

**EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN SERVICES
CONTRA COSTA COUNTY**

TO: Family and Human Services
Committee Members

DATE: Dec. 3, 2012

cc Theresa Speiker
David Twa

FROM: Valerie Earley, Director of Children & Family Services Bureau

SUBJECT: Child Welfare System Improvement Plan Update

Recommendation

Accept this presentation from the Employment and Human Services Department; and continue to support the Children and Family Services Bureau efforts on Child Welfare Redesign and implementing the System Improvement Plan required by the State's Child Welfare Performance Outcomes and Accountability Act.

Background

As the Committee may recall, Contra Costa Children & Family Services Bureau began a formal process in 2001 to "redesign" many of our Child Welfare practices with the goal of improving outcomes for children. The Federal government also passed the Adoptions and Safe Families Act which requires all states to address specific federal child safety, permanence and well-being outcomes in order to receive Federal Child Welfare funding. California passed the Child Welfare Performance Outcomes and Accountability Act which sets specific performance goals for all California counties, and requires self assessments, program audits, system improvement plans, and outcome measurement data collection and reporting.

In the latter half of 2009 and Spring of 2010 as Contra Costa was completing the Peer Quality Case Review and County Self Assessment, budgetary constraints continued to be a primary factor in the workplace environment. Recovery from severe staff cut-back and changes in procedures and organizational structure to address the reduced staff impacted bureau decisions and direction. Focus for performance was directed at a basic level: assuring safety of children, sustaining improvement in timely compliance of response for referrals and visits to children, and meeting court objectives and timelines. The disruption to service delivery was minimal only due to the dedication of staff. Those areas that had been targeted as best and innovative practice were put on temporary hold as staff learned new jobs and adjusted to the revised work structure. Measures selected for the Systems Improvement Plan included continued efforts to assure all children were seen each month, to improve the measure where we had the poorest performance in Permanence, and to not lose the forward momentum we had gained in addresses racial disparity and disproportionality.

Summary/Conclusion

The CFS Bureau continues to meet Federal and State performance improvement expectations and goals. We have been able to continue our Redesign efforts by utilizing funding from a

variety of sources: State Redesign Pilot grant, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, Federal Comprehensive Family Assessment Grant, and smaller grants from the Stuart Foundation and Hedge Funds Care.

With the Board's continuing support and the commitment of our CFS staff, we are confident that Contra Costa will lead Child Welfare System changes that will positively impact outcomes for children and families.