, foster parent training and information, sibling separation, and unsafe and inappropriate placement sections of the plan have been shared with the parties. John noted that draft revisions of the remaining sections (mental health and services to adolescents) would be forwarded to the parties later in the week, and he indicated that the Panel's goal is to finalize the revisions in the time for the February 2008 monitoring report.

John indicated that he would provide an overview of a number of general issues related to the revised Implementation Plan, and provide an example in each area for discussion.

Approach to benchmarks

John Landsverk noted that the revised Implementation Plan sets absolute targets as annual benchmarks, instead of the approach of requiring a certain percentage improvement compared to the baseline that was used in the original Implementation Plan. He noted that, whenever data were available, the process of setting benchmarks was informed by data provided over the past two years.

As an example, John referred to the outcome related to placement of children with all siblings. Instead of the requirement of improvement over baseline figures, the revised Implementation Plan set absolute targets of 60% for FY07, 65% for FY08, 70% for FY09 and 75% for FY10.

Casey Trupin suggested that the outcomes be rephrased to incorporate the ultimate benchmark. In other words, this outcome would be rewritten as "75% of all children will be placed with all of their siblings..."

Cheryl Stephani asked whether the Panel had consulted national data or research to settle on the targets. John Landsverk responded that the targets were based on baseline data and Panel discussion. He noted that the Panel was mindful of the complexities of this particular outcome, which is why the ultimate target established was 75%, rather than (for example) 90%. Dorothy Roberts noted that the benchmark expectations were based on Panel members' experience in other locations, and Jess McDonald referenced the sibling placement requirements of the *Aristotle* case in Illinois.

Steve Hassett noted that Washington statute includes an expansive definition of siblings, and asked what the Panel had in mind with this measure. Carrie Whitaker commented that, unless otherwise noted in the documents, the Panel did not intend to change the measurement approach that has been in place for the last several years.

John Landsverk noted that the Panel welcomed and expected comments from the parties about the benchmark targets. Steve Hassett clarified that the Department may have additional questions about how the Panel approached the benchmarks and what resources were consulted. Jess McDonald noted that the Panel had also looked at the *LeShawn* consent decree in Washington, DC, which sets expectations of 95-100% in most areas.

Bill Grimm raised specific questions about the approach to measuring whether siblings are placed together. He referred to the data notes provided with this measure, and argued that the approach was too narrow. Lee Doran explained that the measure looks at siblings removed within one week of each other and examines the first placement. Jess McDonald agreed with Bill that this could leave out whether siblings remain in the same placement, and suggested a point-in-time look at this issue. Steve Hassett commented that the measurement approach had been agreed to with the Panel some time ago. John Landsverk noted that he was not eager to revisit measurement approaches in areas that had been agreed to, but stated that the Panel would consider comments from the parties. Bill Grimm stated that a broader principle should be that the language of the outcomes and the way in which they are measured are consistent, so that exactly what the data are measuring is clear to anyone reading the outcome language.

Use of regional data

John Landsverk explained that the Panel's revised document includes an approach to regional use of data in determining compliance that was informed by the comments submitted by the parties several months ago. The Panel will make a single statewide determination of compliance, but regional data will be factored into this decision. In most areas, this approach requires that for a given outcome to be achieved, performance at the statewide level would need to meet or exceed the benchmark, and that no region could be more than 10 percentage points behind. In some areas, it is necessary to modify this approach. These exceptions are explained in the draft documents.

Use of data by race/ ethnicity

Dorothy Roberts explained that the original Implementation Plan requested data broken down by race and ethnicity in only a handful of areas. In the revised document, the Panel is requiring data in all areas. For the time being, these data will be treated as informational. Once data are received, the Panel will review and consider setting benchmarks for compliance in areas in which there are concerns about disproportionality.

Casey Trupin stated that plaintiffs had discussed this issue with stakeholders. Stakeholders expressed support for the request for racial/ ethnic data for all outcomes, but confusion related to why the areas in which benchmarks had been set were being removed. Dorothy replied that the new approach was more comprehensive and consistent and would allow the Panel to establish expectations for improvements by race and ethnicity in areas in which data indicated disparate outcomes exist, rather than highlighting a small number of outcomes before having received data. John Landsverk added that this approach would also allow the Panel to develop

expectations in strategic areas, such as access to mental health care, that might lead to improvements in a number of other areas.

Deborah Purce noted that the Department had provided a report showing data breakdowns by racial and ethnic groups for the placement stability outcomes. The Department requested Panel feedback regarding the format and approach.

Jan asked how the Panel's data related to race and ethnicity might be used to inform the committee on disproportionality that Cheryl Stephani had mentioned earlier. Deborah Purce agreed that these processes were related, and suggested that the disproportionality committee's work could also inform the Braam process.

Laurie Lippold asked Dorothy what she saw as being lost in this change. Dorothy indicated that this would provide more comprehensive data and give the Panel a basis for creating benchmarks in specific problem areas. Jim Theofelis indicated that he supported a more comprehensive approach, and he referred to the King County disproportionality committee, which had found disproportionality at every juncture in the child welfare decision making process. Jess noted that disproportionality is a complicated issue that requires child welfare agencies to look at all aspects of resource allocation.

Steve Hasset noted that there may be some areas in which data by race/ ethnicity would not be available. Cheryl Stephani stated that as long as the data come from CA, these breakdowns would be possible, but that they may have to investigate availability of racial and ethnic data when the data are coming from other agencies.

Informational measures

John Landsverk noted that the Panel had shifted a number of outcomes from compliance measures to informational measures. In these areas, the Panel will still require annual submission of data, but will not set benchmarks and will not make a determination about compliance. As an example, John noted that the Panel had converted the outcome related to foster parent retention into an informational measure. The Panel considers this measure to be redundant, because the measure assessing the ratio of licensed foster care beds to children will require the Department to address both recruitment and retention.

John also noted that additional changes might be possible; for example, it may be possible to consolidate some related outcomes, such as the measures examining the number of prohibited placements (in adult mental health facilities and in DSHS offices, apartments, and hotels).

Bill Grimm expressed support for the general principle of eliminating redundancy and consolidating closely related outcomes, but disagreed with the Panel's proposal to convert the measure related to foster parent retention to an informational measure. He indicated that he had observed that more experienced foster parents generally provide higher quality care.

Dorothy Roberts noted that the Panel would still examine data for informational measures and reserved the right to reinstitute benchmarks. John Landsverk noted that analysis presented by Lee Doran related to retention at an earlier Panel meeting had shown that retention rates had been remarkably consistent over time, suggesting that it might be very difficult to effect change in this area.

John referred to the measure related to the ratio of licensed foster care beds to children. He noted that the Panel had set an ultimate goal of a ratio of 2.0 to 1 for this measure, and that this was informed by data presented to the Governor showing that the current ratio was 1.6 to 1. In the recent data submitted to the Panel, this ratio was significantly higher than 2 to 1. Lee Doran explained that the approach used in the data presented to the Governor was problematic, because it had looked at all children in care during the course of a month and compared it to a month-end count of beds. The approach used in the recent Braam data represents an improved way of measuring this. It provides uses a consistent approach to counting foster care beds and children in foster care, by looking at a snapshot of these numbers at the end of the month, and then calculating an average for the year based on these monthly figures.

Laurie Lippold asked why the Panel had chosen to use beds, rather than homes. Foster parents may not be able to accept additional children to fill all licensed beds, depending on the types of children they are already serving. John stated that licensed beds reflected true capacity, and Jess noted that matching would be addressed in a separate measure. Laurie stated that these data suggested that there was not a real problem related to capacity, and that this was not consistent with reports from around the state. Jess stated that this is admittedly an imprecise measure of capacity, and it does not reflect availability of homes for different subpopulations.

Jan asked why youth in guardianships were included in the measure, and Lee stated that these were licensed beds. Bill Grimm asked why only youth in family foster care were included in the measure. John Landsverk commented that youth in relative care are not in need of a foster care bed, because they are already placed with a caregiver. Bill suggested that youth in residential and group care should be factored into this measure, because a family foster home setting should be available for all youth. John Landsverk disagreed, stating that if these children were counted, then the beds in these settings should also be counted. Steve Hassett stated that the data approach was consistent with the outcome language, and Deborah Purce noted that this measure had been discussed extensively at previous Panel meetings.

Jess asked whether CA licensing standards were consistent with COA standards. Tim Hunter replied that CA allows 6 children in a home (including biological children), while COA limits the number of children to 5. Lee Doran stated that the average number of licensed beds in foster home is approximately 2.3.

Timeframes to reflect data availability

Carrie Whitaker explained that the Implementation Plan had been revised to be consistent with approved compliance plans regarding the provision of data. Therefore, if the Panel has approved a compliance plan under which data will be provided beginning in FY09, the Implementation Plan now indicates that an approved data compliance plan is in place for the earlier fiscal years, and then sets forth benchmarks beginning in FY09.

Runaways

John noted that the Panel had not yet completed its work in the services to adolescents section of the document and had not yet provided the parties with a draft. He updated the group on the Panel's intentions for approaching outcomes related to runaways, which would reduce the number of outcomes from 5 to 2, and require an additional informational report. Jess noted that

the Panel had proposed 2% as the ultimate benchmark for the percentage of children who experience runaway events during a fiscal year. Steve commented that there should be data on this issue from other states. Jess replied that in Illinois, approximately 1% of children were on runaway status at any given time. He noted that Washington may face some additional challenges related to runaways, including unique issues related to the tribal systems. Bill Grimm suggested that data for this measure be limited to older youth, to provide a clearer indication of the proportion of adolescents who have run from care. Lee Doran noted that data for this measure are based on a broad definition of runaway, and therefore includes youth who have violated curfew.

Educational outcomes

John stated that the Panel had reviewed the outcome related to school enrollment within 3 days of placement, and wondered whether this timeframe was too ambitious. Casey referenced the federal McKinney Vento provisions related to education for homeless youth and those awaiting foster care, which call for enrollment *without delay*. Although many states have not translated this into a specific time period, several states have interpreted this to mean 2 days. Ross Dawson indicated that current CA policy is consistent with the 3 day requirement. Dorothy Roberts stated that the Panel's expectation should not be less than the current policy.

John noted that there are three educational outcomes for which there are several potential sources of data, but it is not clear which will be the most comprehensive or reliable: children at age-appropriate grade level, high school graduation rates, and GED completion rates. Potential data sources include administrative CA/ OSPI data, the adolescent survey, and a study being conducted by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy. He also noted that child welfare research reveals that most children are significantly behind their peers with respect to educational status when they enter foster care, and that the Panel wants to be mindful of this issue in establishing outcomes and benchmarks. Steve suggested that the Panel outline key issues and questions for the parties to address in their comments on the revised version of the services to adolescents section of the Implementation Plan.

Timeframe for revision of the Implementation Plan

The Panel and parties agreed that the parties would submit comments on the revised Implementation Plan by Friday, January 11. John Landsverk noted that the Panel intends to finalize this document in time for its next Monitoring Report.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

Tuesday, December 11

Panel Members: John Landsverk (Chair), Jan McCarthy, Jess McDonald, Dorothy Roberts

Panel staff: Carrie Whitaker

Plaintiffs' Attorneys: Casey Trupin, Bryn Martyna, Bill Grimm, Erin Shea

Assistant Attorney General: Steve Hassett

DSHS Staff: Cheryl Stephani, Ross Dawson, Deborah Purce, Lee Doran, Jody Carpenter, Steve Wickmark, Tim Hunter, Robin McIlvaine, Barb Putnam, Brenda Villareal, Marjorie Fitzgerald, Sophia Kouidou-Giles

Others: Laurie Lippold, Jim Theofelis, Ron Murphy, Alisa Moore, Jennifer Strus, Traci Russell, Robert Nelson, Shannon Dorsey, John Tarnai

The meeting was called to order at 9:10am.

Monthly Visits

Issue: The Panel continues to view the Department as out of compliance with action steps related to caseload size, monthly visits, and visits to children within the first week of placement. The Panel has also expressed concern that administrative data related to monthly visits for all children in the class are not available. The group discussed related data provided by the Department.

John Landsverk indicated that the Panel did not intend to use the recent "eyes on the child" data for compliance or monitoring purposes. The Panel appreciated receiving these data and had a few questions.

John noted that the Panel expected that actual monthly visit data would look at health and safety visits, while the recent data included a number of different types of contacts with children. Cheryl Stephani replied that the Department is in agreement, and that the "eyes on the child" data was provided based on a Panel request for data giving some indication of the frequency of contacts, even if these contacts do not meet the policy definition of a health and safety visit. She noted that the monthly visit policy was being rolled out over time to certain populations of youth in care, and that the first group to whom the policy applies is children under age 6 with unlicensed caregivers.

Jess questioned why the policy is being rolled out in this way, rather than having staff visit all youth in placement on a monthly basis. He noted that this expectation should already be in place in offices that have gone through Council on Accreditation site visits. Cheryl Stephani noted that the Department had previously detailed the roll-out plan for the policy and discussed this with the Panel. Jess expressed frustration with this approach.

John Landsverk noted that it appeared as if the Panel would need to rely on foster parent survey data for at least one additional year. He asked CA to outline in detail when comprehensive administrative data regarding monthly visits would be available.

Casey Trupin expressed concerns about the 'eyes on the child' data. He stated that looking at contact every 40 days, rather than every 30 days, was meaningless. Based on the policy requirement for a visit every month with no more than 40 days in between visits, he noted that there should actually be two visits in each 40 day period. Casey stated that the Department's portrayal of these data in a recent press release as 'monthly visit' data was misleading. Cheryl disagreed, and stated that she had been very clear in the media release and in speaking with press that these data simply represent whether children were seen by a social worker in any way at all during a 40 day period. Steve Hassett stated that the Department is clear that these visits do not meet the policy definition and are not to be considered health and safety visits.

John Landsverk reiterated that the Panel had never viewed the 'eyes on the child' data as being suitable for monitoring. Jess indicated that if the 40 day provision in the policy was confusing, he would support removing it, and requiring visits every 30 days. John disagreed, noting that the Panel had approved the policy approach, and that the real issue is the lack of availability of administrative data. Jan McCarthy agreed that the allowance of 40 days between visits is necessary and should be retained in the policy.

John Landsverk reiterated the request that CA provide information detailing when appropriate, comprehensive administrative data would be available.

CHET definitions

Issue: After discussion at the Panel's September meeting of a CA policy change regarding when a CHET screening is considered complete, CA had submitted additional materials related to the history of the statute and related policy.

John Landsverk explained that CA had recently submitted materials to the Panel outlining the evolution of CHET policy over time. He indicated that the Panel had discussed the materials. In order for a CHET to be complete, the Panel believed that there may be a need for some flexibility related to completion of the EPSDT and receipt of educational records, such that documented attempts may be sufficient for the CHET screening process. However, the Panel felt that all screening in the remaining areas (emotional/ behavioral, connections, and developmental) should be completed (not just attempted) before the CHET screen is to be considered complete.

CA agreed that this would be a workable approach. However, plaintiffs expressed significant concerns. Bill Grimm indicated that if the CHET is to be called complete, then all elements should be actually completed. He encouraged the Panel to focus on the needs of child, and he stated that a policy change such as this would imply that merely attempting to obtain this information is sufficient. Bill stated that this is an unsatisfactory position for the Panel to take, and is misleading to stakeholders, who are likely to assume that if the Panel has called a CHET complete, it means that all elements are in fact complete. He noted that the problem of receiving educational records is an age-old issue, and that if the Panel accepts CA's proposal that an attempt to obtain educational records is sufficient for the CHET screening process, then the Panel is doing nothing to address this unacceptable situation.

Jan McCarthy agreed that the Panel could lose sight of the problem related to communication between school districts and CA if it does not maintain pressure to receive educational records in a timely fashion as part of the CHET screening process. Jess McDonald agreed with Bill's

suggestion that DSHS, as party to Braam, should have at least some leverage over the Medicaid health system, and therefore should work to address issues related to EPSDT completion.

Jody Carpenter noted that CHET screeners may obtain health and educational information from sources other than the official records, such as parents, teachers, or collaterals. Bill Grimm stated that this type of information should not be considered sufficient, and that CA should be expected to obtain official educational and medical records for children in placement.

Steve stated that the materials submitted to the Panel had highlighted that the statute does not specifically define a complete CHET screen, such that it is within the Department's discretion to set policy in this area.

John Landsverk indicated that the Panel would need to have further discussion of this issue. He noted that it would be important to discuss this with Panel member Jeanine Long, who sponsored the original legislation requiring screening at the time of placement.

Foster Parent Survey

Issue: An update was provided on the foster parent survey, including follow up on several items related to the 2007 survey, as well as planning for the 2008 survey.

Steve Hassett noted that foster parent survey results presented by John Tarnai in September 2007 had indicated that interviewers were unable to contact approximately 1,000 foster parents. He provided an update on the Department's examination of this issue. He noted that some of these homes were no longer actively caring for children at the time the contact information was drawn from CA's data system, but were still included in the data file provided to WSU because of the Panel's desire to speak with both current and former foster parents. In addition, he noted that there was an approximately 6 month gap between the time that the phone numbers were drawn and when survey calls actually began. During this time, phone numbers could have changed.

Steve noted that approximately 600 of the 1000 caregivers were no longer caring for children at the time the data were drawn and sent to WSU. Of those remaining, a number of additional homes had been closed between when the data were drawn and when calling began. In addition, CA found a number of homes where social workers had updated contact information in the case file, but it had not been entered into CAMIS. In some cases, CA found that phone numbers did actually work, which may have represented dialing errors at the time of calling.

Jess McDonald noted that this issue also relates to the discussion of availability of foster care beds. If a large number of homes cannot be contacted, then they are not usable resources for a child in need of placement. He also referenced results from the separate unlicensed relative caregiver survey, which indicated that several hundred surveys were returned as undeliverable, suggesting inaccurate or outdated contact info.

John Landsverk asked the Department to submit the details of their analysis in writing, along with strategies for addressing this issue in the future.

With respect to the 2008 survey, Steve Hassett indicated that CA would like to re-convene the workgroup to discuss some clarifications. In particular, he suggested that questions related to

sexually aggressive youth (SAY) and physically assaultive youth (PAY) might need to be revised. John Landsverk also suggested that questions related to sibling contact may need to be edited, and he agreed with the idea of having the workgroup discuss these and other issues.

John Landsverk noted that the Department had been discussing the possibility of administering a shorter survey focusing on the areas in which Braam outcome data are needed in 2008, and then returning to the full-length version in 2009. He noted that he would support an approach of alternating years between a long and shorter version of the survey. Cheryl stated that with a survey of this magnitude, it does take time to develop and implement strategies in response to the findings. Casey Trupin expressed some reservations about this approach. He suggested that the workgroup reconvene to discuss general revisions and clarifications, and then discuss the edited version to determine whether a shortened version is necessary.

John Landsverk agreed that these issues should be discussed by the workgroup. Jan McCarthy stated that the group should make sure that foster parents continue to be involved in foster parent survey development efforts.

Adolescent Survey

Issue: An update was provided on the adolescent survey, which will be used to gather data related to independent living services for Braam monitoring purposes.

John Landsverk noted that the Panel had received a document outlining the methodology and plan for the adolescent survey, as well as a draft of the survey instrument. Ross Dawson noted that a group involving youth, plaintiffs, Panel staff and CA had been involved in this process.

John Tarnai, Washington State University, is contracting with CA to develop and administer the survey. John Tarnai provided an update on this process, indicating that the draft questionnaire is a 15-20 minute survey addressing issues related to placement, school, runaway experiences, significant relationships with adults, siblings, relationships with social workers, court processes, service availability, and aging out issues. The survey will include youth age 15-18. There are approximately 3300 of these youth in placement, and WSU will seek to conduct 600 completed interviews, plus an oversample of 200 youth age 17. The survey will be pre-tested with a focus group, and WSU will also gather qualitative data through the focus group process. Youth will receive a letter in advance of the survey, and there will be several drawings for \$50 prizes to encourage participation. John indicated that survey calling would take place in February and March, with the goal of a final report in April 2008.

John Landsverk clarified that youth in residential care, group homes, or hospital settings would be included, and Ross agreed that they would be. Traci Russell asked whether there would be an identifier for youth served by private agencies, and Ross confirmed that this would be done.

Dorothy Roberts asked about the role of foster parents in the process, and John Tarnai asked whether they should receive an advance letter in addition to the letter being sent to youth. John Landsverk asked how the Institutional Review Board (IRB) would see this issue. Ross indicated that CA had taken the position that they are the legal parent for these youth and can therefore consent to the survey. He suggested that foster parents should be notified and encouraged to allow the youth to participate, but that foster parent consent should not be required.

Jan McCarthy asked how interviewers would be expected to handle situations in which a child reveals an allegation of abuse or neglect. Steve Hassett recalled that this had been discussed in relation to the foster parent survey, and it had been agreed that WSU interviewers should be considered mandated reporters. He suggested that the introductory statements at the start of the survey should more clearly state that interviewers are obligated to report such allegations, even in the context of a confidential survey.

Jim Theofelis thanked the group involved in developing the survey for their work. He agreed that foster parents should be notified of the survey as a courtesy. He suggested that a crisis response or counseling resource should be made available so that interviewers can refer youth as needed. He suggested that a question be added related to sexual orientation.

Casey Trupin asked whether youth in JRA or detention would be included, and Ross stated that they would be. Steve pointed out that these youth would be difficult to contact.

John Landsverk suggested that the small group working on the survey be reconvened to discuss mandated reporting issues, the role of foster parents, some additional specific questions on the survey instrument from the Panel, and decision rules for Braam outcomes.

Implementation Plan revisions—public comment

John Landsverk asked the parties for their opinions on how to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to comment on proposed changes to the Implementation Plan, and asked whether they recalled whether the original version of the plan had been embargoed. Casey Trupin replied that there was no reason to embargo, and that the documents should be posted on the Panel website with an invitation for stakeholder comment. He stated that it should not be assumed that all stakeholders' opinions can be represented by the plaintiffs. Steve Hassett agreed that an embargo is not needed. He supported the suggestion of posting the documents on the Panel website, along with clear indication that the documents remain in draft form.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45am.