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**The Children's Cabinet**  
**Monday January 29, 2017**  
**DOA Conference- Room A**  
**10:00am – 11:30am**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
*Minutes Approved February 26, 2018*

**Cabinet Participants:**

Secretary Beane, Director Hawkins, Director Alexander- Scott, Commissioner Wagner, Child Advocate Jennifer Griffith, Director Boss, Director DiBiase, Director Picolla

**Call to Order:**

Commissioner Wagner calls the meeting to order and welcomes Kayla Rosen to the Children's Cabinet. He explains that Kayla will now be serving as the Policy Director for the Rhode Island Children's Cabinet. She comes from the Commerce team and has experience with educationally focused work. Commissioner Wagner and the rest of the Cabinet formally welcome Kayla.

Commissioner Wagner then goes on to speak about the Governor's Third Grade Reading Budget. He reviews each departments budget, particularly that of RIDE in regards to curriculum work in the k-12 space as well as stipends for teachers in the field. He discusses the importance of teaching for moving the indicators around third grade reading. There is also money for pre- k expansion. In terms of other funding through the innovation funding, there is money for summer reading and money through the it fund for data integration and sustainability work.

He turns the meeting over to Secretary Beane. He discusses the effort to recruit foster families, so no one has to go into a group home. The Governor, he says, is also in support of an effort to end DCYF services at a child's age of 18. He also discusses addiction and recovery services for youth. He affirms that the Governor is committed to all of this Health and Human Services work in her budget.

There is a motion to accept the minutes. The motion is seconded and passed by the entire Cabinet.

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**Presentation One:** Commissioner Wagner turns the meeting over to Rhode Island Housing to discuss lead issues. The meeting will be started with RI Housing to talk about the Lead Reduction Program. The commissioner asks that q and a be saved until the end of the meeting. RI Housing discusses their efforts to reduce lead. RI has the oldest existing housing stock in the US. There has been a significant push in the last 15 years to remediate this. They are on their way to having remediated hundreds of units. They are targeting older and urban communities. This seems to be where the problem is. The current grant casts a broader net. They are trying to target communities with the most at risk stock. They are also trying to broaden their efforts to reach more efforts in the community. There has been three million dollars in lead reduction work. There have been 29 hazards that have been identified. They work with this grant to target to anyone under eight percent of median income. They are working to help and get everyone tested. They have had success with several families. They have worked hard to mitigate this issue. There are 250 homes and many lead inspections done with this grant. There are also 200 interventions with healthy homes. They work with West and East Bay Community Action programs. They continued to mention that they are targeting the urban core, however it is a state wide program. In the past, RI Housing and RIDOH have been the open doors for this program. They also brought flyers with them in order to spread the word about their work.

**Presentation Two:**

RIDOH is the agency that has been given the main authority to administer the lead poison prevention act. As a result of this, they have a number of programs to deal with lead poisoning and other lead issues. They are focusing on identifying exposure as early as possible.

It is their sense that everyone who is identified is able to have their needs met. The only barrier is a cooperating landlord. The issue is not everyone is able to take advantage because of this.

Commissioner Wagner asks how one gets above the threshold in regards to this issue.

RIDOH says that typically paint is the origin, but it may be dust as well. The kids that have the higher level are ones that end up eating something dangerous. Hand to mouth activity is also an important factor.

Secretary Beane asks about requirements for physicians to test children.

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She answers that there needs to be cooperation with the parent taking the child to get the test. RIDOH is currently reviewing its methods and practices to increase the rates of intervention.

Secretary Breane discusses the strategy that RIDOH adopted for the prescription drug program and using that same way to see which physicians are doing well.

Dr. Klein discusses that this is part of the requirements. In our state, because of the high stock housing, the recommendations are at age one and two. If those levels are normal, then a verbal screening test is generally given until age six. RIDOH is currently reviewing best practices and physicians who are implementing this well.

Secretary Beane comments that Dr. Alexander- Scott's work in elevating this issue has been very helpful in this issue. She has worked very hard to create equity in this state.

### **Presentation Three:**

Joseph Carr from DCYF discusses the importance of child outreach screening on children that have had lead exposure. Currently DCYF is trying to find ways to identify how to improve ways to screen. This is a primary focus of the Kellog Grant.

Child Outreach screening, is the preschool arm of the child find system. This program works in identifying any developmental delays prior to kindergarten. These are administered to all children throughout the state. There will be a report this September to look at the rates of referral and children who have been successfully screened.

Dr. Klein explains that lead screening in WIC programs used to be a standard in Rhode Island. It was done to take advantage of the fact that children were getting their blood done anyway. There are plans to begin piloting this again.

### **Presentation Four:**

Veronica Davis, who is the head of licensing for DCYF, presents on lead issues and foster families. There are many requirements, including the lead services act, that requires certification

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in foster homes. It has been a tremendous challenge in foster homes. The department is faced with removing a student and placing him into a home that he does not know. It leads to legal issues. The court, every time, chooses to let young people stay in the place that they are.