



Families First Community Advisory Board Meeting

October 17th, 2024

Board Members Present:

- Commissioner Clarence Carter (DHS)
- Ashleigh McFadden; Designee for Commissioner Lizzette Reynolds (Education)
- Jack Bailey
- Dr. Jerry Askew
- Brittany Cleveland
- Rachael Corry
- Executive Jim Mangubat

Staff Present:

- Trevor Lauri
- Callon Baggett
- Crystal Barnell
- Devin Stone
- Eric Dunn
- Gary Wilson
- Krisann Hodges
- Lakecia Peterson
- Nicole Hinson
- Shannon Rosedale
- Suzanne Carr
- Rebecca Walker
- Todd McKinney

Board Members

Absent:

- Commissioner Ralph Alvarado (TDH)
- Commissioner Stuart McWhorter (ECD)
- Commissioner Denice Thomas (DLWD)
- Leader Raumesh Akbari
- Chairman Bryan Terry
- Chairman Bo Watson
- Chairman David Hawk
- Elizabeth Fournet
- Frank Lawrence
- Annie Cacheiro
- Bishop Edward Stephens
- Steven Gentile

1:00 p.m. Welcome and Commissioner's Update

Commissioner Carter opened the meeting by thanking the participants and acknowledging the challenging circumstances faced in East Tennessee. He shared that he is working through a significant health issue but remains dedicated to the work of the Advisory Board. Commissioner Carter emphasized the importance of the Board's ongoing efforts to transform Tennessee's safety net and expressed gratitude for their role in the initiative.

1:04 p.m. MEF Participant Profiles, Pilot Enrollment, and Upcoming Research Activities

Tatiana Schaefer provided an update on pilot enrollment and evaluation activities. As of October 7, four pilots had not reached their enrollment goals. However, ETC has since met its goal. The remaining pilots are on track to meet or exceed their targets by December 2024. Key updates included:

- Several sites are expected to surpass their enrollment goals, aiming for larger sample sizes.
- MEF Associates has completed research site visits and launched 12 and 18 month surveys for various programs.

During the discussion, Commissioner Carter inquired about any unanticipated findings from the pilot reviews, which Tatiana and her team agreed to summarize in memos by the end of the year.

1:11 p.m. PCG Updates

Bell Tracy shared updates from PCG, highlighting the smooth operation of their assessment tool and the ongoing development of grantee videos, which are expected to be completed by the end of October. Additionally, the Human Flourishing Survey is undergoing testing and will be deployed in early November. Jessica White provided an overview of the data collected from the assessments and explained the reporting functions. Commissioner Carter raised a question about the potential for post-participation follow-up, which PCG is investigating.

Mike Fishman confirmed that they have other sources than self-reporting for data for their impact studies.

1:33 p.m. AFIRM Overview; Q&A

Carol Jackson, representing the AFIRM (A Father's Involvement Really Matters) program, presented an overview of the pilot targeting low-income fathers in Memphis and Shelby County. Key points included:

- The program focuses on healthy parenting, co-parenting support, and economic mobility.
- AFIRM has achieved significant milestones, including enrolling 667 participants, 196 of whom have completed fatherhood training.
- The program faces challenges related to transportation and changes in child support vendors but continues to build relationships with local partners.

Carol emphasized the importance of fatherhood education in reducing psychological distress in children and fostering healthier family dynamics. Commissioner Carter asked about AFIRM's enrollment challenges and commended the team for their efforts to engage fathers.

2:25 p.m. Concluding Remarks

Commissioner Carter thanked all participants for their continued dedication to the Advisory Board's work. He reiterated the significance of addressing systemic challenges, particularly in the child support and judicial systems, to support fathers in meeting their obligations. The meeting concluded with best wishes for the upcoming holiday season.

2:26 p.m. Adjournment

The Board meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m. The next Advisory Board meeting will take place on January 16th, 2025.