



## COUNCIL ON THE CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

June 3, 2021

10:00a.m.

Via Videoconference

### **Members in Attendance:**

Robresha Anderson  
Aishala Burgess  
Renee Carthan  
Leslie Chambers  
Kevin Griffin-Clark  
Troynyah Hankton  
Dominique Jones-Johnson

Natalie LaBorde  
Ivy Mathis  
Dr. Kelli Peterson  
Kim Robinson  
William A. Sommers

### **Guests in Attendance:**

Governor John Bel Edwards  
Dr. Adren Wilson  
Dominique Minor  
Jarwanda Harris  
Jimese VanBuren  
Dr. Suzanne Mayo  
Dr. Tewabetch Negatu

### **Call to Order:**

Dominique Jones-Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and Kevin Griffin Clark second the motion

### **Guest Speaker:**

Governor John Bel Edwards made remarks about the importance of the council and provided a legislative update on the 2021 session.

**Minutes:** Dominique made a motion to approve the minutes, Kevin Griffin Clark carried the motion and Leslie Chambers second the motion.

### **COMMITTEES**

- **Data/Research:** Dominique Jones Johnson stated that Daughters Beyond Incarceration partnered with Tulane to receive the support needed to collect the data required for the council. The committee plans to work alongside OJJ, DP, public defenders, school boards on how to determine the percentage of children struggling with truancy, dropouts, suspensions and data on children who are not receiving the mental health they need to thrive. They did not meet in the month in May but will meet prior to July.

- **Youth Voices:** Robresha Anderson stated that their committee is still working to recruit youth and asked if the council would be okay with creating a social media graphic to notify the public of the existence of the council.
- **Caregivers:** Jarwanda Harris stated one of the main barriers for caregivers was their ability to pay and provide for adequate housing. Transportation was also considered an issue because it is extremely difficult to maintain relationships with those that are incarcerated if reliable transportation is available. She stated that members discussed establishing a monthly transportation site that could be used to shuttle family members back and forth from the physical facility. The ability to provide for necessities for youth was also a topic discussed since income is vastly reduced due to the incarceration of a loved one. Necessities included school, clothing, food, ability for children to participate in extracurricular activities, lack of technology, Wi-Fi and hygiene items. Members also stated the lack of peer and support groups and lack of mental health services was also an issue of concern. Jarwanda stated that members asked if informational materials about the council could be kept at juvenile court so it can be provided to families.

Kevin Griffin Clark stated that the council should establish a relationship with juvenile justice judges to assign young individuals who are about to be released or just released to the council. Aishala stated this was discussed in her committee as well and they wanted to explore if this could happen with group homes. Secretary Sommers also believed this was a great idea and stated that they are working out the logistics. Secretary Sommers stated he is also working to try and work our partnerships with Lyft to shuttle children to different facilities if their parents are incarcerated. Kevin stated he would bring this up with the judges that he has a meeting with next week. Dr. Peterson stated that the Department of Education has a joint meeting with the juvenile judges and that she would work on putting this as an item on their agenda as well. Aishala stated she would discuss this with the juvenile judges and will work on getting more youth involved.

#### **Public Comments**

Dr. Wilson stated that last week there was a meeting hosted by the Governor's Office with 35-40 African American judges and the council was mentioned to them.

Dr. Mayo from Grambling University stated she was excited about this council and stated that her career research has been on children who have parents that are incarcerated. She wishes to join the data committee as well as the caregiver committee.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.