



CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN of COLORADO

COLORADO CHILD PROTECTION OMBUDSMAN BOARD

PUBLIC MEETING

June 17, 2022

Record of Proceedings

Notice of this meeting was provided pursuant to the Colorado Open Meetings Law, § 24-6-402, C.R.S.

CONVENE

The subcommittee meeting of the Child Protection Ombudsman Board was convened via Zoom teleconference at 1:03 p.m. by Deputy Ombudsman Jordan Steffen.

A quorum of the Board was not required.

INTRODUCTIONS

PRESENT AT THE MEETING

Board Members on Zoom

Hon. Ken Plotz
Judith Martinez, Vice-Chair
Victoria Shuler
Wendy Buxton-Andrade

Others Present

Jordan Steffen, Deputy Ombudsman
Karen Nielsen, Director of Administrative Services
Janna Fischer, Assistant Attorney General

PRESENT FROM THE PUBLIC

Cara Nord, Youth Empowerment Attorney, Office of the Child's Representative

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

OPENING REMARKS

Subcommittee members, Office of Colorado's Child Protection Ombudsman (CPO) staff and Janna Fischer,

Assistant Attorney General participated via Zoom teleconferencing.

Deputy Steffen welcomed everyone and thanked the subcommittee members for sharing their experiences and perspectives on improving the agency's outreach efforts to serving youth in Colorado.

PRESENTATION

Deputy Steffen welcomed Cara Nord, Youth Empowerment Attorney with the Office of the Child's Representative's (OCR), who coordinates the OCR's Lived Experts Panel (LEAP). The subcommittee members, CPO staff and AAG Fischer introduced themselves.

She stated that she asked Ms. Nord to come present to the subcommittee and provide an overview about both OCR and the LEAP program, how LEAP was formed, how to support their lived experts and how agencies like the CPO can interact with youth panels. Victoria Shuler is also a member of the LEAP.

Ms. Nord shared her background and that she has been with OCR for the past five years. OCR gives voice to Colorado's children by providing effective legal representation and advocacy on behalf of children in Colorado's court system.

She reported that OCR staff traveled across the state meeting with all types of youth doing surveys and focus groups related to what could be done to improve attorney representation as well as gain the youths input around court. One of the recommendations that came out of the data was the need to create a youth board. This is what lead to the creation of the LEAP. She stated that LEAP members is made up of youth with diverse backgrounds.

At 1:09 p.m. Ms. Shuler joined the meeting.

The goals of the LEAP are to provide young adults opportunities to:

- Share experiences, feedback, and ideas about OCR attorneys and court with supportive peers and adults; grow personal and professional networks;
- Learn about topics they want to learn about, as well as what OCR does and what OCR attorneys do;
- Gain skills and knowledge they can use in their everyday lives; and
- Participate in OCR's efforts to create and improve laws, policies, and OCR attorney practice in ways that serve the best interests of youth.

Ms. Nord talked about how they designed the survey with youth voice and the struggles they experience. She suggested to always remember to ask yourself "what is the why."

Ms. Nord shared some recommendations and ideas for the CPO subcommittee which include:

- Becoming a part of the COLYN (Colorado Youth Leadership Network)
- Ask OCR to email LEAP members asking if they would be interested in participating in any CPO events, survey etc.
- Become a part of the planning for the Celebration of Educational Excellence (CEEX), resource fair and event celebrating youth who are living in foster care by hosting a table to collect youth surveys about the CPO.
- Become a part of the planning for the Youth Awareness Week (YAW), that celebrates Colorado youth and their voice, through leadership to plan and in-person event to solicit youth feedback.
- Solicit youth feedback via the CPO's website.

- Display youth feedback, options and resources and a youth-friendly summary of any youth-centered data.

Deputy Steffen thanked Ms. Nord for providing her time, insight and experience regarding lived experience strategies for connecting youth in Colorado. She will share the presentation, handouts and survey to the subcommittee members following the meeting.

At 1:45 p.m. Ms. Nord left the meeting.

PROJECT UPDATES

Think of Us

Deputy Steffen reported that the CPO continues to work with Think of Us (TOU) to share a summary of key themes that arose from each design sessions to find ideas for solution areas.

She reached out to TOU following the last subcommittee meeting to talked to request additional co-creation sessions with young people. They have initiated a process to do a survey with youth across the state to review CPO materials and messaging and provide feedback. Due to the intimate nature of those discussions, TOU asked that CPO staff and Board subcommittee members will not be included, but they will share the outcomes of those working sessions in the debrief session on June 28, 2022.

There was discussion to ensure the CPO continue to connect with Colorado youth. Ms. Shuler offered to help find those with lived experience.

Vincent Strategies

The CPO continues to work with Vincent Strategies for its diversity equity and inclusion (DEI) training and assessment work. The agency is committed to strengthening its DEI efforts and has sent Dr. Vincent all our existing materials, collateral and videos for feedback, making sure diversity and inclusion is woven into how we do our work.

CPO Legislative Task Forces

Deputy Ombudsman Steffen reminded the group that the CPO wrote and promoted two pieces of legislation; House Bill 22-1375, Child Residential Treatment and Runaway Youth and House Bill 22-1240, Mandatory Reporters that passed. She stated that these two bills will establish to task forces and that the CPO is starting to take applications for the positions. She reported that there are positions on both task forces that require lived experience and encouraged board members to share the information with others.

CPO Open Positions

The CPO is hiring a Public Information Coordinator and an Associate Ombudsman/Client Services Analyst. If anyone knows someone who may be interested in speaking to the CPO about these opportunities, please have them contact the main number.

DISCUSSION

The subcommittee concurs that the CPO should be engaging youth feedback on a regular basis and that their voice is incorporated into the strategic plan and that it is important to use resources in our own community

and bring young people bi-annually and annually to re-evaluate our materials, collateral and video's on a regular basis.

Deputy Steffen said she would like to see something in writing that is public facing that is our promise to the public about our commitment to youth voice.

At 2:03 p.m. Vice Chair Judith Martinez left the meeting.

CLOSING REMARKS

Deputy Steffen thanked everyone for their participation in the presentation and discussion.

The next CPO Board Youth Voice Subcommittee meeting will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, July 14, 2022, via Zoom teleconference.

ADJOURN

The Board subcommittee formally adjourned the meeting at 2:06 p.m.

ATTESTATION

As Board Chair and Board Vice-Chair, I attest that these minutes of the open public meeting held on June 17, 2022, of the Colorado Child Protection Ombudsman Board substantially reflect the substance of the discussion and action taken related to the matters under the authority of the Board and in compliance with the Open Meetings Law, § 24-6-402, C. R.S.



Board Chair

_____ 07-25-22
Date



Board Vice-Chair

_____ 07-26-22
Date

