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Governor Scott Walker
Secretary Eloise Anderson

Division of Safety and Permanence

May 24, 2017

Mary Schultz, Chairperson
Marathon County Citizen Review Panel
Marathon County Dept. of Social Services
400 East Thomas Street
Wausau, WI 54403

Thank you for your submission of the 2016 Marathon County Citizen Review Panel report. This letter responds to the citizen review panel annual report requirement in the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA).

The citizen review panel submitted three recommendations to improve child protection services at the state level. A brief summarized statement of the recommendations and the Department of Children and Families, Division of Safety and Permanence response follows:

1. *Ensure that mandated programs are adequately funded (continuing recommendation from previous years)*

The Marathon County panel has submitted this recommendation to the DSP in past years, and our response remains the same: We agree that supporting the agencies serving families and protecting children is critical to achieving successful outcomes. We continue to fund and implement initiatives that complement mandated programs, providing additional support for the child welfare agencies. In addition to continuing initiatives (e.g., Alternative Response, In-Home Safety Services, the Post Reunification Support Program, etc.), we fund and coordinate prevention services, such as the Home Visiting Program and Families and Schools Together. In recognition of the increased volume of child welfare cases experienced by many counties, the Governor's 2017-19 biennial budget bill includes \$5 million per year of additional funding to counties for child welfare services through the Children and Families Allocation (CFA). If approved by the legislature, this proposed funding will help counties address the increased demands of child welfare cases.

2. *Assist CRPs in defining their role in relation to oversight and support of the Juvenile Justice Community Services, as this is under DCF's authority now.*

The Department of Children and Families assumed state oversight responsibility for the community-based juvenile justice system in January 2016. With this transfer of responsibility, DCF became the state supervisor of the county's work in juvenile justice, similar to DCF's role in the child welfare system. The Department of Corrections maintained responsibility for the state juvenile correctional facilities (Lincoln Hills School, Copper Lake School and GROW Academy).

In the past year, DCF has received input from hundreds of system partners, families, stakeholders, county personnel and youth to guide our work in this new realm. In the course of our conversations, DCF learned that the youth did not feel the term “juvenile justice” adequately captured the type of positive work DCF intends to support. Therefore, we have renamed our portion of the system the **youth justice system (YJ)**. Provided for your information are links to two documents, “Wisconsin’s Community-Based Juvenile Justice System: Summary of Input Gathered and Visions for the Future of Youth Justice” at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/yj/pdf/yjsmry-rpt.pdf>, and Youth Justice (YJ) Vision and Strategic Plan” at <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/cwportal/yj/pdf/yjplan.pdf>. These documents will provide you with information gathered from stakeholders, a vision for the future, progress to date, and areas of DCF statutory responsibility; i.e., creating training, data systems and performance standards for the youth justice system.

Hopefully this information will help orient you to DCF’s new role with respect to Youth Justice. We appreciate your interest in defining your role, and at this time there isn’t a formal role for the panels related to this system.

3. *Provide access to the Child Abuse Prevention Toolkit in advance of Child Abuse Prevention Month in April for better planning and implementation at the local level.*

The DCF agrees that more time is needed to plan for and implement prevention awareness events and activities for National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. The Prevention Workgroup which consists of the DCF, the Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention Board and Prevent Child Abuse/Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin, released and published the updated 2017 Child Abuse Prevention Toolkit in January this year. We are pleased that your panel finds the Toolkit useful and is leading prevention activities in your community.

Thank you for your panel’s continued dedication and efforts on behalf of Wisconsin children and families.

Sincerely,



Fredi-Ellen Bove
Division Administrator

Cc: Dawn Perez, Child Welfare Manager
Marathon Co. Dept. of Social Services