**Policy Impact Committee Recommendations**

**Background:**

The Policy Impact Committee met in Tallahassee on December 5, 2016 to develop a cohesive, workable set of guidelines to evaluate positions that the Cabinet is asked to take or issues that we want to support. The Committee had asked the State Multiagency Team, made up of staff of all agencies on the Cabinet, to provide an analysis of the Cabinet’s current headline indicators in light of the data trends they had compiled. The State Multiagency Team was asked to make recommendations to the Policy Impact Committee. As a result of our meeting the Policy Impact Committee makes the following recommendations to the Florida Children and Youth Cabinet.

**Recommendations:**

**Recommendation #1.** **We recommend that the Cabinet use the annual Florida KIDS COUNT data to illustrate “the state of the state” of Florida’s children and youth, and that the Cabinet convene a special day-long meeting each year to review and analyze the KIDS COUNT data upon its release.**

Discussion:

* The Annie E. Casey Foundation’s KIDS COUNT is produced annually and collects information on various indicators pertaining to the health and wellbeing of children. This report is captured for each state and offers the ability for Florida’s performance to be measured compared to the nation.
* The indicators presented in KIDS COUNT align with the four current focus areas of the Children and Youth Cabinet as well as the 13 indicators that have been previously adopted by the original Cabinet. The Florida KIDS COUNT data is compiled for the Annie E. Casey Foundation by the University of South Florida.
* We are recommending the adoption of this report because it is a comprehensive set of indicators that is inclusive of the scope from prenatal to transition to adulthood, which is our charge under the Florida statute.
* During the proposed annual KIDS COUNT data meeting, Cabinet would review where we are now, where we need to go and how do we get there, adjust our priorities as needed, and define the top three initiatives that we want to accomplish each fiscal year.

**Recommendation #2. We recommend nine priority indicators for the 2017 legislative year; four of the priorities stem from the Cabinet’s support of the First 1,000 Days initiative:**

1. **Percentage of low birthweight babies born in Florida;**
2. **Percentage of eligible children, under four years of age, not in school readiness or Early Head Start.**
3. **Percentage of children, under four years of age, living at or below 20% of the federal poverty level.**
4. **Percentage of infants and toddlers without health insurance**
5. **Children who are under 12 at first arrest.**
6. **Percent of victims of verified maltreatment who were not subjects of subsequent reports with verified maltreatment within 6 months (related to children removed from homes and returned or who remain in foster care).**
7. **Percent of children that are reading on grade level by fourth grade.**
8. **Percent of children with developmental disabilities placed in out of home placements.**
9. **Number of preventable child deaths that occur.**

*Note: The Policy Impact Committee also considered a priority indicator regarding young adults who “age out” of the foster care system with a permanent relationship with a caring adult. However, it was determined that the Cabinet would not have adequate data for measuring this indicator.*

**Recommendation #3. We recommend that the following activities be implemented in an effort to monitor the nine priority indicators:**

1. **Add a data dashboard to the Cabinet website.**
2. **Regularly update the website with information about the priority indicators.**
3. **Consider additional communication tools like Facebook, Twitter, etc.**
4. **Start each Cabinet meeting with a review of the current data and/or updates on each adopted priority indicators.**
5. **Limit Cabinet agenda items to adopted priority indicators.**
6. **Use the adopted priority indicators as a lens through which to review legislative bills.**
7. **Support bills that promote the adopted priority indicators.**
8. **Have each agency director report on how his or her agency is contributing to turning of the curve on the adopted priority indicators.**
9. **Put the focus areas and adopted indicators on the website so that interested groups will know our priorities each year.**

**Recommendation #4. Following an assessment of current cabinet workgroups/committees identified on the Cabinet’s website, we recommend that the workgroups sunset as they have completed their tasks or become an operational component where work continues OR be incorporated into a committee as voted on and approved by the Cabinet in October 2015.**

Discussion:

* Bullying Prevention- is an operational activity to be integrated into the Communication Committee
* Budget and Resource- integrated into a standing committee
* Children and Youth Collaboration- integrated into both Communications and Best Practices Committees
* Communications- integrated into a standing committee
* Crossover- integrated into both Communications and Best Practices Committees
* Early Learning- task has been completed through the implementation of the Help Me Grow resource
* Legislative Affairs- integrated into the Policy Impact Committee
* Multisystems Children and Youth- is an operational activity to be integrated into the Communications Committee
* Prevention Investment- is an operational activity to be integrated into the Communications Committee
* Suicide Prevention Taskforce- integrated into the Best Practices Committee

The Cabinet should work with the Executive Director to implement the following standing committees, approved in October of 2015, that support the efforts of the Cabinet moving forward.

* **Policy Impact Committee**: This committee will assess legislative proposals for the priorities identified by the Cabinet. **Current Chair is Sandy Karlan**
* **The Budget and Resource Committee**: This committee will identify funding streams and resources to support children’s services throughout the state. This includes the charge under the statute to develop a Children’s Budget. **Current Chair is Secretary Mike Carroll**
* **Communication:** This committee will articulate the actions that the committees, agencies and Cabinet are working together on, as well as sharing updates on new programs, public awareness initiatives, areas of concern and barriers experienced. **Current Chair is Zackary Gibson**
* **Best Practices and Delivery of Service**: This committee will seek out and identify the best practices provided by all state agencies and community care organizations, both for profit and non-profit. **Current Chair is TBD**
* **Technology Committee**: This committee serves as a venue for finding better ways to share information across agencies. **Current Chair is Victoria Zepp**

Committee chairs should be appointed for those that do not yet have a chair and the committee chairs should participate in the Cabinet meetings. Otherwise, chairs should designate a member of that committee to provide updates at each Cabinet meeting.

**Recommendation #5. We recommend the creation of an advisory/liaison board**:

Discussion:

* This was previously approved by the full Cabinet in the adoption of the framework and next steps document.
* This would include key community groups or organizations in our state whose work is directly related to the work of the Children and Youth Cabinet (for example, Children’s Services Councils, University educators, professional associations, etc.)

**Recommendation #6. We recommend hiring a fulltime executive director** **to advance all aspects of the Cabinet, to include operational administration, community outreach, and coordination amongst cabinet entities. We recommend the following funding option:**

1. The Cabinet proposes a budget request to the Governor to fund a full time Executive Director position. The position is to be under the Executive Office of the Governor and funded at $100,000 nonrecurring. Representative Gayle Harrell is to file the budget request.
   1. The task of maintaining the Cabinet website, social media and other organizational tasks will fall under the Executive Director’s duties.