# CWAC WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes – July 20, 2016

Attendance: Kim Peek – UMCH

Laura Angelucci – UCAN

Ruth Jajko – LSSI

Marge Berglind – CCAI

Chris Kelly – CYFS

Hope Carbonaro – Caritas

Monico Eskridge – DCFS

Carly Jones – Lawrence Hall (By Telephone)

Shaun Lane – Hephzibah Home (By Telephone)

Beverly Jones – LCFS and Co-Chair

Meeting opened with welcoming remarks and introductions.

Discussion ensued about the scope and approach of the Committee's work. Marge Berglind provided the group with background information, including the impact that the series of articles, published by the Chicago Tribune, has had and the current reimbursement rate structure under which agencies are operating. There are three (3) major issues:

1. Erosion of rates
2. Workforce – salary compensation and number of individuals who have interest in this work.
3. Unnecessary and cumbersome bureaucracy.

Discussion of the Department's strategic plan followed. It was noted that there are no references to workforce development in the plan. **The decision was made that as a Committee, we will provide feedback and comments to the Department regarding this critical omission.**

All expressed concern regarding the change in the Department of Labor regulation regarding employees who will be eligible for overtime, beginning December 1st.

The group expressed a number of questions regarding the immersion sites. Namely,

1. Who is in the immersion site?
2. Who is not included?
3. What does it mean to be a participant?
4. What is the impact?

All agreed that quality supervision is a key component to retention of personnel. Both Ruth (LSSI) and Monica (DCFS) shared their experiences with the supervisory practice model that was piloted. Both agreed that years of experience do not equate to performance and that overall, the roll-out was a positive experience.

The Committee members decided that initially, the worker and supervisory positions will be focus of our work together. As such, the Committee, in conjunction with the work of the Training Subcommittee of CWAC, proposed immediate changes to Foundations training. Below are the highlights:

1. Emphasis is learning and professional development, and not training.
2. Encourage and support self-directed learning and structured flexibility.
3. It is critical that newly hired caseworkers become a part of their Agency and supervisory team as well as to afford them opportunities to develop knowledge and skills in practice immediately. Specifically, the primary responsibility for training of staff will lie with the POS agency with clear expectations and standards delineated by the Department. The Department's provision of training will become those technical skills that are needed.

The Committee applauds the Department's efforts to move from a placement system to an intact family services system. However, an immediate review of the current compliance measures and rate structure needs to occur. For example, why are Agencies paid less once reunification occurs?

Other recommendations, that need further exploration and discussion, include establishment of centers of excellence through partnerships with universities and additional maximization of Title IV-E training dollars.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, AUGUST 23RD from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Call in number is: 866-628-8009; pass code: 6019144. Location: 150 N. Schuyler Avenue, Suite 200, Kankakee; 815-929-1970.**