



VIRGINIA COMMISSION ON YOUTH

Meeting Minutes

Commission Meeting

May 21, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

General Assembly Building, Senate Committee Room B

Attending:

Senators: Barbara Favola (Chair) and David Suetterlein;

Delegates: Carrie Coyner (Vice-chair), Josh Cole, Holly Seibold, Irene Shin, Anne Ferrell
Tata

Citizen Members: Avi Hopkins, Chris Rehak

Not Attending:

Delegates: Karrie Delaney

Citizen Member: Jessica Jones-Healey

Attending Virtually:

Senator: Dave Marsden

Staff Attending:

Amy Atkinson, Will Egen

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Senator Barbara A. Favola, Chair

Senator Barbara Favola welcomed the Commission members, presenters, and attendees to her first 2024 Commission meeting. Commission members introduced themselves.

Senator Favola introduced the summer law interns: Rebekah Carico, rising third year law student at the University of Richmond, and Shannon Callaghan, rising third year law student at William and Mary.

II. Approval of Commission on Youth 2024 Study Plans

Amy M. Atkinson, Executive Director

Amy Atkinson reviewed the Commission on Youth's 2024 General Assembly accomplishments.

Next, Ms. Atkinson explained the three 2024 studies and requested consideration and approval from Commission members to complete the studies during the current year. The studies included the following:

- Review of Virginia's Special Education Dispute Resolution System
- The Use and Impact of Relief of Custody on Care and Support of Youth
- *Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs*

Following the presentation, Senator Favola asked for further discussion about the study plans. Delegate Coyner moved to adopt the study plans as written and Delegate Cole seconded the motion. Members voted unanimously to adopt the three Study Plans as presented.

III. FAPT Confidentiality Review Update

Scott Reiner, Executive Director, Office of Children's Services

Senator Favola introduced Scott Reiner, Executive Director of the Office of Children's Services. Mr. Reiner gave a brief background on the number of children the Children's Services Act (CSA) serves and the upcoming biennial budget. Next Mr. Reiner reviewed the training and conference events OCS holds yearly.

Finally, Mr. Reiner gave a Family Assessment and Planning Team (FAPT) confidentiality update. The State Executive Council (SEC), the supervisory body responsible for the establishment of programmatic and fiscal policies that support the purposes of the CSA, received a letter in December 2023, copied to the Office of the Attorney General, asking for a response addressing the scope and nature of the confidentiality of information presented before FAPT meetings. The request letter was presented at the SEC's March 2024 meeting. Mr. Reiner explained that the SEC would be meeting in June 2024 and will at that time receive information from counsel and discuss the topic to provide a response to the Commission on Youth. Mr. Reiner said he would keep the Commission updated.

IV. Little Hands- Virginia's Low-Income Safety Seat Program

Taylor Keeney, Founder & Executive Director Little Hands Virginia

Senator Favola introduced Taylor Keeney, Founder and Executive Director of Little Hands Virginia, to provide an overview of the Little Hands organization. Ms. Keeney described Little Hands of Virginia as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that serves families with children from 0-3 years old in the wider Richmond region. Little Hands of Virginia provides essentials that the children need to survive and thrive, such as diapers, food, milk, shelter, clothes.

Little Hands serves as a diaper bank for the Richmond region with 70+ partners (local departments of social services, hospitals, schools, prisoner re-entry programs, non-profits, etc.).

Additionally, Little Hands operates an individual request program with their partners, serving 200 children monthly. They provide whatever the family needs, as well as positive interaction with the families to help keep the families together and thriving. Little Hands works closely with Social Services to help fulfill items needed by the family, which in turn helps keep the family together.

Little Hands works with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to operate a low-income safety car seat program. Little Hands would like to work with the State to find ways to increase access to this program.

Following Ms. Keeney's presentation Commission members asked questions about funding and what barriers exist.

V. Adjourn

Senator David Suetterlein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.