



**SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS PERMANENT JUDICIAL
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

**Supreme Court of Texas
Permanent Judicial
Commission for Children,
Youth and Families**

February 12, 2016
Meeting Notebook

The State Bar of Texas – Texas Law Center
1414 Colorado Street
Austin, Texas 78701

**Supreme Court of Texas
Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families**

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Supreme Court of Texas
Permanent Judicial Commission for Children, Youth and Families
State Bar of Texas – Texas Law Center
Austin, Texas
February 12, 2016
9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Meeting Agenda

- 9:30 Commencement / Opening Remarks – The Honorable Eva Guzman
- 9:45 First order of business – The Honorable Eva Guzman
1. Adopt Minutes from September 18, 2015, Tab 1
- 10:00 Commissioner Updates
- 11:15 Break
- 11:30 Executive Director Report with commentary from Basic, Training, Data, and Education Committee Chairs – Tina Amberboy/Commission Staff, Tab 3
- 12:00 Special Presentation - Judge Rob Hofmann
- 12:30 Working Lunch
- 1:00 Presentation about proposed Center for Child Welfare Policy – Rebecca Lightsey/Bruce Esterline
- 1:30 Jurist in Residence Updates – Judge Dean Rucker, Judge Robin Sage
- 1:50 DFPS Update – Judge John Specia
- 2:20 Office of Court Administration – David Slayton
- 2:35 New Business/Comments from Collaborative Council
- 2:50 2016 Meeting Schedule
May 13, 2016, and September 23, 2016 at State Bar of Texas
- 3:00 Adjourn

INSERT - TAB 1

PERMANENT JUDICIAL COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 18, 2015
9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
State Bar of Texas – Texas Law Center
Austin, Texas

ATTENDANCE

Commissioners	Attended	Did Not Attend
Chair, Hon. Eva Guzman, Justice, Supreme Court of Texas, Austin	✓	
Chair Emeritus, Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Justice, retired, Law Office of Harriet O'Neill, Austin		✓
Vice Chair, Hon. Darlene Byrne, Judge, 126th District Court, Austin	✓	
Hon. Jo Ann Battise, Senior Peacemaker, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Livingston	✓	
Lisa Black, Assistant Commissioner for Child Protective Services, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Hon. Jean Boyd, Judge, 323rd District Court, Fort Worth	✓	
Sheila Craig, Associate Commissioner, Center for the Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities, Health and Human Services Commission, Austin	✓	
Kara Crawford, Senior Policy Analyst, Office of the Governor, Austin	✓	
Bruce Esterline, Vice President for Grants, The Meadows Foundation, Dallas		✓
Hon. Helen Giddings, Texas House of Representatives, District 109, Dallas		✓
Hon. Bonnie Hellums, Judge, 247th District Court, Houston		✓
Hon. Rob Hofmann, Judge, 452nd District Court, Mason	✓	
Dr. Octavio Martinez, Executive Director, The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, The University of Texas, Austin	✓	
Hon. Michael Massengale, Justice, 1st Court of Appeals, Houston		✓
Hon. Mary Murphy, Presiding Judge, First Administrative Judicial Region, Dallas	✓	
Hon. Ronald Pope, Judge, 328 th District Court, Richmond	✓	
Hon. Peter Sakai, Judge, 225th District Court, San Antonio	✓	
Hon. Michael Schneider, Judge, 315 th Juvenile Court, Houston	✓	
Luanne Southern, Senior Director of Texas Strategic Consulting, Casey Family Programs, Austin		✓
Vicki Spriggs, Chief Executive Officer, Texas CASA, Inc., Austin	✓	
Sharayah Stiggers, Parent Liaison, Department of Family and Protective Services, Region 8, San Antonio		✓
Terry Tottenham, Of Counsel, Fulbright and Jaworski, L.L.P., Austin		✓
Hon. Carlos Villalon, Associate Judge, Child Protection Court of the Rio Grande, Edinburg	✓	
Lt. Col. Travis Walters, State Public Affairs Officer (FTUS), United States Air Force, Fort Worth	✓	
Hon. Judy Warne, Judge, 257th Family Court, Houston	✓	
Hon. Royce West, (by proxy Graham Keever), Texas Senate, District 23, Dallas	✓	
Committee and Collaborative Council Members		
Hon. Mark Atkinson, Executive Director, Texas Center for the Judiciary		✓
Joy Baskin, Director, Legal Services Division, Texas Association of School Boards		✓
Tymothy Belseth, Youth Specialist Region 7, Department of Family & Protective Services	✓	
Hon. Alyce Bondurant, Associate Judge, North Texas Child Protection Court		✓
Edna Ramón Butts, Director, Intergovernmental Relations & Policy Oversight, Austin Independent School District		✓
M. Lynn Chamberlin, Sr. Assistant County Attorney, Harris County Attorney's Office	✓	

	Attended	Did Not Attend
Irene Clements, President, National Foster Family Association, and Consultant, Butterfly Marketing, LLC, Pflugerville	✓	
Cathy Cockerham, Program Operations Director, Texas CASA		✓
William B. Connolly, Attorney, Connolly & Shireman, L.L.P., Houston		✓
Briana Dovi, Intake Social Worker, FFY		✓
Lori Duke, Clinical Professor, Children's Rights Clinic, The University of Texas School of Law		✓
De Shaun Ealoms, Parent Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Loretta Edelen, Community Outreach Director, Foster Care Alumni Coordinator, Austin Community College	✓	
Barbara Elias-Perciful, President, Texas Lawyers for Children, Dallas	✓	
Alice Emerson, Attorney, Travis County Office of Child Representation		✓
Debra Emerson, CPS Director of Permanency, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		✓
Dr. Monica Faulkner, Associate Director, Child and Family Research Institute, The University of Texas at Austin		✓
Laura Figueroa, The Arbitrage Group, Inc., Katy	✓	
Mike Foster, Assistant Director of Outreach, TCU Institute of Child Development	✓	
Mara Friesen, Deputy Director for Child Support, Office of the Texas Attorney General, Austin		✓
Gabriela 'Gaby' Fuentes, Appointments Manager, Office of the Governor		✓
Sadie Funk, Executive Director, Texas Alliance for Infant Mental Health, Austin		✓
Paul E. Furrh, Jr., Chief Executive Officer, Lone Star Legal Aid, Houston		✓
Helen Gaebler, Senior Research Attorney, William Wayne Justice Center for Public Interest Law, The University of Texas School of Law, Austin	✓	
Maya Guerra Gamble, Attorney at Law, Austin		✓
Hon. Richard Garcia, Associate Judge, Bexar County Children's Court		✓
Dr. David Gardner, Deputy Commissioner/Chief Academic Officer, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board		✓
Teal De La Garza, Attorney, Bill De La Garza & Associates, P.C.	✓	
Christina Green, Director of Public Affairs, Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas, Austin	✓	
Hon. Diane Guariglia, Guariglia & Placzek, PLLC, Houston		✓
Sandra Hachem, Senior Assistant County Attorney, Harris County Attorney's Office, Houston	✓	
David Halpern, Director, Promise Mentor Program, Seedling Foundation, Austin	✓	
Ashley Harris, Child Welfare Policy Associate, Texans Care for Children, Austin	✓	
Tracy Harting, Attorney at Law		✓
Robert Hartman, Executive Director, Providence Service Corporation, Abilene		✓
Jason Hassay, General Counsel, Office of Senator Carlos I. Uresti		✓
Deena Hill, President, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education		✓
Leslie Hill, Managing Attorney, Travis County Office of Child Representation, Austin		✓
Jenny Hinson, Director of Permanency, Department of Family & Protective Services		✓
Andy Homer, Director of Public Affairs, Texas CASA	✓	
Hon. Gilford Jones, Judge (ret.), 33rd District Court		✓
Pamela Kemp, Special Projects Attorney, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Bruce Kendrick, Director of Outreach, Embrace Texas, McKinney		✓
Lori Kennedy, Managing Attorney, Travis County Office of Parent Representation, Austin		✓
Knox Kimberly, Vice President for Advocacy and Education, Lutheran Social Services of the South, Austin		✓

	Attended	Did Not Attend
Kelly Kravitz, Foster Care Education and Policy Coordinator, Texas Education Agency, Austin		✓
Elizabeth Kromrei, CPS Director of Services, Department of Family & Protective Services		✓
Richard Lavallo, Legal Director, Disability Rights Texas, Austin		✓
Stephanie Ledesma, Assistant Professor, Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Houston		✓
Tracy Levins, Manager, Prevention/Early Intervention, Texas Juvenile Justice Department, Austin		✓
Colleen McCall, CPS Director of Field Operations, Texas Department of Family & Protective Services		✓
Hon. Lamar McCorkle, Senior District Judge, ret.		✓
Madeline McClure, Executive Director, Texas Association for the Protection of Children, Dallas		✓
Hon. F. Scott McCown, Clinical Professor and Director of the Children's Rights Clinic, The University of Texas School of Law, Austin		✓
Gabriela McDonald, Pro Bono and New Projects Director, Texas Appleseed, Austin	✓	
Kris Mohajer, State Education Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services	✓	
Hon. Cathy Morris, Associate Judge, Child Protection Court of South Texas		✓
Jon Olson, State Disproportionality Specialist, Center for the Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities, Health and Human Services Commission, Austin		✓
Pamela McPeters, Director of Public Policy, TexProtects, Austin		✓
Robert Nolen, Director of Information Technology, Harris County Clerk's Office		✓
Dr. Anu Partap, Assistant Professor in Pediatrics, Southwest Medical Center, Dallas		✓
Wanda Peña, Senior Director, Casey Family Programs, San Antonio	✓	
Judy Powell, Communications Director, Parent Guidance Center, Austin	✓	
Lisa Ramirez, Women's Substance Abuse Services Coordinator, Department of State Health Services, Austin		✓
Michael Redden, Executive Director, New Horizons		✓
Mary Christine Reed, Director, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid, Austin	✓	
Tanya Rollins, State Disproportionality Manager, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Fairy Davenport Rutland, Director, Appeals Division, Texas Health and Human Services Commission		✓
Hon. Virginia Schnarr, Associate Judge, Sabine Valley Child Protection Court		✓
Johana Scot, Executive Director, Parent Guidance Center, Austin	✓	
Janet Sharkis, Executive Director, Texas Office for Prevention of Developmental Disabilities, Austin		✓
Hon. Ellen Smith, Associate Judge, 323rd District Court		✓
Andrea Sparks, Executive Director, National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Austin	✓	
Ian Spechler, Staff Attorney, Disability Rights Texas	✓	
Jeanne Stamp, Senior Program Coordinator, Texas Homeless Education Office, Charles A. Dana Center, Austin	✓	
Gloria Terry, (by proxy Brooke King), Coalition President, Texas Council on Family Violence, Austin	✓	
Kenneth Thompson, Fatherhood Program Specialist, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin		✓
Hon. Olen Underwood, Judge, 284th District Court, Conroe		✓
Arabia Vargas, Chair, Bexar County Child Welfare Board, San Antonio		✓
Elizabeth Watkins, Attorney, Law Office of Elizabeth Watkins		✓
Julie Wayman, Director, Student Success Unit, Texas Education Agency	✓	
Kelly White, Executive Director, LIFT Alliance		✓
Larry Williams, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Livingston		✓

Staff	Attended	Did Not Attend
Tina Amberboy, Executive Director, Children’s Commission	✓	
Jessica Arguijo, Administrative Assistant, Children’s Commission	✓	
Jamie Bernstein, Staff Attorney, Children’s Commission	✓	
Simi Denson, Child Protection Courts Attorney, Office of Court Administration		✓
Casey Kennedy, Director of Information Service, Office of Court Administration		✓
Tim Kennedy, TexDECK Project Manager, Office of Court Administration	✓	
Monica Mahoney, Administrative Assistant, Children’s Commission	✓	
Mena Ramon, General Counsel, Office of Court Administration	✓	
Milbrey Raney, Staff Attorney, Children’s Commission	✓	
Tiffany Roper, Assistant Director, Children’s Commission	✓	
Honorable Dean Rucker, Jurist in Residence, Children’s Commission	✓	
Honorable Robin Sage, Jurist in Residence, Children’s Commission		✓
David Slayton, Administrative Director, Office of Court Administration		✓
Kristi Taylor, Project Manager, Children’s Commission	✓	
Rashonda Thomas, Grant Account Specialist, Children’s Commission	✓	
Guests		
Hon. John Specia, Commissioner, Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin	✓	
Hon. Jeffrey Boyd, Justice, Supreme Court of Texas	✓	
Hon. Cheryl Fairbanks, Justice, Inter-Tribal Court of Appeals for Nevada White Earth Nation	✓	
Hon. Goodwin Liu, Justice, Supreme Court of California	✓	
Graham Keever, Chief of Staff, Senator Royce West	✓	

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING REMARKS, Justice Eva Guzman

Justice Guzman called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Recognition of Guests

Justice Guzman welcomed special guest Judge Cheryl Fairbanks, a Justice of the Inter-Tribal Court of Appeals for Nevada White Earth Nation and Professor of Law at the University of New Mexico School of Law’s Southwest Indian Law Clinic.

Commissioner Membership Changes

Justice Guzman announced that the Supreme Court added one new member to the Commission: Judge Ronald Pope of the 328th District Court in Fort Bend County, Texas. Justice Guzman announced that the Supreme Court also renewed the term of three Commissioners for a period of three years: Judge Rob Hofmann, Ms. Luanne Southern, and Ms. Vicki Spriggs. The Supreme Court moved Judge Darlene Byrne, one of the long-standing Commissioners, to Senior Judicial Advisor status.

Justice Guzman announced that founding Commissioner Bruce Esterline's final term expires on November 30, 2015. Justice Guzman further noted that the Commission is working with Mr. Esterline to identify a suitable replacement for the critical role he has fulfilled since the Commission's beginning.

Justice Guzman announced that ex officio Commissioner Ms. Gabriela 'Gaby' Fuentes of the Office of the Governor transitioned off as a Commissioner. Governor Greg Abbott appointed Ms. Kara Crawford as the ex officio member of the Commission. Justice Guzman also announced the new ex officio appointment of Senator Royce West by Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick.

Collaborative Council Membership Changes

Justice Guzman welcomed Ms. Teal De La Garza of the De La Garza Law Firm in Houston to the Collaborative Council.

Staff Member Changes

Justice Guzman announced that Rashonda Thomas accepted a job with the Cancer Prevention Research Institute in Austin; today serves as her last day with the Children's Commission. Justice Guzman also announced that Jessica Arguijo transitioned to the position of Information Specialist where she will be in charge of the Commission website, media and internet presence, Twitter, Facebook, distribution lists, listservs, and managing the various modes of distribution used to disseminate information.

Adoption of June 12, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Justice Guzman directed members to Tab 2, noted that members had the opportunity to review the minutes, and asked if there were any corrections or discussion. There were no corrections or discussion points raised.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to adopt the meeting minutes of the June 12, 2015 meeting. Judge Darlene Byrne motioned to adopt the minutes. Judge Rob Hofmann seconded the motion. The attending members voted to approve and adopt the meeting minutes unanimously.

Other Announcements

Justice Guzman announced that the Commission's website update is now complete and the new site is live at www.texaschildrenscommission.gov. Justice Guzman noted that Judge Dean Rucker was the recipient of the 2015 Sam Emisen Award from the Texas Academy of Family Law Specialists and was also bestowed the honor of having the 25th Edition of Sampson and Tindall's Family Code dedicated to him for his many years of service as a judge and his dedication to family law litigants and attorneys.

COMMISSION MEMBER UPDATES

Justice Mary Murphy reported that the evaluation process by the Regional Presiding Judges of all IV-D and CPC associate judges has been completed as prescribed under Senate Bill (SB) 1139.

Dr. Octavio Martinez reported on the initiatives of the subgrantees of the Hogg Foundation's grant to organizations of Harris County, including Communities in Schools of Houston, Inc., Disability Rights Texas, Easter Seals Group of Greater Houston, and Family Services of Greater Houston, among others. Dr. Martinez also reported on the Second Annual Young Minds Matter Conference in June 2015.

Hon. Rob Hofmann directed members to Tab 5 to view the American Bar Association Child Law Practice publication in August 2015, which featured a front-page article about the Texas Blueprint. Judge Hofmann reported that the education chapter in the Child Protection Bench Book was updated to include legislative changes and additional content, and noted that the judicial education checklist was also updated. Judge Hofmann further reported that House Bill (HB) 3748 was passed in 2015 Session; the bill required the designation of foster care liaisons at the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and every state institute of higher education. The legislation also required DFPS and the Coordinating Board to enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to facilitate the annual exchange of data between the agencies.

Judge Hofmann announced that on October 1, Ms. Roper will give a presentation on education at the Multidisciplinary Advocacy Training Conference on Child Abuse in Edinburg, Texas, and on October 8, he will present on judicial leadership and the cross-system collaboration between DFPS, TEA, and the courts at the San Angelo regional consortium. Judge Hofmann also announced that on October 26, DFPS, TEA, and the Children's Commission will give multiple presentations at the National Dropout Prevention Conference in San Antonio, including a Texas-specific foster care liaison training.

Hon. Jean Boyd reported that Tarrant County is currently forming a Safe Babies Program with leadership from Judge Ellen Smith. Judge Boyd announced that the 323rd District Court expects to have over 70 adoptions on the upcoming National Adoption Day.

Ms. Sheila Craig reported on the Center for the Elimination of Disproportionalities and Disparities' (CEDD) Second Annual Cross System Summit that was held on August 20-21, 2015. Ms. Craig reported the summit had over 500 participants. She further noted a breakout session with Judges Meca Walker and Chris Oldner about reducing implicit bias in decision making. Ms. Craig reported that the CEDD is working with partners from Toronto, Canada to discuss the work being done in Texas around disproportionality and child welfare. Ms. Craig noted that a meeting was held at Texas CASA to discuss Canada's implementation of the Texas model, Framework for Equity, into its child welfare system.

Ms. Craig reported that the CEDD Coalition met in August and expects to produce a status report in December 2015. Ms. Craig further reported on the renewed contracts with the Office of Border Affairs that focus on mental health, health, substance abuse, computer for learning for families in Colonias, and medical and dental services. Ms. Craig announced that the CEDD has received a grant from the Federal Office of Minority Health to implement initiatives that address health equity and culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Ms. Craig reported that CEDD's Equity and Inclusion team continues to focus on trainings across the state and now offers facilitators to host trainings on Mental Health First Aid, a one-day free training available to all organizations.

Justice Guzman welcomed special guests Justice Jeffrey Boyd of the Supreme Court of Texas and Justice Goodwin Liu of the Supreme Court of California.

Senior Peacemaker Jo Ann Battise reported on the Higher Education program of the Alabama Coushatta Tribe, which assists the twenty-seven high school graduates of 2015 to all successfully enter college, and on her work with the tribe to continue peacemaking work within the tribe. Senior Peacemaker Battise further noted that the tribe will have a Constitutional amendment vote in November 2015. Senior Peacemaker Battise reported that she visited several tribes throughout the year to speak about the principles of peacemaking and that the traditional dancers of the Alabama Coushatta performed at the Child Welfare Judges Conference (CWJC) in August of 2015. Senior Peacemaker Battise announced that she has been asked to speak in the Dallas, Texas area in the coming weeks on Native American child welfare issues.

Hon. Michael Schneider reported on the crossover work with children in both the CPS system and the Juvenile Justice system in Harris County. Judge Schneider announced he will travel to New York in October with the Chief Justice and Senator Joan Huffman to present the work being done in Harris County in regards to human trafficking. Judge Schneider gave an update on Judge Katrina Griffith's Permanency Court in Harris County, reporting that the court has relieved the 315th Juvenile Court of over 600 permanent managing conservatorship (PMC) cases since it was founded a year and a half ago.

Hon. Peter Sakai provided an update on Bexar County's redesign strategies and current draft statistics that reveal a significant reduction in removals and record low levels of foster children in the county's system. Judge Sakai noted that the next steps include further data analysis to determine how well the redesign is helping children and families. Judge Sakai announced that a final report is expected by December 2015. Judge Sakai also reported that Bexar County is a possible candidate for a grant to establish an early intervention program to focus on infants, toddlers and young children, much like the model in Judge Pope's court in Fort Bend County.

Hon. Carlos Villalon reported on the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) Implementation Sites Project Conference that he attended in March 2015 in Reno, Nevada. The three-day conference hosted eight courts from around the U.S. and focused on projects to implement changes in courts, such as workshops on collaboration, communication and reasonable efforts for judges, and presentations from state prosecutors on what is required from judges at hearings. Judge Villalon reported on the Rio Grande Valley West Child Protection Court's efforts to restructure its procedures to benefit caseworkers and DFPS. Judge Villalon reported that since the court's implementation two years ago, they have seen great improvements in the timeliness of caseworkers' reports and home studies. Judge Villalon noted that he will present with Ms. Tiffany Roper at the multi-disciplinary conference in Harlingen in October 2015. Judge Villalon announced that he was reappointed as judge to the court on September 17, 2015.

Ms. Vicki Spriggs reported on the Texas CASA 2014 annual report. Ms. Spriggs updated the Commission on the collaboration with Child Protective Services to include the Child Outcomes &

Volunteer Effectiveness (COVE) Project, which looks at the impact of CASA volunteers on children and how best to determine the effectiveness of volunteers; a study on the barriers to growth, which focuses on organizational issues and judicial support of volunteers; and the Collaborative Family Engagement, or Family Finding, which will pilot in Regions 6B and 11 to increase the focus on finding homes for children and creating support for children who age out of the system. Ms. Spriggs announced that Texas CASA is beginning a rebranding process to pilot new marketing messages in two parts of the state and plans to introduce the messages statewide in the next three years. Ms. Spriggs reported on the Texas CASA Reception at the NCJFCJ Conference in July 2015 and announced the upcoming Texas CASA Conference on November 5-7 in San Marcos, Texas.

Hon. Darlene Byrne reported on Travis County's introduction of therapy dogs in the court's hallways on Mondays and Fridays to continue the court's efforts to offer a trauma-informed environment. Judge Byrne reported on the implementation of new legislation on September 1 in Travis County, including earlier attorney appointments and engagement of family finding efforts in cases. Judge Byrne announced a trauma-informed care training on October 27, 2015 at the Children's Shelter in Austin that will focus on compassion fatigue and offer a peer support model. Judge Byrne announced the upcoming NCJFCJ conferences, including the Trauma in Courts Summit in Cleveland, Ohio, the National Summit on Sex Trafficking in New York City, the National Board of CASA Meeting, the Juvenile Justice Conference in March 2016 to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the NCJFCJ Annual Conference in July 2016 to be held in Monterey, California. Judge Byrne noted that the NCJFCJ hopes to raise funds for a summit in Texas to focus on child welfare and juvenile justice issues related to children in military families. Judge Byrne also reported on the NCJFCJ's efforts to form connections to international judges in Central and South America.

Ms. Kara Crawford introduced herself, noting she focuses on child protection issues in Governor Abbott's office. Ms. Crawford reported that both CPS and DFPS are high priorities for Governor Abbott and that her office looks forwarding to collaboration on child protection issues.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT, Ms. Tina Amberboy

Ms. Amberboy reported that the CIP application was submitted to the Administration of Children and Families on August 31 for fiscal year 2016. Ms. Amberboy reported that Commission staff held a webinar on September 2 with Committee Members to review the projects presented today. Ms. Amberboy directed members to Tab 3 to view the report of the Commission's four committees: the Basic Committee; Training Committee; Technology Committee; and Foster Care & Education Committee. This report is available on the Commission website at:

<http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/39241/Final-Report-to-Commission-9-18-15.pdf>.

Ms. Amberboy discussed the Basic Committee projects and directed the Commission to see a final budget amount on page 10 of the report.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to approve the Basic Committee request of \$103,376.00. Judge Byrne motioned to approve the request. Judge Sakai abstained. The attending members voted to approve and the request unanimously.

Ms. Amberboy discussed the Training Committee projects and directed the Commission to see a final budget amount on page 16 of the report.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to approve the Training Committee request of \$408,942.00. Judge Byrne motioned to approve the request. Judge Sakai abstained. The attending members voted to approve and the request unanimously.

Ms. Amberboy discussed the Technology Committee projects and directed the Commission to see a final budget amount on page 19 of the report.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to approve the Technology Committee request of \$403,910.00. Judge Byrne motioned to approve the request. Judge Sakai abstained. The attending members voted to approve and the request unanimously.

Ms. Amberboy discussed the Foster Care & Education Committee projects and directed the Commission to see a final budget amount on page 20 of the report.

ACTION: Justice Guzman asked for a motion to approve the Foster Care & Education Committee request of \$10,000.00. Judge Sakai motioned to approve the request. The attending members voted to approve and the request unanimously.

Justice Guzman confirmed that the final amount approved by the Commission to be \$926,228.00.

Presentation from National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), Andrea Sparks, Executive Director of Texas NCMEC Office, gave a presentation to the Commission entitled, "Spotlight on Sexual Exploitation: Why Kids in Care are at Risk, How NCMEC can help Protect and Recover Them, and How We Can All Prevent Victimization." This presentation can be found on the Commission website at <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/53063/NCMEC-presentation-for-Childrens-Commission.pdf>.

Jurist in Residence Update, Hon. Dean Rucker announced the newly created Child Protection Court of the Concho Valley in San Angelo, Texas under Associate Judge Gary Banks. Judge Rucker reported on the 84th legislative session update presented by webinar in July 2015, at the CWJC in August 2015, and by Jurist in Residence letter, which can be found at <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/51067/84th-Session-Lege-Update-JIR-Updated-Photo.pdf>. Judge Rucker reported on prospective interim charges for the next legislative session related to human trafficking and reinstatement of parental rights. Judge Rucker noted that a Jurist in

Residence letter on the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment was recently published and is available at <http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/41340/CANS-IIR.pdf>.

DFPS Update, Commissioner John Specia reported on the current work being done at DFPS regarding capacity, noting that DFPS will roll out one additional catchment area, recruit new staff, and focus on building capacity in areas of high need. Judge Specia reported on building capacity in rural areas in collaboration with ACH Child and Family Services in Fort Worth. Judge Specia reported on the Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) program, noting that the HOPES program will be expanding into 16 counties and that a Request for Proposal is being developed to provide prevention efforts to military families in El Paso, Killeen, and San Antonio. Judge Specia reminded the Commission that all prevention programs will be consolidated under DFPS pursuant to bills passed during the last legislative session. Judge Specia noted that DFPS, in connection with Casey Family Programs, is hosting Permanency Summits across the state with speaker Amelia Frank Meyer. Judge Specia also reported that DFPS is working closely with the Governor's Office regarding Parental Child Safety Placements (PCSPs) and is creating a tool to assess safety that is expected to roll out in the coming months. Judge Specia reported that DFPS received a \$5 million appropriation to develop a pilot program to handle PCSPs that will roll out in the Fort Worth area.

Ms. Lisa Black commented that the Department is also hosting Safety Summits at the regional level that will focus on child fatalities and safety. Judge Specia discussed the recent legislation passed to revamp the Information Management Protecting Adults & Children in Texas (IMPACT) system to make data more accessible to DFPS and make data available by region, making it easier to identify trends at the regional level.

Office of Court Administration, Ms. Mena Ramon reported on the recent statute changes regarding the appointment process for child support and child protection judges. Ms. Ramon noted that the reappointment process is scheduled to end by October 1, 2015. Ms. Ramon announced four newly created Child Protection Courts (CPCs), including the CPC of the Concho Valley in San Angelo announced earlier by Judge Rucker. Ms. Ramon reported on the progress of the JNAC Weighted Caseload Study, noting that an upcoming survey is scheduled for October 26 – November 22, 2015.

COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL REPORT

Irene Clements, Texas Foster Family Association (TFFA) reported on the American Bar Association's campaign "Reimagine Foster Care." Ms. Clements also reported on the workshop she attended at the NACC Conference regarding caregivers in the courtroom. Ms. Clements announced TFFA's conference on October 2-4, 2015 in Houston.

Mary Christine Reed, Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid Texas Foster Youth Justice Project reported on her recent collaboration with a CASA volunteer and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to defend the rights of a foster youth who was changing schools and told that a psychiatric report was required before the youth could be admitted. Ms. Reed noted that the experience showed the impact of the work of the Commission's Education Committee.

Barbara Elias-Perciful, Texas Lawyers for Children reported on two documentaries, *The Raising of America* and *Moment to Moment: Teens Growing Up with FASDs*.

NEW BUSINESS

Justice Guzman announced the dates for the 2016 Commission Meetings: February 12, May 13, and September 23.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

INSERT - TAB 2

CHILDREN'S COMMISSION MEMBERS

Hon. Eva Guzman, Chair
 Hon. Harriet O'Neill, Chair Emeritus
 Hon. Rob Hofmann, Vice Chair
 Hon. Jo Ann Battise
 Paula Bibb-Samuels
 Allison Billodeau
 Lisa Black

Hon. Jean Boyd
 Hon. Gary Coley
 Sheila Sturgis Craig
 Rep. Helen Giddings
 Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums
 Dr. Andy Keller
 Dr. Octavio Martinez

Hon. Michael Massengale
 Hon. Mary Murphy
 Cindy Patrick
 Hon. Ronald Pope
 Hon. Frank Rynd
 Hon. Peter Sakai
 Hon. Michael Schneider

Luanne Southern
 Vicki Spriggs
 Terry Tottenham
 Hon. Carlos Villalon
 Lt. Col. Travis Walters
 Hon. Judy Warne
 Sen. Royce West

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE

Hon. Eva Guzman,
Chair
 Hon. Harriet O'Neill,
Chair Emeritus
 Hon. Darlene Byrne
Senior Judicial Advisor
 Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums
 Hon. Michael Massengale
 Hon. Dean Rucker
 Vicki Spriggs

Staff: Tina Amberboy

BASIC PROJECTS

Hon. Bonnie Crane Hellums
Chair
 Colleen McCall
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Office of Court Administration

INSERT - TAB 3



**SUPREME COURT OF TEXAS PERMANENT JUDICIAL
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

**Supreme Court of Texas
Permanent Judicial
Commission for Children,
Youth and Families**

Report to Commission

February 12, 2016

The State Bar of Texas – Texas Law Center
1414 Colorado Street
Austin, Texas 78701

BASIC COMMITTEE REPORT

2.2A Parent Resource Group: Continue hosting and supporting the Parent Resource Group; Reprint and distribute printed and online Resource Guide to assist parents, explore online center with hotline or other direct service delivery.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Host and facilitate meetings and calls for the PR Workgroup. ▪ Maintain Parent Resource Guide ▪ Update written product ▪ Post online with LawBox ▪ Provide reprints and distribute ▪ Translate to Spanish ▪ Convene workgroup to discuss online resource center / hotline or other direct delivery or assistance services through the Texas Legal Services Corporation 	<p>The Parent Resource Guide was completed in May 2015 and is accessible in print and online on the Children’s Commission website as well as many other CC partner and advocate websites. The PRG will be translated to Spanish by September of 2016. The Parent Resource Workgroup is scheduled to meet on February 19, 2016 to discuss efforts to establish an online resource center through the Texas Legal Services Corporation, as well as other system and resource improvements aimed at assisting parents involved in the child welfare system.</p>	<p align="right">\$8,600.00</p> <p align="right">Includes 3600.00 LawBox and 5000.00 in- person support, printing</p>

2.2C Disproportionality: Raise awareness and understanding among judges and key stakeholders involved in the legal system regarding racial disproportionality.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and promote judicial and attorney training on how to apply training and tools designed to reduce institutional racism and bias ▪ Partner with system stakeholders to include disproportionality in cross-systems trainings and in issue-specific workgroups, including one Poverty Simulation Workshop ▪ Help connect judges and lawyers to their communities to develop disproportionality efforts at the local level ▪ Liaise with the Texas Health and Human Services State Advisory Coalition for Addressing Disproportionality and Disparities ▪ Staff and monitor the Judicial Workgroup Addressing Disproportionality Workgroup (JWD) meetings, strategies, timelines, and work product for FY2015, including monthly or quarterly strategy meetings with the JWD Co-Chairs ▪ Include information about Disproportionality and bias in its CPS judicial Bench Book 	<p>On February 5th, the JWD will host 80 participants in a Poverty Simulation Seminar. Nine judges will bring court teams to participate in a simulation where they assume the roles of families facing poverty. The task of the "families" is to provide for basic necessities and shelter during the course of four 15-minute "weeks". Attorneys, advocates and other child welfare partners will gain an understanding and appreciation of how poverty impacts children and families they serve.</p> <p>The JWD works on: 1) developing and promoting judicial and attorney training on how to apply tools designed to reduce institutional racism and bias; 2) partnering with system stakeholders to include disproportionality in cross-systems trainings and in issue-specific workgroups; 3) helping connect judges and lawyers to their communities to develop disproportionality efforts at the local level; 4) liaising with the Texas Health and Human Services State Advisory Coalition for Addressing Disproportionality and Disparities; 5) staffing JWD meetings, strategies, timelines, and work product; and 6) updating the CPS judicial Bench Book.</p>	<p align="right">\$25,000.00</p>

2.2D Tribal: Educate judges and lawyers about the importance of ICWA, including the context of historical trauma and tools to assist with practical application.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue the mutually respectful and ongoing relationship with Texas' three federally-recognized tribal nations ▪ Partner with system stakeholders to promote ongoing knowledge and understanding of the ICWA and its importance ▪ Work with national ICWA consultant and Columbia Law School on understanding and implementation of new Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Guidelines and the use of Peacemaking in state courts ▪ Update the ICWA Section and ICWA Bench Cards in the CPS Judicial Bench Book ▪ Continue to support Senior Peacemaker Joann Battise in as Children's Commission member ▪ Staff and monitor the Tribal/State Workgroup meetings, strategies, timelines, and work product for FY2016, including monthly strategy meetings with Senior Peacemaker Battise and DFPS ▪ Partner with DFPS to support the biannual tribal/state collaborative meetings ▪ Partner with the Alabama-Coushatta to support their judicial symposiums with content and finances ▪ Assist with any CIP grant application, as requested and appropriate ▪ Further connections with Ysleta del Sur Pueblo and Kickapoo tribes through the DFPS tribal/state meetings, Annual Conference of the Native American Section of the State Bar and other networking opportunities ▪ Continue to collaborate with the Children's Bureau and the participants of the CIP Peer to Peer Exchange related to the Model ICWA Judicial Curriculum and other best practices for Texas 	<p>The Tribal/State Collaborative Workgroup continues to meet monthly and develop new projects for Texas. Most recently, students from Columbia Law School studied and wrote about 1) the new ICWA BIA Guidelines and Proposed Rule, and 2) Peacemaking Principles in state court. Also, the Annual Conference of the Native American Section of the State Bar was January 29th and provided good information as well as networking opportunities.</p> <p>The Workgroup will continue to develop new trainings to education judges and attorneys about amendments to the Texas Family Code that requires judges to ask all parties present at each Adversary, Status, and Permanency hearing whether the child or the child's family has any Native American heritage and identify any Native American tribe with which the child may be associated.</p>	<p>\$8,000.00</p>

2.2E Trauma Informed: Support child welfare system efforts to shift toward trauma informed practice.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support Texas CASA efforts to identify and survey trauma knowledge, training available, training accessed, results or impact of training 	<p>Children's Commission partnered with Texas CASA on a project to survey child welfare stakeholders about the various types of trauma training and programs being offered and utilized around the state. Texas CASA developed and</p>	<p>\$0.00</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sponsor and support additional training events for stakeholders with particular focus on attorneys ad litem ▪ Identify training needs for judges and attorneys and develop and promote training and tools for trauma- informed care ▪ Continue to focus on child well-being and permanency ▪ Include information about trauma informed care in the CPS Judicial Bench Book ▪ Liaise with and participate as a partner in the various trauma-informed workgroups and collaboratives ▪ Monitor the trauma informed care trainings, workgroups, meetings, strategies, timelines and provide reports to the Children's Commission and other stakeholders, as appropriate 	<p>deployed the survey in the Summer of 2015 and issued a comprehensive report in October 2015. Next Texas CASA will collaborate with the Children's Commission to develop an Attorney ad Litem training on trauma. Also, the Children's Commission continues to support DFPS's shift to a trauma-informed care system and align judicial and attorney training about trauma- informed care with CASA, DFPS and other child welfare stakeholders. The 2015 annual judicial conference included a lengthy session on well-being. The 2016 conference may also include well-being sessions, but specific topics and presentations have not yet been identified.</p> <p>The Child Protection Law Bench Book includes a chapter on trauma. Senate Bill 125 became effective on September 1, 2015, which requires DFPS to develop and implement a comprehensive assessment that includes a trauma screening within 45 days of a child entering conservatorship.</p> <p>DFPS is currently developing a Texas-specific Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessment. The new CANS will be rolled out in certain areas in June 2016. Training on the CANS starts in February.</p>	
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2.2F Child Safety: Parental Child Safety Placements (PCSP).

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct Round Table (RT) discussion on Parental Child Safety Placements ▪ Issue PCSP Report with Recommendations ▪ Issue JIR Letter ▪ Identify additional training issues for judges and attorneys ▪ Develop helpful judicial and attorney resources and tools ▪ Work with legal aid providers or other child welfare partners to assist with appropriate closure of PCSPs ▪ Work with Texas Legislature, as appropriate 	<p>A RT on Parental Child Safety Placements was held on August 28, 2015 and a report from the Round Table was issued in December 2015. Recommendations from the report include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapter 34 Agreements. DFPS should endeavor to supplement all PCSP Agreements with a Chapter 34 agreement at the beginning of the PCSP arrangement. 2. DFPS should consider overhauling its day care approval process. There are numerous steps and built-in delays associated with collecting information and paperwork to support approval of day care. 3. DFPS may want to consider whether it can dedicate staff to assist caregivers in determining eligibility and accessing the various benefits and community services that may be available to help support the placement. 4. DFPS should explore whether the use of homemaking contracts can help alleviate minor or short-term problems that are safety hazards to children, such as a dirty house. DFPS should also explore the possibility of providing online tutorials or lessons for parents who need education about a medical condition, behavioral problems that are associated with a child's illness, or pain associated with an undiagnosed illness or injury. 5. Housing. DFPS should make efforts to open dialogue about housing needs for families, explore / map the housing process. 	<p>\$0.00</p>

	<p>6. DFPS should examine the effectiveness of pilots authorized by SB434 (82nd Session) and consider whether they should and can be replicated elsewhere. Also, DFPS must make a concerted effort to educate and apprise District and County Attorneys of all legal options available to parents, including the option of filing for appropriate, complete, and meaningful protective orders.</p> <p>7. Local prosecutors and attorneys representing DFPS may need additional training on the necessity and practicability of seeking and drafting meaningful and adequate protective orders; judges and attorneys may need additional training on the proper use and utility of Texas Family Code Sections 262.205 and 262.113.</p> <p>8. Amend Texas Family Code Chapter 34. Remove unnecessary procedural protections set out in the Family Code and allow use of an unsworn affidavit, thereby eliminating the need for a Notary. Also, eliminate notice by first class mail, return receipt requested since Chapter 34 Agreement does not actually bind another parent who appears in court and objects to the Agreement. The same barrier exists with regard to whether there is a court of continuing jurisdiction.</p> <p>9. Legislative Funding for Caseworkers. After an evaluation of the piloted PCSP workers in Region 3, DFPS should consider seeking funding for kinship-type caseworkers to work with PCSP caregivers or additional specialized PCSP staff to fulfill more of a caseworker-type role.</p> <p>Link to the report here: http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/47987/PCSP-ROUND-TABLE-REPORT-FINAL.pdf</p> <p>The Children’s Commission issued a JIR Letter on PSCPs on September 4, 2015. Link to the JIR on PCSPs here: http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/32438/PCSP%20JIR.pdf</p>	
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2.2G Child Fatalities: Protect Our Kids (POK) Commission.

2016 Action Steps	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to support POK Commission through December 31, 2015 ▪ Write POK Report, including recommendations related to preventing child fatalities due to abuse or neglect ▪ Participate in agency-run collaborative to guide state policy and practice ▪ Collaborate with 85th Texas Legislature on this matter, as appropriate 	<p>The POK Commission was established by Senate Bill 66 during the 83rd Legislative Session and was charged with identifying promising practices and strategies to address and reduce fatalities from child abuse and neglect, and recommending a comprehensive statewide strategy for reducing those fatalities. The POK Commission met several times in FY2015 and divided its work into four subcommittees: Data, Child Fatality Review Team Support, Prevention, and Sustainability. The POK Commission submitted a report to the Legislature on December 31, 2015. Key recommendations include:</p>	<p>\$1000.00</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DFPS Commissioner should create a permanent, high-level advisory board to make recommendations regarding Texas' efforts for the prevention of child abuse and neglect for a state strategy to promote child safety and well-being through methods such as enhanced data collection and analysis, and expansion of evidenced based and promising practice programs. This Prevention Advisory Board should include representatives such as pediatricians, judges, agency representatives, prosecutors, medical examiners, provider groups, and policy experts in prevention, community advocacy or similar disciplines. 2. DFPS, DSHS and the Prevention Advisory Board should develop and maintain an inventory of the top evidence-based and promising practices addressing child abuse fatality prevention and cost per family, including population-based strategies currently in Texas and location and population-based strategies not in Texas. 3. The State should better support local Child Fatality Review Teams to ensure coordination, training, and consistency. 4. The State should ensure that all Texas counties have a Child Fatality Review Team and should expedite the CFRT case review process. 5. DSHS and DFPS should determine how to better use available data to inform a public health approach to preventing child fatalities and continue to support the work already underway in the Dept's "Strategic Plan to Reduce Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities." 6. The State should evaluate currently available child fatality data resources (CPS and CFRT data) and develop strategies to include near-fatalities. 	
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2.2H Permanency and Wellbeing: Additional specific activities intended to heighten awareness about child permanency and wellbeing.

2016 Action Steps	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support efforts to roll out “New Culture of Permanency” at Regional Permanency Summits throughout all DFPS regions ▪ JIR to attend various permanency summits ▪ Include importance of permanency and new permanency culture philosophy and ideas at child welfare judicial conferences ▪ Host foster youth panel at CWJC ▪ Include new legislation in CPS Judicial Bench Book ▪ Design Bench Cards to include well-being and permanency best practices 	<p>The Children’s Commission hosted Amelia Franck Meyer at the annual Child Welfare Judges Conference in August 2015, to train judges on the new Culture of Permanency work initiated by DFPS statewide. Both JIRs have been trained by Ms. Franck-Meyer. The CC sponsored / hosted a foster youth panel on well-being at the August 2015 judges’ conference, and the CPS Bench Book was updated with new legislation and information about well-being and transitioning youth. Bench cards were updated to include specific well-being and permanency best practice questions and issues. The Children’s Commission has offered to sponsor Ms. Franck-Meyer again in August 2016 to present at the Advanced Family Law One Day Child Abuse and Neglect Track. Details are pending.</p>	<p>\$0.00</p>

2.2I Human Trafficking: Participate on Statewide Human Trafficking (HT) Prevention Task Force and work with child welfare community on child welfare related issues such as identification, services, training, data collection, and collaboration.

2016 Action Steps	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate with Office of Attorney General and statewide HT Task Force ▪ Work with DFPS on identification and assessment of children from child welfare system who are victims or at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking ▪ Gain understanding of existing data collection efforts and identify additional or new data collection elements or efforts needed ▪ Coordinate and collaborate with child welfare agency and other child welfare partners on various programs and efforts to combat HT occurring a local or regional levels ▪ Understand, participate, and help identify HT placements and services available to foster children who are trafficked or at risk of being trafficked ▪ Identify training needs for judges, attorneys, and other stakeholders ▪ Collaborate on prevention efforts at state, regional and local levels as appropriate 	<p>January was Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention Month. The Children’s Commission joined an effort to spread awareness about the dangers of human trafficking and the vulnerability of youth in care by releasing several tweets, updating content on the human trafficking page of the Children’s Commission website, and issuing a JIR letter. In the coming months, Children’s Commission staff will continue to participate in the Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force coordinated through the Office of the Texas Attorney General.</p>	\$1000.00

2.4A. Legal Representation Committee. The committee exists to explore various aspects of legal representation in Texas child welfare cases, including due process, financial impact on the state and counties, policy and legislation that supports the legal representation system, outreach, education, training, standards of representation, timely and meaningful court hearings, and high quality legal advocacy.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff and support the LRS workgroup by hosting / facilitating meetings, reimbursing travel expenses for workgroup members, developing agendas and preparing meeting materials, collecting attendee information and match ▪ Meet at least twice throughout 2015 and 2016 to discuss ▪ Develop and adopt statewide standards of representation ▪ Continue to develop and improve county relationships and local relationships ▪ Act as a resource for the Texas Legislature 	<p>LRC met on 1/29/16 to discuss the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinstatement of Parental Rights - Online training for Attorneys Ad Litem - Improving relationships, communication and cross training between TDCAA and state regional attorneys - Strengthening Relationships with County Organizations - Standards of Representation for Children and Parents - Follow up to 2011 Legal Representation Study - Possible Family Code amendments related to appointing CASA in Court Ordered Services Cases - Texas Board of Legal Specialization Application <p>LRC will meet again in July and November 2016.</p>	\$5,000.00

2.4B Parent Representation Project: (McLennan County contracts with private law firms for all legal representation of parents.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with McLennan County to develop a one-day training event for attorneys, CPS caseworkers, CASA volunteers, and other community stakeholders • Work with District Judge to refine contract to insert training requirements and standards of representation • Continue to survey and interview firm attorneys, CPS caseworkers, CASA volunteers, parents and other community stakeholders about the challenges and benefits associated with the project • Attempt a more in-depth parent survey to gather information from the parents' perspective on the quality of their representation • Additional court observation to gain a better understanding of court-specific procedures and culture, methods of advocacy, and how the parties relate to one another 	<p>In 2015, the Children's Commission evaluated the private contract appointment set-up in Waco and interviewed several parent attorneys, the prosecutor, and a handful of parents. Training needs were identified as a result.</p> <p>For FY2016, the Children's Commission will work with Judge Gary Coley to bring a live training event to McLennan County for attorneys who appear on the CPS docket. Commission staff is working with Judge Coley regarding dates, speakers, and topics for the live training. Also, McLennan County has been added to the group of Child Protection Courts so the CPS docket will transition to an associate judge and data will migrate to the child protection case management system or CPCMS that is maintained by Office of Court Administration.</p>	<p>\$1000.00</p>

2.4D Mediation in Child Protection Cases.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UT will study the best practices and cost-effectiveness of mediation for Travis County and will develop a cost formula that can be applied to other counties in Texas ▪ The Children's Commission will use the research framework and questions developed in this project with other Texas counties ▪ The project will aim to answer four broad research questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What types of child protection cases are best suited for resolution through mediation? – When in the life-cycle of a case is the optimal time for mediation to occur? – How are outcomes affected by mediation, including the legal resolution of the case, child wellbeing, and time to permanency? – Is mediation a cost-effective strategy for resolving child protection cases? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal resolution will be measured by determining whether all of the legal issues were resolved by mediation, as 	<p>In September 2014, UT applied for a grant to help determine the best practices and cost-effectiveness of mediation for Travis County, Texas. This project also aimed to develop cost formula that could be applied to other counties in the state and to provide a research framework and questions that can be used by other counties. One goal of the project was to determine the costs of mediation measured by the full costs associated with cases that are resolved prior to mediation, at mediation, and at trial and include all real costs paid by the courts and departments to prepare and service the case, in addition to the cost of mediation, foster care placement, and any other relevant costs. A cost analysis of mediation in Travis County Family Courts was submitted in November 2015, but due to data delays associated with the SACWIS / child welfare system, the final report in the project has been delayed and will be processed at year end as a no-cost extension so the project may be completed in FY2016. Link to the Cost Report here: http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/media/54517/Model-Court-Cost-Analysis-Memo-FINAL.pdf</p> <p>The final report will be an evidence-based analysis of best practices in mediation and whether mediation in child protection cases is a more cost effective strategy than going to trial without mediation, and whether mediation can be associated with a shorter time to permanency and case resolution.</p>	<p>No Cost Extension</p> <p>\$2,776.00</p>

<p>compared to being partially resolved or not resolved (moving to trial).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The timing and type of outcome of the case will be measured in three ways: time to legal resolution or final order (whatever the outcome), the type of final order (reunification, adoption, PMC to the Department or relative), and time to exit from foster care. Comparisons between cases that are resolved prior to mediation, at mediation, and at trial will be made. ○ Cost of the case will be measured by the full costs associated with cases that are resolved prior to mediation, at mediation, and at trial. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UT will publish a final report in FY2016 ▪ Based on report, the Children’s Commission will determine whether to fund additional mediation projects to help develop best practices or training 	<p>In addition to this study, Children’s Commission staff began meeting with CPS mediation experts in late 2015 to discuss a long-term project, which may include curriculum development or determining promising practices within the state. This initiative is in the planning process and updates will be provided at the next commission meeting.</p>	
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2.5A Children’s Commission Round Tables: Round Tables (RT) bring together subject matter experts, judicial and executive branch leaders, and key policymakers to discuss issues affecting child welfare in the State of Texas.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with DFPS to identify RT topics ▪ Form a workgroup to define state purpose and goal of RT, determine format, and develop an agenda ▪ Facilitate and staff workgroup meetings to develop materials, data required, and identify speakers and moderators ▪ Secure meeting location, invitations, attendee lists, travel, and match forms ▪ Produce written report from the RT within 4 to 6 months and disseminate to participants and stakeholders 	<p>Please see the Parental Child Safety Placement project (2.2F) for recent RT details. In April 2016, the Children’s Commission will host a Kids In Court RT to examine generally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - when should kids be in court - how should they get there - how should courts accommodate their presence - what are reasonable, acceptable, quality alternatives to physical presence - What is the role of the attorney and guardian ad litem in ensuring the child’s voice is heard at court 	<p>\$5,000.00</p>

2.5B Jurist in Residence: Jurist in Residence acts as a consultant, trainer, and speaker to provide expert and seasoned judicial advice on matters affecting courts and legal system handling of child welfare cases and issues.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with retired, experienced judges with child welfare experience to serve as JIRs ▪ Attend conference calls, meetings, and conferences as requested / needed 	<p>The Jurist in Residence (JIR) position was created to foster judicial leadership and promote greater expertise among child protection judges. The JIR acts as a consultant, trainer, and speaker to provide expert and seasoned judicial advice on matters affecting courts and legal system handling of child</p>	<p>\$40,000.00</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Publish communiqués and letters on emerging, highly pertinent, and changing policy, laws, and practice that may be of interest to judges hearing CPS cases ▪ JIRs will market scholarship and conference attendance opportunities ▪ Assist with writing JIR letters, distribute to the CPS judge listserv, and post JIR letters on the CC website ▪ Provide shorter communications with judges regarding specific training opportunities and other matters of interest 	<p>welfare cases and issues. Additionally, informational letter and “blasts” concerning items of interests, such as training events, are routinely issued. In FY2016, the JIR has published newsletters or news blasts on the following topics: 1) Legislative Update from the 84th Legislative Session; 2) Parental Child Safety Placements; 3) Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment; 4) Extended Health Care Benefits for Former Foster Youth; 5) New Data on Education Outcomes of Children in Foster Care; 6) Every Student Succeeds Act; 7) ICWA and <i>In re V.L.R.</i>; 8) January is Human Trafficking Prevention Month.</p> <p>Additionally, the JIRs will assist with development of curriculum for the annual Child Welfare Judges Conference and review updates of the Child Protection Law Bench Book.</p>	
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2.5C Assistance to Local Jurisdictions.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work to assist local communities and jurisdictions in providing training, collaborative events, and leadership forums to help improve local child welfare systems 	<p>New for FY2016. Commission staff has provided or will provide training on child welfare topics in a number of local jurisdictions during this fiscal year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education of Children in Foster Care, Child Protection Courts of the Rio Grande Valley, October 2015 - ICWA, Travis County, January 2016 - Legislative Update, Child Protection Court of the Hill Country, April 2016 	<p>0.00 May involve staff travel, which is included in operating budget</p>

2.5D Speaker and Consultant Support.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Engage with consultants and experts, as needed to help further Children’s Commission goals, including but not limited to, strategic planning, training, and resource or material development, publication, and distribution 	<p>For 2016, the Children’s Commission will engage with a consultant to help explore establishing a Center for Child Welfare Policy.</p>	<p>\$5,000.00</p>

2.5E Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Stakeholder Input: The federal CFSR for Texas is scheduled for 2016. Part of the process includes a statewide assessment conducted by the child welfare agency and child welfare stakeholders.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in the 2016 CFSR onsite review ▪ Participate in developing any Program Improvement Plan 	<p>The federal CFSR is scheduled for June 2016. In FY2015, the Children’s Commission facilitated three stakeholder meetings on November 14, 2014, December 19, 2014, and January 23, 2015. Each meeting was attended by approximately 50 stakeholders representing the judiciary, child placing agencies, child advocacy groups, DFPS management, licensing, contracts, and administration, as well as personnel from the Administration of Children and Families. CFSR Stakeholder Group 1 - Case Review System; CFSR Stakeholder Group 2 - the Service Array and Agency Response to</p>	<p>\$1,000.00</p>

	Community; and CFSR Stakeholder Group 3 – the Foster/Adoption Licensing, Recruitment and Retention, to include Foster and Adoptive Family Training. The Department included an analysis of the stakeholder roundtables in its Child and Family State Plan and submitted to ACF in June 2015. In January 2016, DFPS submitted its CFSR Statewide Assessment.	
TOTAL BASIC PROJECTS		\$103,376.00

TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT

2.1A Texas Center for the Judiciary (TCJ): Provides specialized judicial education and training opportunities for active, retired and former Texas appellate, district and county court at law judges, as well as associate judges and court personnel. The Texas Center is designated by the Court of Criminal Appeals as the official registrar of continuing judicial education.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with TCJ to design curriculum and agenda for 2016 Child Welfare Judges Conference ▪ Conduct periodic planning calls, including creation of workgroup to plan agenda ▪ Determine number of attendees TCJ/budget can accommodate ▪ Determine attendee criteria ▪ Coordinate with OCA about inclusion of CPC staff ▪ Identify whether meeting space needed for CPC judges and court coordinators ▪ Develop method of handling travel reimbursements ▪ Identify topics and speakers ▪ Develop agenda ▪ Monitor logistical and other planning information ▪ Meet in person 4-6 weeks in advance of event to discuss organizational responsibilities and duties ▪ Approve attendee list ▪ Survey participants for increases in knowledge and other feedback ▪ Evaluate conference planning process ▪ Evaluate participant feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Incorporate feedback into FY2017 planning, as appropriate 	<p>The 2015 annual judicial conference was held on August 17-19, 2015 and was attended by 90 judges. Topics included: Creating a Culture of Permanency, Judges’ Strategies for Getting Kids to Permanency, Presentation by Texas CASA, 84th Legislative Session Update, Handling Wellbeing Issue from the Bench, Reasonable Efforts in CPS Cases, Tips for Properly Filing and Responding to Interventions in CPS Cases, Panel presentation by DFPS executives, NCSC Weighted Caseload Information Session and Study, Protect our Kids: Texas Efforts to Reduce Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities, Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, and Human Trafficking. The State Tribal Collaborative also hosted a half-day session on Monday, August 17th, and six tribal peacemakers attended the judicial conference on August 18 and 19. Also, the Child Protection specialty courts held a half-day meeting immediately prior to the conference and utilized the time to discuss technology that will support their work and best practices. Commission staff and TCJ conducted post-conference evaluations as part of CQI and identified potential new topics for the 2016 conference, which is scheduled for November 14-16 in Austin. Planning for the conference will begin in February 2016.</p>	<p>\$235,834.00</p> <p>Includes two Texas judicial conferences scholarships to one national conference, judicial technical assistance, and TCJ overhead to organize and host conferences</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partner with TCJ to offer scholarships to the 2016 NCJFCJ Annual Conference ▪ Provide input into criteria for scholarships and determines number of scholarships to be awarded ▪ Approve scholarship process and list of scholarship recipients prior to notification ▪ Evaluate TCJ’s scholarship process for the NCJFCJ conference ▪ Evaluate participant feedback ▪ Incorporate feedback about the planning process, participant experience, and participant opinion about the training into the FY2017 planning, as appropriate 	<p>The Annual NCJFCJ Conference was held in Austin on July 26-29, 2015. The Children’s Commission, through its grant to TCJ, provided scholarships to 30 Texas judges. The next annual NCJFCJ conference will be held July 17-20 in Monterrey, California. As with previous NCJFCJ conferences, criteria will be established for the scholarships. The application process for scholarships to the conference will open in March or April 2016.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide partial funding for TCJ’s annual Family Justice Conference ▪ Provide input into the content of the child abuse and neglect presentation, track, or agenda ▪ Provide feedback regarding judges invited to and slated to attend the child abuse and neglect portion of the conference, including criteria for attending presentation or track ▪ Evaluate feedback solicited by TCJ about the child abuse and neglect portion or event ▪ Conducts CQI on the planning process, event content, and relevant speakers 	<p>The 2016 Family Justice Conference was held in Bastrop January 25-26 and CIP funds were used for a half-day child abuse and neglect track. The sessions on the child abuse and neglect track at the Family Justice Conference included Child Safety and Domestic Violence, Child Fatalities, and the Tricks and Traps of Human Trafficking Trials. The three sessions were attended by approximately 100 judges.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide funds for judicial technical assistance, which may be used for speakers, meeting support and facilitation. 	<p>FY 2015 CIP funds were used to fund speakers and facilitators at several multidisciplinary or judicial events such as the CFSR meetings hosted in November, December and January 2015 (see Basic Committee Report item 2.5E) and PCSP Round Table held on August 28, 2015 (see Basic Committee Report item 2.2F). No funds have been expended to date in FY 2016.</p>	
<p><i>2.1B Texas Child Protection Law Bench Book: The Bench Book was created in 2010 and has been updated with legislative changes as recently as the 2015 Session. It is available online through the Children’s Commission, Texas Center for the Judiciary, and Office of Court Administration websites.</i></p>		
<p>2016 Action Steps:</p>	<p>Progress Report</p>	<p>FY2016 BUDGET</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain a Child Protection Law Bench Book that outlines the statutory requirements for judges handling child protection cases, including topical sections, and checklists ▪ Disseminate Bench Book with 2016 updates at annual child welfare judicial conference, as well as to all new judges hearing CPS cases, and upon request ▪ Maintain an updated Bench Book on the Children’s Commission’s website ▪ Ensure all statutory citations are maintained and connected to a statutory resource hosted by LawBox ▪ Update the Bench Book with new information as needed ▪ Track distribution of Bench Book ▪ Convene the Bench Book workgroup at least once in FY2016 in person or via conference call to review substantive changes and approve updates 	<p>Bench Book updated with 2015 legislative changes in August 2015 and distribution of 100 copies occurred at the August 2015 Child Welfare Judges Conference. Also, Bench Cards were modified based on judicial feedback and distributed to judges at 2015 Conference. The Bench Book was posted online on the Children’s Commission website and connected to LawBox (web citation service) in October 2015. Children’s Commission staff is currently working on revisions to the next version of the Bench Book, which will be disseminated at the Child Welfare Judges Conference in November 2016.</p> <p>Staff will reconvene the Bench Book workgroup to discuss additional changes needed to the Bench Book between today and the next commission meeting.</p>	<p>\$10,000.00</p> <p>Includes 3600.00 LawBox, 6400.00 for printing and in-person meeting support</p>
<p><i>2.1C Trial Skills Training (TST): A hands-on training designed to improve the litigation skills of child welfare law attorneys in order to raise the caliber of legal services to children and families in child protection cases; includes fictional CPS fact pattern, with case file covering all statutory hearings building up to final trial; gives parent, child, and state attorneys litigation exercises in the CPS context; includes lectures and demonstrations from trained faculty comprised of senior attorneys and judges, followed by personal coaching; and is based on a Texas-specific case scenario with adapted pleadings and forms created for a termination lawsuit.</i></p>		

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convene two, 3-day TST events that include lectures, demonstrations, and practice sessions with live witnesses. ▪ Follow same flow as a final trial in a CPS case ▪ Include hands-on practice of trial skills with the assistance of professional, live witnesses, videography, and coaching by trained faculty ▪ Ensure attorney review of practice session with a faculty member for additional feedback ▪ Evaluate each TST event ▪ Edit and update TST curriculum and materials, as necessary 	<p>TST events were held in October 2014 and April 2015, training 42 Texas attorneys from geographically diverse population. Extensive CQI conducted after each TST event with changes incorporated into the next TST program. In FY2015, four new TST faculty members were trained and the Children’s Justice Act agreed to cover the cost of participants who represent the state in CPS proceedings. In September, the Children’s Commission distributed an announcement about the November 2015 TST to its JIR listserv. To date, 21 new attendees have been selected for the April 2016 TST in Austin.</p>	<p>\$69,200.00 Change pending</p> <p>Includes all expenses associated with TST</p> <p>\$26,250.00 Designated for faculty scholarships</p>
<p><i>2.1D Scholarships: Children’s Commission offers speaker fees, exam waiver fees, and training scholarships for 2 – 3 attorney trainings each year.</i></p>		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide scholarships to State Bar of Texas Advanced Family Law One-Day Child Abuse and Neglect Track Workshop, National Association of Counsel for Children Annual Conference and every-other year, the American Bar Association Conference on Parent and Child Representation ▪ Determine which conferences scholarships will be awarded in FY2016, criteria for award, and amount of scholarship ▪ Create application process, evaluate each scholarship event and process and make CQI changes, as appropriate ▪ Award scholarships pursuant to defined processes, and collect evaluation data from attendees, as appropriate ▪ Amend scholarship process, as necessary, and make recommendations regarding the 2016-2017 funding 	<p>The Children’s Commission administers three attorney scholarships: (1) The State Bar of Texas (SBOT) Child Abuse and Neglect 1-Day Workshop in San Antonio, Texas, on August 5th, 2015. 94 registration scholarships were awarded to qualified attorneys who represented the state, parents, or children on a CPS docket, most of whom attended the live CLE in San Antonio and the remainder watching via video replay in October. Of these, 79 scholarship awardees completed a post-event survey, with responses showing that 76% of these awardees would not have attended the CLE without a scholarship. Also, presentations on domestic violence in CPS cases, case law update, and a cross-examination of a live expert witness were all well received. (2) The bi-annual ABA Conference held in Washington DC on July 22-23rd on Children and the Law was attended by 5 Texas awardees, while the ABA Conference for Parent Attorneys on July 24-25th was attended by 6 awardees. All awardees to the ABA conferences received support from their presiding or appointing judge to be selected to attend and to receive up to \$1250 in reimbursement funds. All 11 awardees responded to the post-event survey that attending the ABA conference would not have been possible without financial assistance from the Children’s Commission. Post-event surveys indicated the awardees’ gains in knowledge on relevant topics and intentions to change current practices or implement new ones based on the ABA Conference curriculum. (3) The NACC Annual Conference on August 24-27th in Monterey, CA was attended by 4 Texas Child Welfare Law Specialists on Children’s Commission registration scholarships. Post-event survey results show that 100% of the awardees would not have attended without a Commission scholarship and that all awardees have a current practice which they plan to change and/or a new practice</p>	<p>\$10,000.00 Advanced Family Law One-Day Child Abuse / Neglect Track</p> <p>\$10,000.00 Annual NACC Conference</p>

	which they plan to implement as a result of knowledge gained at the NACC Conference.	
2.1E CASA will continue to work on assessing trauma knowledge and services among the child welfare community and help provide trauma-related training to attorneys ad litem. CASA will offer scholarships to attend the Annual CASA meeting in FY2016.		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute the 2015 Workforce Survey on Trauma-Informed Care within the Child Welfare System in Texas report through in-person and stakeholder meetings ▪ Work with the Children’s Commission to develop quality training opportunities for attorneys ad litem to promote trauma-informed care knowledge and approaches to representing children and parents in child protection cases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This will be accomplished by conducting at least two meetings with local CASA programs and Attorney ad Litem stakeholder groups to discuss need and best practice ideas around trauma-informed care training and practices and identify best training practices in the CASA network and in attorney training opportunities. ▪ Draft at least one policy change priority, based on the data from the survey, aimed at improving trauma-informed care training and practices in the Texas child welfare system ▪ Meet and collaboratively work with DFPS regarding the agency’s existing trauma-informed care training practices and offer recommendations, based on the Trauma Survey, for expanding their current curriculum to integrate information about trauma and its impact on children ▪ Provide a 3-hour institute at the 2016 Texas CASA Annual Conference on trauma-informed care and lessons learned ▪ Register and provide for travel expenses for up to 10 Attorneys ad Litem to attend the 2016 Texas CASA conference 	<p>CASA’s FY2015 projects increased the understanding of the impact of trauma to help CASA volunteers, CPS caseworkers, attorneys, judges, placement providers, therapeutic providers, kinship and families implement strategies that positively impact well-being and permanency outcomes. Texas CASA developed a survey to assess trauma informed training, practice, use and effectiveness. Read more about the CASA Trauma Survey under Basic Committee item 2.2E. Link to the CASA Trauma Report here. http://texascasa.org/understanding-trauma-informed-care-in-texas/</p>	\$29,358.00
2.1F State Bar of Texas Online Training: SBOT makes the online training available for free or low cost to parent, child and state legal representatives who take CPS appointments.		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with State Bar of Texas to add 2-4 topics to the online CPS library ▪ Identify topics and advise on content 	<p>In partnership with the State Bar, the following online courses were made available to court-appointed attorneys and state and DFPS attorneys: 1) Advocating for Youth Aging Out of Foster Care; 2) Resources and Processes for</p>	<p>\$2,500.00</p> <p>Includes SBOT online</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify speakers and arrange dates for filming with SBOT ▪ Publicize CLE on website and through other methods such as JIR letter, announcements at Commission meetings and other events ▪ Provide scholarships based on financial need to attorneys in order to access the SBOT online CPS library 	<p>Representing Crossover Youth with Disabilities; 3) Special Education Advocacy for Kids in the Foster Care System; 4) Representing Teen Parents in CPS Cases; 5) Practice Tips on Representing Children; 6) Representing Parents in CPS Cases; 7) Preserving Error and Appeals Issues in CPS cases; 8) Representing Children in CPS Cases, Updated July 2013; 9) Trial Skills in the CPS Case; 10) Moving from Ordinary to Extraordinary Representation in CPS Cases; 11) Child Protection Legislative Update: 84th Legislative Session; and 12) Thinking Ahead: Dealing with Appeals Issues in CPS Cases. The most recent webinars (numbers 10, 11, and 12) were filmed on July 21 2015 at the SBOT and were available live at a discounted rate to attorneys and judges across the state. These were created with the assistance of Commission staff and publicized through JIRs to the judicial d-list and in concert with the SBOT's online arm (Texas Bar CLE). Additionally, the SBOT has added the Advanced Family Law One-Day Child Abuse and Neglect Workshop mentioned above to this roster as per Commission request in 2014. The SBOT's online library of CPS-related webinars is available at a discounted rate of \$25.00 per webinar for attorneys who take cases on the CPS docket. August 23, 2016 will be the next one-day of taping reserved for the Commission at the SBOT recording studio.</p>	<p>training taped during the one-day per year event, and all costs associated with Commission-produced webinars (next item)</p>
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2.1G Children's Commission sponsored and hosted webinars for attorneys ad litem, judges, stakeholders.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sponsor and host a series of webinars on various topics relevant to child welfare ▪ Ensure training is made available to all attorneys ad litem, parent attorneys, and attorneys representing the State of Texas, as well as judges and stakeholders ▪ Advise on content ▪ Seek Continuing Legal Education credit for each webinar ▪ Post a link to the webinar on website ▪ Notify potential viewers via electronic means ▪ Monitor the number of viewers ▪ Survey for quality of process, content and speakers/presentations ▪ CQI the process and the content 	<p>New for 2016. Since the last commission meeting, staff has conducted research of learning management systems and webinar-type technology to determine the best and most economical method of providing online training. Additionally, staff consulted with the National Association of Counsel for Children regarding effective training evaluation. A list of possible training topics and speakers has been developed, which includes survey responses from attorney scholarship recipients regarding the need for additional training.</p> <p>In February the Children's Commission started a free trial with GoToTraining and anticipates signing a contract within 30-60 days.</p>	<p>Included in above item</p>

2.1H Children's Commission Provides Reimbursement for CWLS Exam Fee and CWLS Recertification for Successful Child Welfare Law Specialists.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide NACC Child Welfare Law Specialization Exam Fee Waivers for attorneys who become certified as CWLS ▪ Provides partial reimbursement for CWLS who are successfully recertified by NACC 	<p>The Children's Commission offers reimbursement of the Certification Exam Fee for Texas attorneys and judges who successfully qualify for and pass the Child Welfare Specialist Exam. The cost of the fee to take the Child Welfare Certification Exam is \$350 per attorney. Additionally,</p>	<p>\$5,000.00</p>

	assistance is available to Texas attorneys and judges who are seeking re-certification of their CWLS every five years, which is reimbursed at \$190. Commission staff is working with the NACC on the FY 2016 grant application for the certification/recertification.	
2.1I Regional Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) Attorney Training.		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide support for speaker fees, facility fees and other expenses related to the annual Department of Family and Protective Services Regional Attorney Training 	<p>DFPS held a regional attorney training event in November 2015 for approximately 100 attorneys and staff who provide legal representation to the State of Texas in approximately half the counties in the state. The attorneys were trained on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DFPS Transformation Update - DFPS Administrative Process Through the Lens of Non-DFPS Attorneys - Strategies for Protecting the Disabled & Elderly Population - ICWA from the Tribe's Perspective - Human Trafficking 101 for Lawyers - Myths and Facts of Drug Testing - Overview of Child Advocacy Centers - Quick, Down and Dirty CPS Trial Skills 	\$5,000.00
2.1J Local Attorney Ad Litem Training: Keeping Infants and Toddlers Safe (KITS) Conference held in Houston each year.		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide support for Keeping Infants and Toddlers Safe conference held in Houston each year ▪ Provide notice of conference to judges and attorneys ▪ Seek results of evaluations from organizers ▪ Conduct CQI of process and training content 	<p>KITS Conference was held on June 11-12, 2015 and was a multi-track training for attorneys representing children, parents, and DFPS, and child welfare professionals. In 2016, the KITS conference will be held June 16-17 in Houston. Commission staff is assisting with development of the agenda.</p>	\$13,060.00
2.4C Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS): The goal of the project is to establish a child welfare specialization in with the Texas Board of Legal Specialization to help improve the quality of legal representation in child protection hearings.		
2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide staff support to the TBLS Advisory Committee for FY2016 ▪ Participate on the Advisory Committee ▪ Assist with the following tasks: writing standards or qualifications for attorney eligibility, writing the specialization exam, evaluating applications, and providing additional assistance to the Texas Board of Legal Specialization, as requested ▪ Participate in keeping all child welfare partners informed of progress 	<p>The Children's Commission submitted a full application for legal specialization in child welfare law to the Texas Board of Legal Specialization (TBLS) on Friday April 2015 and a revised application in September 2015. The revised application was based on feedback from the attorneys and judges who serve as the Advisory Committee to oversee the development of testing standards and to assist in writing the exam. Commission staff attended the TBLS board meeting in December 2015 and the application is currently under consideration by the TBLS board. TBLS circulated the proposed standards for comment by the advisory commissions of other legal specializations after the</p>	\$5,000.00

	December board meeting. If the specialization was approved, the first exam date will likely be in 2017.	
TOTAL TRAINING PROJECTS		\$421,202.00

DATA/TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE REPORT

2.3A Notice and Engagement Tool: The project involves using non-confidential case data to provide email notice to users about upcoming hearings. OCA will continue to expand the use, maintain, and enhance as appropriate.

2016 Action Steps:	2015 Progress Update	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCA will maintain the web tool that allows establishing a user ID, searching for a child / case, and setting timely email alerts ▪ Children’s Commission will periodically re-issue announcement to various audiences ▪ Children’s Commission will develop a survey tool to assess the usefulness, effectiveness and accuracy of the system ▪ System login and search information will be monitored ▪ Notices will be examined to evaluate whether the correct hearing data is populating according to search criteria ▪ OCA will report to the Children’s Commission the number of users and hearings included in alerts sent by the system 	<p>The project involves using non-confidential case data to provide notice to parties and interested persons about upcoming hearings, and is distributed via email. As of January 31, 2016, there were 250 users. Between September 1, 2015 and January 13, 2016, the system generated 882 notifications related to 558 different hearings.</p>	<p align="right">\$324,467.00</p>

2.3B Videoconferencing: The video conferencing project enables children involved in child abuse and neglect cases to participate in permanency and placement review hearings without them being physically present in the courtroom.

2016 Action Steps:	2015 Progress Update	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCA will host and support the hardware and software required to facilitate VTC between courts and residential placements ▪ OCA will continue to refine the procedures and protocol between OCA, DFPS, Courts, and other users ▪ OCA will maintain an updated set of instructions for participation and provide to end-users ▪ OCA will continue to maintain a list of Residential Treatment Centers, Courts, and non-court and non-DFPS contracted ▪ OCA will continue to work with DFPS and other entities on expanding capability and feasibility for use beyond court hearings ▪ Continue scheduling and coordinating remote hearings for existing remote users including test calls ▪ Increase the number of participating courts by five (5), increase the number participating DFPS service provider sites by 8 during the fiscal year ▪ Conduct an outreach to specific local CASA program offices that are interested in 	<p>The video conferencing project enables children involved in child abuse and neglect cases to participate in permanency and placement review hearings without them being physically present in the courtroom. OCA hosts and supports the hardware and software required to facilitate video conferencing between courts and residential placements. OCA maintains a list of Residential Treatment Centers with video conferencing capability as well as a list of courts. OCA maintains a log of all hearings conducted, including the date, time, participating court, type of hearing, participating placement, length of hearing, any problems with the transmission quality, or technical difficulties. For the months of October 2015 through January 2016 (FY2016):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 103 video hearings conducted - 112 children/youth participated - 11 courts participated - 32 placement facilities participated <p>Courts that are video enabled to participate in the collaborative video conferencing project – 28</p> <p>Placement facilities that are video enabled - 72</p> <p>OCA plans to upgrade the hardware in FY2016 to improve the reporting capability and to include features to enable use</p>	<p align="right">Included above</p>

<p>participating in the video conferencing project. Video conferencing capability will be implemented where possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acquire new video conferencing infrastructure. The new video conferencing infrastructure will provide the capability to conduct video conferencing from mobile technology devices (smartphone and tablets) on android and iOS ▪ Maintain a log of all hearings conducted, including the date, time participating court, type of hearing, participating placement, and length of hearing, any problems with the transmission quality or technological barriers 	<p>from any hand-held device such as an iPad, iPhone, or Android.</p>	
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2.3C Website / Support: Children’s Commission will maintain a website for the Commission and for Education efforts to inform and apprise stakeholders about the Commission and the offerings and services available from the Children’s Commission and Texas Court Improvement Program.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCA will update the Children’s Commission website by September 18, 2015. ▪ Children’s Commission Staff will monitor website on an ongoing basis to ensure items are added, deleted, and information is maintained in a current and accurate manner 	<p>The Children’s Commission new website is here: http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/</p>	<p>Included above</p>

2.3D Child Protection Case Management System (CPCMS): CPCMS is a case management system that is unique to Child Protection Courts. Efficient and full use of the case management system can help decrease the time to permanency and CPC Courts.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCA will provide project management, programming and testing services for CPCMS ▪ OCA will determine whether there are bug fixes or enhancements required based on input from CPCMS users ▪ OCA will use its CPCMS Advisory Group to determine the nature and priority of CPCMS enhances and bug fixes ▪ CC Staff will participate in the Advisory Group calls and meetings ▪ OCA will consult with the Children’s Commission on the appropriate percentage of time to allocate to CPCMS enhancements ▪ OCA will keep Children’s Commission apprised of equipment and software purchases required for proper and efficient operation and maintenance 	<p>CPCMS is a case management system that is unique to Child Protection Courts. It has been in use since 2009. OCA provides project management, programming and testing services for CPCMS. OCA staffs a CPCMS Advisory Council of CPC judges, OCA staff and Children’s Commission staff to evaluate bug fixes or enhancements. The CPCMS Advisory Group met in FY2015 to provide governance in order to prioritize enhancements and bug fixes. Also in FY2015, OCA undertook a major upgrade of the CPCMS infrastructure and also upgraded the judge’s primary hearing page, which allows the judge more flexibility to stay on one page (the primary page) of CPCMS while also accessing information stored on other pages. Overall, these changes have made CPCMS more efficient and easier for judges and court coordinators to use. CPCMS is in maintenance mode. OCA continually works on the architecture to streamline how documents are stored so that document storage can be accomplished outside the CPCMS database. Documents stored outside the database will make the system more responsive and easier to use, and as four new CPC courts will be created in FY 2016, this change</p>	<p>Included above</p>

	<p>will allow CPCMS to continue to be responsive as users are added.</p> <p>Another project with CPCMS going forward into FY2016 will involve using data from the State Bar of Texas database to eliminate duplicate entries for attorneys by identifying each attorney by his/her bar number and the name associated with that bar number on the SBOT website. OCA is at 85% completion for the match between CPCMS and the SBOT database and at about 95% completion in eliminating the duplicate entries. Next, OCA will modify CPCMS to use the SBOT/CPCMS attorney data, and clean up any new attorney data added to the CPCMS database during the project.</p>	
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2.3E Weighted Caseload Study: To identify the specific and accurate court and judicial system resources required to adequately handle the state's child protection caseload.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCA will work with the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) to design a weighted caseload project ▪ A Judicial Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) will be formed to provide project oversight and guidance as well as to review project plans and materials ▪ A web-based tool will be developed to for judges to collect data ▪ Training will be developed to explain to judicial officers how to classify and record work during the study ▪ An event-based time study of judicial workload over the course of a four to six week period will be conducted in October/November 2015 ▪ The activities will include all on-bench and off-bench pre-trial, dispositional, and post-disposition activities ▪ An analysis of the time study date will be performed ▪ A composite case weight for CPS cases will be developed ▪ The project will also include a sufficient of time survey to assess whether judges would have sufficient time to fulfill all responsibilities given current resource levels ▪ This particular study will assess whether there is a need for more or less time related to specific phases of case processing, the challenges to effective handling, and proven efficient and deficient case processes and strategies ▪ A final meeting will convene for presentation of the results and sufficiency of time survey 	<p>Late FY2015, the Children's Commission approved a grant to the National Center for State Courts to design and execute a weighted caseload study.</p> <p>During this reporting period, NCSC and OCA staff finalized the list of events/hearings to be recorded during the time study and developed a glossary to define the events and training materials, obtained hearing counts for cases filed in 2012, 2013, and 2014 from CPCMS, and obtained complete list of time study participants (CPs and district) and unique ids.</p> <p>NCSC designed a web-based tool used to collect data; prepared training materials that explained how judicial officers should classify and record work during the study, produced a web-based recorded training that participants were able to view at their convenience, created printable forms that judicial officers can use to track time on paper during the study period, and provided a glossary defining all case-type event categories.</p> <p>Beginning October 26, 2015 to November 22, 2015 NCSC conducted the event-based time study. All 19 CPC judges asked to participate submitted time, and 38 of 116 district judges entered at least some time during the time study.</p> <p>In the next reporting period, NCSC staff will compile, verify, and analyze all time study data. The analysis will provide an empirical profile of the amount of time that case events (e.g., hearings) are currently taking and from these events a composite case weight for CPS cases will be developed.</p>	<p>\$73,223.00 For NCSC activities, assistance</p> <p>\$6220.00 For JNAC travel expense</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A final report that includes CPS case weight recommendations will be published by NCSC and OCA 		
<p>NEW: Hearing Timeliness Project. A partnership aimed at better understanding CPS cases that are being extended beyond the 12-month deadline, and make recommendations on needed changes. The analysis will consider race and ethnicity and will include recommendations for systemic reform. The project will cover SFY 13 or 14.</p>		
<p>2016 Action Steps:</p>	<p>Progress Report</p>	<p>FY2016 Budget</p>
<p>A descriptive analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How often cases are extended beyond the statutory deadline for extraordinary circumstances that did not involve a child being on a trial home visit ▪ The legal disposition for all cases that were not extended ▪ The ultimate legal disposition for cases that were extended, and the time to achieve the ultimate disposition or outcome <p>A statistical analysis of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cases that had an order issued pursuant to Section 263.401 at 12 months resulting in permanency (exit from foster care) in SFY 13 or 14 ▪ The outcomes of cases that were extended to determine whether ultimate outcome was reunification or another outcome ▪ If the outcome was not reunification, whether it reflected the original concurrent plan or evidence another pattern. 	<p>For the past several years, 40% of all cases have been extended beyond the original dismissal date. In order to determine how to make appropriate systemic changes to help ensure children are exiting foster care more quickly (ideally within 12 months), Texas must better understand which cases are being extended, the reason for the extension, and the impact the extensions are having. Anecdotal information from judges and CPS staff suggest that it is due to delays in services being set up or parents needing additional time to comply with court orders.</p>	<p>0.00</p>
<p>TOTAL DATA/TECH PROJECTS</p>		<p>\$403,910.00</p>

FOSTER CARE AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

2.2B Texas Blueprint: Foster Care and Education Committee will support and monitor implementation of the Blueprint recommendations.

2016 Action Steps:	Progress Report	FY2016 BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Staff new standing Foster Care and Education Committee to launch Phase II of the Texas Blueprint Implementation ▪ Ensure the committee meets periodically to assess progress of implementation ▪ Promote continued collaboration between education, child welfare, and the courts ▪ Seek guidance of top-level judicial, education, and child welfare leadership, as necessary ▪ Create and monitor workgroups or subcommittees to carry out charge or purpose of the Foster Care and Education Committee ▪ Foster Care and Education Committee will provide periodic updates on implementation to the Children's Commission at its scheduled meetings during FY2016 ▪ CC staff will include information about education needs, outcomes, laws, policy, practice, and judicial tools in its CPS Judicial Bench Book and Education website 	<p>The Foster Care and Education Committee met on December 14, 2015 to monitor the progress of the Data, Postsecondary, Special Education, and Local Collaboration Workgroups. The Data Workgroup will work towards improved information-sharing and the formulation of a joint report by TEA and DFPS. The Postsecondary Workgroup will address issues such as college or career readiness and supporting new foster care liaisons at institutions of higher education to encourage better outcomes beyond high school. The Postsecondary Data Subgroup will also explore the scope of the first data exchange between DFPS and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Special Education Workgroup will focus on the over and underrepresentation of students in foster care receiving special education services. The Surrogate Parent Subgroup will explore the current challenges related to special education decision-makers. A confidentiality subgroup will work to clarify the miscommunications and misunderstandings with respect to student privacy. The Local Collaboration Workgroup will identify strategies to promote collaboration at the local level. The Foster Care and Education Committee will meet again on April 15, 2016.</p>	<p>\$10,000.00</p>
TOTAL FC&E PROJECTS		\$10,000.00
GRAND TOTAL PROJECTS		\$938,488.00

INSERT - TAB 4



Children's Commission Financial Report

FY 2016 BUDGET REVENUE

Carry Forward from FY 2015	\$	1,516,575
1 st FY 2016 Distribution ¹		
<i>Basic</i>	\$	442,169
<i>Data</i>	\$	368,071
<i>Training</i>	\$	368,071
	\$	1,178,311
<u>Current Available Funds for FY 2016</u>	\$	2,694,886

PROJECTED FY 2016 BUDGET REVENUE

Current Available Funds for FY 2016	\$	2,694,886
2nd FY 2016 Distribution ²		
	\$	392,770
<u>Total Projected FY 2016 CIP funds</u>	\$	3,087,656

FY 2016 OBLIGATIONS

Total Projected FY 2016 CIP funds	\$	3,087,656
FY 2016 Obligations		
<i>Indirect</i>	\$	898,434
<i>Staff Directed Projects</i> ³	\$	227,550
<i>Grants</i>	\$	671,878
<i>Scholarships</i> ⁴	\$	50,560
	\$	1,848,422
<u>Estimated Balance after obligations</u>	\$	1,239,234

Current Financial Status

To-date expenditures	\$	396,254
Outstanding obligations	\$	1,452,168
To-date balance	\$	2,691,402
<u>Estimated Carry Forward from FY 2016</u>	\$	1,239,234

¹ approximately 75% of the FY 16 total

² projected 2nd disbursement to be received in second quarter

³ pending Commission vote on \$14,200 additional funds for Trial Skills Training

⁴ pending Commission vote on final KITS application

