

Children and Youth Cabinet  
Interagency Agreement Committee



To: Committee Members on the Interagency Agreements

From: Sharon L. Read                      Jennifer Diaz  
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Re: Minutes from June 11, 2008 Telephone conference call

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Committee Persons present:

**Toni Crawford, Chair**

Dr. Judy Schaechter\*

John Hughes and Brittany Birken, representing the AWI

Michele Tallent, representing AHCA

\*Dr. Schaechter stated that David Lawrence sends his regrets as he had a previous scheduled speech event.

Committee Persons not present:

David Lawrence

Chris Canty, representing the DOH

Jay Pfeiffer, representing the DOE

Chief Justice Lewis

Public and or other Agencies

Chris Blakeslee, Florida Supreme Court

Ted Granger, United Way

Vivian Alarfion, Florida Children's Service

Susan Main, Early Learning Coalition of Duval County

Proceedings:

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The telephone conference call meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Chairperson Toni Crawford, who requested that Jennifer Diaz call the roll and Sharon Read prepare the minutes.

Chairperson Crawford requested the thoughts of the Committee on the issue of linking all eight agencies and how the data system will benefit the whole child from birth to age 18.

Dr. Schaechter stated that she believes that there are three levels that we need to investigate:

- 1) The street/ case manager/families accessing services level - ease of accessibility and discover where information overlaps or has gaps
- 2) The highest level being the leadership of the state agencies/decision makers that allocate resources, etc.
- 3) The middle level being local management where decisions are made and problems are solved at a local level

Mr. Hughes stated that he had attended a meeting on June 10<sup>th</sup> with the DCF, DOH and the DOE regarding moving forward with the data system usage on two issues:

1. Real time and or live data, which would be the operational and or administrative data used to administer services, which will be costly.
2. Status or research data that is static and warehoused.

Mr. Hughes points out that the requirements from various agencies will be different and it would be considered a large task to prepare the program.

Chairperson Crawford stated that she felt that real timedata was the best way to precede once the challenges and cost issues were known and inquired of the committee on how the agencies communicate as of now.

Mr. Hughes explained that it all depends on the nature of the question as some data information needs to be shared on a regular basis and some questions that are on broader issues become an ad hoc challenge; no infrastructures in place for some.

Ms. Tallent brought up the issue of those agencies that are on different operating systems and the time, resources and dollars that may present a problem to which Dr. Schaechter responded that part of the task would be to investigate the changes and cost conversion and how we share information without incurring the additional costs.

Mr. Hughes agreed with Dr. Schaechter and informed all that he would begin to look at the existing data and define data in each administrative agency for static data. Dr. Schaechter interjected the need for better communication between the agencies, especially with budget cuts; need to make sure that Agency A doesn't cut what Agency B would need.

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Chairperson Crawford agreed with Mr. Hughes and Dr. Schaechter added that the task presented is a daunting task and that it would be a real coup for the Cabinet if we can accomplish the task.

Chairperson Crawford requested that Chris Blakeslee bring those that had not attended the Cabinet meeting up to date on the Florida Court system data sharing. Ms. Blakeslee stated that in her opinion, it would not be difficult for the Cabinet to utilize the data system, if the Cabinet can get around the political issues. She stated that is simple to get the identification information and agencies to pull the data and that she would envision the data system to be an extension of the current court system especially because the judiciary needs information that could be provided by agencies. She gave the example of a child being removed from his/her house late at night and being placed in a temporary residence; the need to have the temporary guardian's background checked immediately would be extremely beneficial. Further, the Cabinet would get all of the court system's users of the system data too.

Dr. Schaechter presented her proposed goals for work shared planning process:

1. Develop a budget and structure (Consider how agencies might better communicate and collaborate in setting budget priorities, identifying duplication and finding structural and programmatic synergy).
2. Prepare a shared data agreement which considers solutions to the barriers set by HIPAA and FERPA
3. Investigate real time system and how to link the 3 levels

Dr. Schaechter asked what problems the JIS court system has or had, to which Ms. Blakeslee responded, if there was/is information missing, then it was not in the information shared from the initial source. She stated that the JIS is not a data warehouse, but she knows that system is working as it provides 6,000 users with information, including not only the court systems, but law enforcement agencies and probation officers, to name two. She also stated that staffing is the major problem and that issues with technology were/are fixed as soon as they arise, but there is no data control or quality assurance although once a problem is pointed out, they do go to the agency that provided the information.

Dr. Schaechter interjected that it was critical that we know what each agency needs; who collects it and the information is returned routinely, to which Ms. Blakeslee responded that they had spent months gathering information on what data is/was available and that you cannot build a system without doing just that. She stated that they used their vendor to establish information sessions for each agency over a period of eight months. She stated that it is important that we think ahead □ what are we going to do with the data; that within the three levels that were discussed, what would be useful and or beneficial to you from other agencies? Also beyond the agencies, what researchers and academic child advocates would do with the data? This is a big process and it must be built correctly.

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Mr. Hughes added that it is important that all three levels be considered, for information sessions, the local level, the regional level and state level and to consider who the intended users would be.

When questioned on the cost by users, Ms. Blakeslee stated that they do not charge for use of the system and that some counties have set up an extension of the court's data system, but we should be careful and selective as it is costly to bring everyone in at once. Start with the state system first and then go down, who is using it and what roles and profiles are to be accessed.

Mr. Hughes stated the importance of prioritizing, keeping in mind that the DOE and the AWI have no live data; that although some case management systems do have live data, we need a plan of goals and also a survey for restricted and flexible systems.

Chairperson Crawford inquired if a work shop would be timely to get all the players together for an action plan, to which Dr. Schaechter stated although she did not disagree, she felt there was work to be done before a work shop; that we needed to have an understanding of what data was needed, how we get it, why we need it and what money will be necessary to investigate same before we begin to build the system. She stated that questions relevant to HIPAA and FERPA were crucial.

Michele Tallent stated that she felt the number one goal would be the need to determine what information is needed and can be shared. She felt it beneficial to know what each agency does for the child.

Chairperson Crawford agreed with Miss Tallent and requested that Jennifer Diaz read into record, the eight agencies as follows:

1. Department of Children and Families
2. Department of Juvenile Justice
3. Agency for Health Care Administration
4. Agency for Persons with Disabilities
5. Agency for Workforce Innovation
6. Department of Health
7. Department of Education
8. Guardian Ad Litem Office

Mr. Hughes graciously volunteered to contact these agencies next week and inquire as to

- 1) legal limitations for sharing information i.e. FERPA
- 2) data security sharing agreements
- 3) existing and available data systems within the agency

He suggested pulling the information together and sharing it with the committee and Cabinet before going to other departments for input or other critical information.

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Dr. Schaechter suggested that we also should ask the agencies what data could they use from other agencies in their work. She also said that it would be helpful if we could have public comment from others using the system to which Jennifer Diaz stated that as long as we prepare the proper notice under the Sunshine Law, this could be done.

Michele Tallent stated that AHCA has "outreach programs" that could be utilized for public information and Mr. Hughes stated that he would do all of this simultaneously.

Toni stated that from the minutes, we will form an action plan that will include purpose of the committee and goals with actions needed to be taken. The committee will present this action plan to the full Cabinet on July 14.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Action Items:

John Hughes, AWI, will contact agencies and get the following information:

- legal limitations for sharing information i.e. FERPA
- data security sharing agreements
- existing and available data systems within the agency
- what data could they use from other agencies in their work

Judy Schaechter and Jennifer Stan will:

Explore options to elicit public input regarding what data sharing would be helpful at the local level. Specifically, what are the interagency issues and unavailable data that teachers, child care providers, doctors, nurses, attorneys, child advocates, etc. have themselves identified that if improved or made available could improve services and timeliness for children and families.