

**Provider-Vendor Advisory Committee (PVAC)  
Equity Subcommittee Meeting  
October 27, 2023 1-2:30PM**

**In attendance:** Anthony Rowe, Adaptive Learning Center (Equity Subcommittee Co-Chair); Dan Hogue, Las Trampas (Equity Subcommittee Co-Chair); Ramsay Mashy, California Autism Foundation; Brandi Auble, California Mentor; Mike Pereira, Ala Costa Centers; Jan Cohen, Ability Now Bay Area; Craig Rose, VistAbility; Annette Omwurah, North Star Residential Home; Marcie Hodges, St. John Boys' Home; Sadia Mumtaz, RCEB Board.

**Anthony Rowe called the meeting to order at 1:05PM.**

**Subcommittee News**

Jan Cohen is joining for the first time; Dan provided an overview of the committee's purpose and formation and the work the committee is doing.

Dan Hogue reported that the draft of RFP Policy came back; not sure everything was captured; met with Frank Paré, accommodations to RFP policy were approved, and new policy should appear on website soon.

Anthony Rowe celebrated the win.

Dan Hogue suggested that other policies on RCEB website might also benefit from review for similar language and updates.

**Subcommittee Issue Tracker**

**Current Issue Updates:**

- RFP discussion with Lisa Kleinbub – updates from Anthony
- SLS referrals – new provider concern being handled by Lisa Kleinbub

**Ongoing Issues – no updates:**

- Provider training as a general topic, and specifically support to Spanish-speaking provider group for business development aligned with needs of community/catchment area
- Families with teenagers at home are having to give up parental rights in order to have children placed.
- Inequities beyond/surrounding RFP process – when RFP winners cannot sustainably provide services, existing providers (especially providers of color/Black providers) are relied on to provide services at lower rates/outside of RFP process.
- Health and safety waivers: providers have not been successful at receiving waivers, or assistance/funding resources, even in cases of highly contagious disease fatalities at home.  
CPP homes are receiving the support of RCEB doctors; why are other providers not receiving similar resources?

**New Issues:**

- Racial Equity Steering Committee of Alameda County requested PVAC Subcommittee to ask RCEB about Mason Tillman report.  
Frustrations arising, with blame being traded between RCEB and Mason-Tillman.  
RESC would like a letter to be submitted officially requesting this information; Mike Pereira has drafted.  
Since Board is addressing, does letter need to be sent? A: Yes!
- Consideration to add equity guideline language re: waitlists for residential placements, SLS.

**Discussion – Letter to RCEB Board re: Mason Tillman Report**

- Mike Pereira shared the letter and walked the group through the text, and will email to the group for further review.

- A member asked about waitlists and adding some language about whether there are equity guidelines for residential placements and supported living services.
- A member recommended adding the waitlist item to New Issues in the tracker, as distinct from referrals.
- A member asserted the need to identify why this process has been extended so long – whether it lies with RCEB or with Mason Tillman.
- A member commented that the results of this study represent something the community has needed for so long to move the conversation on equity forward – data. Without data, the community cannot plan to address the issues we see on the ground.
- A member mentioned that the data doesn't necessarily cover the entire area or spread of instances of inequity, from a data science standpoint. Not sure if Mason-Tillman Report will provide this.
- Re: RCEB Performance report on disparity, per DDS's requirements, disparity is viewed through POS lens. This is only one set of measures – for example, it doesn't always capture the dynamics of people not being served.
- A member added that disparity by location isn't very well covered by the POS data, and that Mason Tillman findings may not cover this either, but the report might give some view onto how disparity works throughout various parts of the Bay Area.
- A member pointed out DDS's responsibility to gather and analyze this type of data, and what seems like a resistance to doing this work. He mentioned that Sadia on the board has advocated for this work as well.
- A member opined that RCEB is compliant with requirements; not doing anything wrong – they are not tracking the right things because they aren't given the tools to do so, and aren't asked to look at inequity in more different kinds of ways.
- A member weighed in, saying the data does have flaws, but the qualitative piece also matters – there are likely differences between quantitative data and qualitative interviews, assessments, etc. That likely these would show providers who don't have the opportunity to grow and flourish within the system. There are regional centers in the system who act in favor of all providers thriving. Locally we see that money, investment often means referrals, and when these providers fail, the clients are passed on to the (often) smaller minority-owned providers. RCEB isn't necessarily working in favor of minority providers.
- A member asked which regional centers are doing well in supporting growth for minority-owned providers, and another member responded that Valley Mountain Regional Center was doing a great job of supporting providers to grow and thrive.
- A Board Member agreed with the comments being shared, and pointed out that AB1147 is currently being read in the Senate, addressing equity, accountability, transparency issues. Super-heavy on compliance, data collection, reporting – may not be the best answer, but something will be coming thru DDS once the law takes effect.
- If the Board recommends collection of certain data points, the RCEB could do this – but strategic planning has taken precedence, so that there is a commonly agreed-upon list of priorities. Equity is certainly a part of the plan that everyone agrees is a priority – Equity and Diversity, including data collection. If there is a list of what folks think might be important, the board would be eager to see this.
- A member mentioned seeing the data by city, area code, and service type, as well as data for providers of color.
- A Board Member asked about data for children served by the school district, and whether it would be worthwhile to establish a sharing agreement between RCs and School Districts.
- A member asserted that this data would help describe how services are being executed, such as respite services. This member mentioned times when Alameda County has had to sue RCEB for lack of services.
- A Board Member asked whether DDS might be able to provide funding for subcommittee members' time in order to support this work better.

- A member mentioned that there have been recent RFPs to help bridge gaps in liaison work – mainly for family members.
- A Board Member thought perhaps they could connect with Lisa to explore this. Also, RCEB is working on a policy for referrals, since it doesn't seem like there is an existing policy or direction from DDS. They are working to push dollars and resources toward gaps in service.
- A member mentioned the DDS-SAE grant process included two equity-based initiatives that have been renewed: DHTI and La Familia.
- Families United also received funding under recent RFP.
- A member suggested accepting Board Member's recommendation to have an agenda with list of suggestions/actuals for a regular meeting with Lisa Kleinbub, and to hold RCEB accountable to include these as part of the RCEB Strategic Plan.
- A member requested feedback on inherent bias training and the outcomes of our input? What happened? Did the training happen? How did our feedback inform the training? Will trainings continue?
- A member added, could there be a survey/questionnaire for RCEB staff asking about the effectiveness of training and whether training will continue?
- A Board Member mentioned that the issues discussed are tied up with discretion – if there's no policy guideline, then discretion is the rule of decision-making.
- A member offered a resource for beyond implicit bias:  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2372732220983840>
- A Board Member recommended a letter on behalf of the group with recommendations that policy on discretion/referrals be prioritized, perhaps calling on the support of a policy specialist in one of the participating subcommittee orgs to bypass some of the red tape involved in policy writing.
- Knowing that RCEB is aware of the issues makes the gaps much more frustrating – the work continually falls into the hands of the providers; however we need resources to do this work. Without the data (Mason Tillman Report, e.g.), this quagmire continues.
- A member mentioned that when providers advocate robustly, action happens – but sometimes it is negative action, where referrals are withheld, and sometimes referrals do result – but the work is considerable.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:24**