

VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

September 18, 2018

1:00 p.m.

House Committee Room C
Ground Floor, Pocahontas Building

MEETING MINUTES

Attending:

Senators Barbara Favola, Chair; Dave Marsden
Delegates Richard “Dickie” Bell, Vice-Chair; Emily Brewer, Mark Keam, Chris Peace
Citizen members Avohom Carpenter, Deirdre “Dede” Goldsmith, Chris Rehak

Attending Electronically:

Delegates Jay Jones, Todd Pillion

Not Attending:

Senator Charles “Bill” Carrico

Commission on Youth Staff Attending:

Amy Atkinson, Will Egen, Christine Wilcox

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Senator Barbara A. Favola, Chair

Senator Favola welcomed Commission members and meeting participants and asked for introductions. Senator Favola then explained that two members of the Commission would be participating via telephone: Del. Jones due to demands from his law practice and Del. Pillion due to demands from his dental practice. Additionally, during the 2018 General Assembly Session, the General Assembly adopted legislation to allow members of the public to access legislative meetings remotely whenever a legislative Commission has one or more legislators participating remotely. Because of this change in law the Commission on Youth reviewed a proposed policy for remote participation and then voted to adopt the policy by unanimous consent.

II. Barriers to Obtaining a Driver’s License for Virginia’s Foster Youth

Amy M. Atkinson, Executive Director

Senator Favola then introduced Amy Atkinson to give a presentation on Barriers to Obtaining a Driver’s License for Virginia’s Foster Youth. Ms. Atkinson’s presentation touched on the study activities undertaken, the background of the topic, and the specific issues of safety, normalcy, and transition to adulthood. In addition, Ms. Atkinson discussed the specific barriers to obtaining a driver’s license for foster care youth. In summary, these barriers include the cost of insurance, concerns about losing insurance by the foster parent, a driver’s license being inappropriate for the youth for any number of reasons, a lack of information amongst foster parents, and foster youth not being interested in getting a license. The presentation also discussed what actions are being undertaken in other states to address barriers.

Del. Chris Peace expressed his desire for staff to look at ways that all foster children could get access to and utilize a picture ID, which is needed to take the GED, and could be used for a variety of other reasons. Without objection from the Commission, staff agreed to look into this issue and craft a draft recommendation for public comment. Finally, Ms. Atkinson presented findings and draft recommendations on this study. The draft recommendations will be made available for public comment through Tuesday, November 6, 2018. The presentation and draft recommendations can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the September 18 meetings tab.

III. Review of the Standard of Proof to Determine a Founded Case of Child Abuse and Neglect

Will Egen, Senior Legal Policy Analyst

Senator Favola then introduced Will Egen and explained that this study originated in August of 2017 when Commission staff was requested to update the Commission in reference to an investigative report by NBC4 Washington about a teacher sexual misconduct case. At the September 2017 Commission on Youth meeting, the Commission heard a presentation from the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education on the child protective services (CPS) appeals process and teacher license review process. Commission on Youth staff worked with the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education to craft draft recommendations to be presented at the November 2017 Commission on Youth meeting. At the December 2017 meeting, the Commission adopted a number of recommendations to be presented before the 2018 General Assembly. The Commission also determined that further study was needed to review the standard of proof for a non-school personnel child protective services investigation vs. a conduct investigation involving a public school employee.

Mr. Egen reviewed the study mandate and study activities. He also thanked the Advisory Group for their hard work on this study. Mr. Egen explained the standard of proof in a CPS investigation for school employees vs. non school employees, defined a few key terms, discussed the standards of review in other states, and explained the exact process in Virginia that a CPS caseworker undertakes when investigating a child abuse and neglect claim against a teacher. Commission members inquired about the reporting requirements to law enforcement and to the Commonwealth's Attorney. Commissioner Chris Rehak shared his experience learning about alleged cases of child abuse and neglect as a Commonwealth's Attorney.

Mr. Egen then presented a number of findings and draft recommendations on this study. The draft recommendations will be made available for public comment through Tuesday, November 6, 2018. The presentation and draft recommendations can be accessed on the Commission's webpage under the September 18 meetings tab.

IV. Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs

Amy M. Atkinson

Ms. Atkinson gave a presentation on the *Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs*. She gave an update on

the publication of the 6th Edition of the *Collection* (2017 update) as Senate Document No. 6 in December 2017, as well as an update on the work over the past year to disseminate the *Collection*. Ms. Atkinson stated that the 6th Edition has incorporated information from the revised *Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, 2013 (DSM-5)* and follows its new organizational structure. Finally, Ms. Atkinson informed the Commission that the *Collection* won the 2018 National Conference of State Legislatures Notable Document Award in the category of Youth Policy.

Sen. Favola asked about how agencies and departments in the Commonwealth are using the best practices emphasized in the *Collection*. Ms. Atkinson stated that this document has been well received by other agencies. Carl Ayers, Director of Division of Family Services of the Department of Social Services, came to the podium and briefly described how the new federal law, *Families First*, links a pool of funding (Title IV-E) to the use of best practices in treatments.

V. Adjourn

The Commission on Youth meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m. The next meeting will be on November 20 at 1 p.m. in the House Committee room.