**MINUTES**

**CA HOPE for Children Trust Account Program**

**901 P Street, Room 102**

**Sacramento, California 95814**

**May 01, 2023 – 1:30 PM**

Public Participation

Call-In Number: (888) 557-8511and Participant Code: 5651115

**OPEN SESSION**

Treasurer Fiona Ma, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

Kasey O’Connor gave instructions for those joining on the phone and online.

Connie Chan called the roll.

**Item #1 Roll Call**

Present:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fiona Ma, Treasurer | Shimica Gaskins | Kasey O’Connor | Ted Ballmer |
| Connie Chan | Diana Yang | Jordan Sosa | Alexandria Downing |
| Margaret Libby | Erick Tenorio | Nicole Hisatomi | Patrice Berry |
| Yesenia Jimenez | Cathy Senderling | Sunni Dominguez | Dianna Heimstadt |
| Sara Kimberlin | Alissa Anderson | Christa Brown | Rita Medina |
| Cynthia Gomez | Vickie Mays | Darrick Hamilton | David Radcliffe |
| Naomi Zewde | Sara Flour | Madeline Brown | Shira Markoff |
| Nick Picinich | Salena Chow | Dana Moore | Cody Van Felden |

Chair Ma thanked everyone for coming and proceeded with introductory comments.

**Item #2 Welcome and Introductory Comments Information Item**

Chair Ma introduced the item and stated she has noticed that many people are interested in this program. The Chair expressed she is happy that everyone is participating in an active and productive way.

Chair Ma concluded her welcome and moved onto the next item.

**Item #3 Review of Agenda and Timeline Information Item**

Chair Ma introduced the item and turned it over to Executive Director Kasey O’Connor.

Executive Director O’Connor thanked the Treasurer.

Executive Director O’Connor introduced Andrea Luquetta, consultant for the Children Hope Trust Account Program to present the item.

Andrea Luquetta presented the following information:

* Two workgroups have already met: Data sharing and privacy, and Eligibility and Outreach
* May will begin the monthly meetings of the advisory group, who will send their recommendations to the Hope Governing Board as needed.
* The Governing Board will be meeting quarterly beginning at the end of May.
* The goal is to wrap up the writing of the implementation plan by October so that it can be put before the legislature by the February deadline.
* By November the final draft will be reviewed and submitted by the advisory workgroup for adoption by the Hope Board.
* January begins the presentation and socialization within the legislature.

Ms. Luquetta concluded her presentation and asked if anyone had any questions.

Chair Ma asked if they will be presenting to the Committee when they present to the legislature.

Ms. Luquetta responded that she does not know at this time and asked if Executive Director O’Connor knows.

Executive Director O’Connor responded that she will need to confirm but the legislation specifies a report to the legislature. She specified that by statute, it only needs to go to leadership in the budget offices that allocated the $100 million for the program, but she thinks it is a good idea to send it to all 120 members.

Ms. Luquetta thanked the Executive Director and asked if anyone else had any questions.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any public comments.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor moved on to the next agenda item.

 **Item #4 Eligibility & Outreach Information Item**

Ms. Luquetta continued with her presentation, presenting the following information:

* The statute gives a great definition of who is eligible but within the broader definition of children who have been in the foster system for 18 months and kids who have lost a parent to covid we identified that there are communities that may need additional outreach to help with enrollment.
* We should have community partnerships set up for outreach to reach children since we are reaching out to children who do not have a reliable primary caregiver. We want kids to get excited about it and tell each other and other children in the system.

Ms. Luquetta asked for any recommendations from the group by either listing them in the chat, speaking, or using the app to ask questions and give recommendations.

Ms. Luquetta received an online request to reach out to California Tribal Families Coalition and asked Executive Director O’Connor what efforts are currently underway for the tribal community.

Executive Director O’Connor stated that in January she reached out to the California Alliance for Tribal Communities and that they have had some turnover there. She has also reached out to some consultants that work for some tribal networks and they are in discussions but they haven’t been able to make headway yet. She added that if anyone has any of those connections to please pass them along.

Ms. Luquetta stated that she would like to get a group of about 10 youth, preferably teenagers, who are in foster care, state, and tribal, and maybe some who have lost parents to Covid to get them in as soon as possible. She said she is still trying to figure out how to pay them but the idea is that they would be paid $100 each time they meet and would be brought to meet about five times. They’ll be asked to weigh in on issues as youth because we are really a bunch of adults designing a program for youth and we definitely want to make sure that they have a say.

Ms. Luquetta recognized Jordan Sosa had their hand up.

Jordan Sosa of California Youth Connection (CYC) spoke and shared 3 points of concerns from CYC membership into the discussion in the example of the CHAFEE cash cards foster youth were eligible to receive as part of the nationwide COVID-19 pandemic relief package: 1) foster youth’s confusion in where to enroll for eligibility determination: the eligibility system or database should be ironed out to effectively support verification for eligibility and also provide legitimacy in application for verification so youth do not have to be suspicious of information being stolen, 2) some foster youth individuals who were confirmed as eligible to receive CHAFEE cash cards experienced no funds available in their cash cards and could not reach anyone helpful to answer why this was the case which suggests a lack of infrastructure for support, and finally 3) for those individuals who didn’t use their cash card immediately or instead had set it aside as a rainy day fund to be accessed at a later time, they experienced fees being applied to them when they did decide to take money out of those cards.

Ms. Luquetta acknowledged the points shared by Mr. Sosa and said the design of eligibility would keep those points in mind.

Ms. Luquetta recognized Cody Vanfelden and Valerie Earley had their hands up.

Executive Director O’Connor expressed a quick thank you to Mr. Jordan Sosa and acknowledged the importance of his comments. She added that there have been some articles lately circulating on the web of monies not in children’s names yet because of their minor status and folks looking out for them end up taking those monies due to this fact. Discussion in place has been aiming to be thoughtful about getting this directly to youths and children as well making sure processes are working an in place. Furthermore, on the accessibility issues, some are getting those funds and some are not for tribal communities and other communities involved. The comment that Mr. Sosa made are important and will be noted.

Executive Director O’Connor then turned over discussion to Cody Vanfeldan.

Cody Vanfelden asked a question on if there has been a criteria established for what it means to be “in” and “out” of foster care since she knew there are a lot of youth that can return to biological parents, biological family members, or be adopted after long term foster care. Has there been any in depth criteria established around that specific area yet?

Ms. Luquetta answered that there has not and those decisions will have to be made within the Eligibility and Outreach Workgroup. While there are a lot of decisions that need to be made within this workgroup, that particular definition and point which Ms. Vanfeldan has brought up, has not been established yet.

Ms. Luquetta stated the Statute does not say youth must be in the foster care system for 18 *consecutive* months, and expressed that the Statute is very specific in that it indicates eligibility should be maximized and therefore, will be leaning on the side of maximizing eligibility if there ever was a question about narrowing eligibility. Additionally, another point to consider on top of the definition of *who is eligible to have a trust account?* is also *what will the age criteria be for distribution?* since that has also not been spelled out in the Statute. She threw out an age range for the Workgroup to consider: ages 18 through 25, and prompted the Workgroup that they would need to determine that. To add further to this, she noted that the Statute does very much specify that HOPE work with youth who do not have Social Security or ITNs. All in all, the mechanism for identifying kids and keeping track of them overtime as their funds grow and ensure that we remain in touch with them are all important factors to consider and go over as well.

Ms. Cody Vanfeldan responded with a thank you.

Executive Director O’Connor asks Valerie Earley if she still had a question.

Valerie Earley answers and introduces herself (from the Department of Social Services or DSS) and states that she has a comment to make but wanted to first thank Mr. Jordan Sosa for his feedback on the issue with the cash cards for CHAFEE and the lessons that they learned through that experience because Ms. Luquetta mentioned that this Workgroup will be doing outreach out there as well. The lesson boiled down to that communication should be clear with and from all partners about who is doing what so that when youths have questions, they know who to go to and the information is clear across the board between vendors, facilitators, and administrators. Ultimately, these youths did experience miscommunication on where they needed to go to, to enroll and obtain their CHAFEE cash cards. Youths ended enrolling in Think Of Us’s overall information website rather than the CHAFEE cash card’s official website, which caused the confusion. In catching up to what was going on and fixing what happened, it will be important to communicate with partners moving forward about, say, the single location where enrollment is taking place or be on the same page where multiple enrollment is taking place. If they don’t come together, confusion will follow. Think Of Us outreached, but a different vendor was to handle issues regarding the actual CHAFEE cash card. Communicating clearly who does what should be something the Workgroup keeps in mind moving forward.

Ms. Luquetta thanked Ms. Earley and said that the discussion right now is exactly working towards infrastructure with organization charts and staffing and vendor roles in the works. A comment like this is really helpful and appreciated.

Ms. Luquetta recognized Antoinette Dozier had their hand up.

Ms. Antoinette Dozier stated her comment is about outreach and reiterated what her understanding of this Workgroup is looking at during this part of the discussion: Workgroup members are looking at foster youth and those who have lost a caregiver to COVID during the Federal Emergency (pandemic), and eligibility and payout from these trust funds for these youths could happen for some kids immediately as they qualify if they are foster youths who were 16 at the time and are now 18. But for others, it may be a few or many years down the road when they can withdraw from the accounts. She stated because of this, she believed it will be important to consider a continuous outreach and what that could look like so that the Workgroup can ensure all foster youths are able to be reached out to as much as possible versus just in a one time outreach. She suggested that there may be spaces and places that the Workgroup may want to identify to place information or notices such as through CalKIDS or one of the other State Treasurer’s Office’s savings programs, or information placed on medical health wire or other benefits fliers that people continually receive so that people are getting exposed to this information about this program continuously.

Ms. Luquetta affirmed this comment and stated that two ways are currently being looked at: ongoing outreach and ongoing support. Ms. Luquetta suggested an example and idea to consider: the website design for foster youths viewing their account and information will also have information that provide resources that will be useful and helpful to them. She emphasized that outreach will not be just a one-time event with community partnerships, but continuously ongoing and with ongoing support for enrollment with other ongoing community engagements and support such as financial education or other types of programs that benefits these youths.

Ms. Luquetta asked the Executive Director if anyone had any questions.

Chair Ma spoke and added that since the State Treasurer’s Office oversees the tax credits and bonds that build affordable housing , many of them have on site services for their residents, especially the young people, that could be something to add onto the notes as something to consider.

Ms. Luquetta responded and said that is a great idea and thanked Chair Ma for the suggestion.

Executive Director O’Connor then noted that the comments made have been really helpful and productive and thanked all the Workgroup members who spoke. She then put a reminder out that eventually outreach should be made more possible to do since there is a charge in the statute to eventually have this program belong not just to children orphaned by the pandemic or foster youth, but it will eventually open up to all children born in low-income households like some of the sister programs across the nation. At that point, this program will then be able to utilize similar data sharing agreements that CalKIDS has used with CDHP. Staff will work closely on the front end to make sure that all happens correctly and liability is where it should be. At a later time point, reaching low-income families will need to be discussed along with reaching those with no Social Security Numbers or ITNs as Ms. Luquetta mentioned. Talk of going into churches to see the youths of the youth groups, local foster care centers, after school programs as the Treasurer mentioned are all viable options. Ultimately, socializing the program will be key and that is why the work of this Workgroup is so instrumental and the outreaching methods will eventually expand and become larger as the program works its way to a larger pool of children to consider.

Executive Director O’Connor then checked to see whether anyone in the Workgroup had further questions or comments to make.

Yesenia Jimenez spoke. She thanked the Executive Director and Ms. Luquetta and said that she has shared this information with the Workgroup before about figuring out ways to assign tasks or workgroup members with assignments so that progress is made and members can report out for follow up meetings. Given Bagley Keene rules, how can workgroup members maximize collaboration to get assignments done?

Executive Director O’Connor responded that she will check in with Legal team about it but to reiterate, members of the Bagley Keene notice group—this Workgroup—three or more would be considered a quorum. Outside of these scheduled meetings potentially 2 workgroup memberships with one board member or just two workgroup members can break out. She stated that after checking in with Legal team, at the next sub workgroup meeting, perhaps sub workgroup folks can be given directives and break out to Ms. Jimenez. She reiterated that essentially, Bagley Keene notice group members would not be able to talk to anybody else in their sub workgroups about what has been discussed until another publicly posted meeting.

Ms. Jimenez responded in understanding and thanked Executive Director O’Connor.

Executive Director O’Connor checked again if there were anymore comments from the Workgroup members.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any public comments.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor moved on to the next agenda item.

**Item #5 Data and Sharing and Privacy Information Item**

Executive Director O’Connor introduced the next agenda item and stated that the Data and Sharing Privacy Sub Workgroup met the previous week and turned it over to Ms. Luquetta.

Ms. Luquetta thanked Executive Director O’Connor and began summarizing what the Data and Sharing Privacy Sub Workgroup discussed which was what kind of information was needed to set up the accounts. Basic information such as name, address, SSN, ITNs or other identifiers were starting points and an enrollment website would be created to ensure that information is captured and will automate enrollment on the front end for foster kids. Determining how to ensure the accuracy of those information as well as obtaining information for foster youths who don’t have identifiers and then keeping track of them are all points to still discuss. Other data points to consider in regarding those youths coming “in” and “out” of the foster care system, so “date of entry” and “date of exit” for example.

Ms. Luquetta made an aside and noted a Workgroup member, Cathy Senderling, who inputted in the Workgroup chat that she could help level up the information. Ms. Luquetta said will be happy to follow up with Ms. Senderling about it.

Ms. Luquetta continued that the information required will be vital records and where to obtain them, and what specific vital records information in addition to preferred language are all in consideration.

Ms. Luquetta moved on and stated that the Data and Sharing Privacy Workgroup identified possible data partners:

* California Health and Human Services Agency
* Department of Social Services, Healthcare Services, Public Health.
* Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)
* EVVE and EVVE FOD (death certificates information for determining caregiver deaths related to COVID 19 between the beginning and end dates of COVID)

Chair Ma made a comment about the EVVE/EVVE FOD and said she was thinking about what that was.

Ms. Luquetta prompted Dana Moore of California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to help explain a little bit more.

Dana Moore of CDPH answers and greets everyone and then proceeds to explain that the EVVE is the Electronic Verification of Vital Events for births, and the EVVE FOD is for facts of death information. It is ran by the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS), which is the national vital records organization and meant for external entities to very seamlessly validate information on. It is mostly used by Social Security and Homeland Security but is also encouraged to be used by external entities.

Executive Director O’Connor thanked Ms. Moore and praised her as well on the wealth of knowledge she provided to the sub workgroup meeting last week. Executive Director O’Connor went on to say that there are a lot of lessons that could be gleaned as well from working together with CalKIDS in getting data. She expressed a desire to remain sensitive to the information being used and that it will continue to be something to be worked through as well in the sub workgroup meeting.

Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any more questions, and noted there was one in the chat. She said the question was asking with whom does CalKIDS have data sharing agreement with?

Executive Director O’Connor answered it and said she believed they had one with CDPH. In regards to the HOPE program having the ability to do the same, it would need to be updated in the Statute for HOPE to have the ability.

Executive Director O’Connor then asked Ms. Moore if CalKIDS had any data sharing with other groups or is it just with CDPH?

Ms. Moore responded saying they have a data sharing agreement but it is incredibly complex. She stated that if, with CalKIDS, they could have a do over, she would recommend the EVVE system that is what she recommends as well for HOPE, considering the nature of what HOPE is doing. If anyone had any questions about the current agreement with CalKIDS, she is happy to take emails or calls offline.

Executive Director O’Connor thanked Ms. Moore and said that the complexities of that agreement may be something that HOPE might experience as well and those will need to be figured out as well. Errors of information and checks and balances for information accuracy are some potential complexities. Backstops and checks will be built in as well as account managers is the hope for when HOPE does go out to request for proposals on this front. Making sure that the Workgroup fills in its role by providing these details on investment policies, eligibility, etc. will help round out that proposal.

Ms. Luquetta checked in to see whether members of the Workgroup had anything to say regarding what Executive Director O’Connor stated.

Ms. Luquetta sees none.

Ms. Luquetta recognized that errors will be something that will be encountered so an appeals system may need to be in place.

Executive Director O’Connor affirmed that point.

Executive Director O’Connor checked again if there were anymore comments from the Workgroup members.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any public comments.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor moved on to the next agenda item.

**Item #6 Administrative Infrastructure and Timelines Information Item**

Executive Director O’Connor introduced the next agenda item and stated that Administrative Infrastructure and Timelines Sub Workgoup have been rescheduled from the past week to this following week and turned it over to Ms. Luquetta.

Ms. Luquetta stated that was the update on this particular Sub Workgroup and that there would be no review. However, an overview of this Sub Workgroup was gone over, and more specifically, covers how the Sub Workgroup figuring out who needs to be hired for what roles, what needs to be contracted for what, what kind of contracting process should be selected, what kind of RFP, etc. will be discussed. The Administrative Infrastructure and Timelines Sub Workgroup will have a birds eye view on the entire program and anyone interested in this kind of work in the Workgroup meeting not already assigned is welcomed to be a part of it.

Executive Director O’Connor then reiterated the Bagley Keene rules that those not already assigned to a sub workgroup but want to change are welcomed, given the Administrative Infrastructure and Timelines Sub Workgroup only has a few people in it at this time and its work is just as important as the other Sub Workgroups.

Ms. Luquetta then transitions and says that since this meeting has not taken place yet, if anyone in the Workgroup has recommendations to give on the Administrative Infrastructure and Timeline Subs Workgroup, this would be the time.

Ms. Luquetta noted she is not seeing any hands to speak.

Executive Director O’Connor checked again if there were anymore comments from the Workgroup members.

Executive Director O’Connor acknowledged Naomi Zewde.

Naomi Zewde thanked Executive Director O’Connor and stated that she wanted to go back to the comment heard earlier about how difficult it was to communicate with the different contracted entities. She said her comment is similar—concerns are echoed from members of medical and public service about the services provided by these different entities. These different private entities have different levels of efficiency and different levels of ability to be human and responsive. She suggested that perhaps this Sub Workgroup could keep this concern in mind and really consider the purpose of contracting out versus what can be done more efficiently through public employees under the umbrella of making this program run.

Ms. Luquetta acknowledged Ms. Zewde’s two points: levels of efficiency and human interaction and said she will touch base with Ms. Zewde offline to discuss more about them so that that could be something potentially written into the RFP. Ideas area welcomed and will be helpful.

Executive Director O’Connor then addresses Ms. Zewde and says if she wanted to be part of that Sub Workgroup, her input would be valuable to the Sub Workgroup.

Executive Director O’Connor then addresses Jordan Sosa who made the comment earlier about the CHAFEE cash card issues and says that he is welcomed to join as well.

Executive Director O’Connor acknowledged Jordan Sosa’s hand.

Jordan Sosa of California Youth Connection speaks again and thanks Executive Director O’Connor for the opportunity. He wanted to bring up one more thing and shared that CYC Members knew how critical the CHAFEE cash card resource was, and the limited time frame in which to obtain them, and could bring up the notes and colleagues who worked hand in hand with their Membership on awareness: a social media campaign called Funds for Youth. He noted that he could be a resource and will be happy to relay that to the Sub Workgroup.

Executive Director O’Connor noted that the Treasurer also brought up before partnering potentially with United Ways Foundation as well. Working with the United Way and severely affected communities can also ensure that they can be made aware of the benefits and everything foster youths could get. Executive Director O’Connor suggested that perhaps outreach will have to be in a similar location such as that.

Ms. Luquetta then acknowledged that if folks have already committed to a Sub Workgroup, they can reach out to her to pass on ideas outside of their sub working group.

Executive Director O’Connor added to Ms. Luquetta’s comment that other members of the other sub working groups are welcomed to call in as members of the public as well.

Executive Director O’Connor then recognized Joci Kelleher.

Joci Kelleher shared that her organization recently started using a ticketing system for customer service and it is helpful in tracking who is contacting their organization. That ticketing system is helps with tracking as well how long it takes to address their customers.

Executive Director O’Connor noted her comment as a helpful idea. She stated that in a future meeting, a representative from CalKIDS or other savings programs can help talk through what they have been working on and how they built their program and what lessons were learned around data policies for investment schools infrastructure. Potential experts that could be helpful to this program and part of this panel is welcomed. Ms. Luquetta would be able to put together that panel.

Executive Director O’Connor checked again if there were anymore comments from the Workgroup members.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any public comments.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor moved on to the next agenda item.

**Item #7 Proposed Meeting Schedule Information Item**

Ms. Luquetta thanks the Workgroup and their work in the sub workgroups and states that a monthly meeting would be ideal.

The group at large suggests the last Monday of every month will be held specifically for the Workgroup.

Executive Director O’Connor checked if there were comments from the Workgroup members.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor asked if there were any public comments.

Hearing none, Executive Director O’Connor moved on to the next agenda item.

**Item #8 General Public Comment Information Item**

Executive Director O’Connor thanks everyone again and turns the mic over to Chair Ma for closing comments and adjournment.

Chair Ma thanked everyone for their participation and continued commitment and passion to the issue. She then added that she is looking forward again to working with everyone again to keep helping the next generation succeed.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 PM.