



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Title: DHHS- DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES - UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP WITH SOUTHEASTERN WORKFORCE STRATEGIES (INITIAL STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING)

Sponsors:

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TITLE

DHHS- DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES - UPDATE ON PARTNERSHIP WITH SOUTHEASTERN WORKFORCE STRATEGIES (INITIAL STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING)

SPONSOR

Heather Skeens (Sharon Barlow)

BACKGROUND

The number of children in foster care across the nation continues to increase. Over the past five years, Guilford County has experienced a 62% increase of children in foster care. Of the children entering foster care in Guilford County, only 20% of these children and youth are successfully reunified with their birth parents. There is cause for great concern about the trend in Guilford County, compared to other communities with more than 50% successful reunification of families.

A few months ago, the Board of County Commissioners approved a partnership between Social Services and Southeastern Workforce Strategies (SWS) to implement A Model Approach for Change in Child Welfare (AMAC-CW). The goal of this partnership is to improve reunification outcomes for Guilford County children in foster care by examining Guilford's foster care system as a whole.

To successfully implement this initiative, Social Services hosted an initial stakeholders' meeting bringing together relevant members of the local community and government to provide valuable input, expertise and discuss practical strategies that will address the underlying

concerns of the foster care system in Guilford County. The meeting was held on September 7, 2018 at the Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of this meeting was to begin meaningful discussion about the state of foster care and how we could partner together to ensure the reunification of children and families.

The work of gathering input from internal and external partners has begun. Focus groups have been held with more than 60 DSS staff. Additional focus groups have been scheduled through December 2018. Since approval of the contract, we have begun to work with staff through focus groups to receive strengths and challenges in our internal and external systems that impact reunification. There are multiple focus groups scheduled over the next month to ensure feedback is received from all staff. Once focus groups are completed, this information will be condensed into major themes. External partner focus groups will be scheduled in the coming months.

BUDGET IMPACT

[NO ADDITIONAL COUNTY DOLLARS]

REQUESTED ACTION

Receive DHHS - Social Services update on the partnership with Southeastern Workforce Strategies (initial stakeholder's meeting)