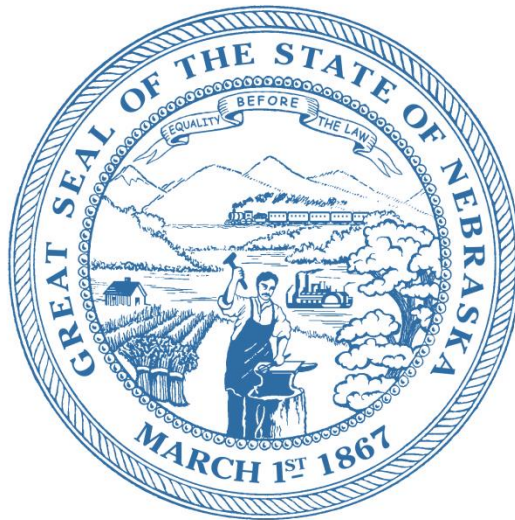


**The Nebraska Foster Care Review Office
Children and Juveniles Data Feasibility Study Report**



Submitted Pursuant Neb. Rev. Stat. §43-1306

Issued October 2, 2017

Children and Juveniles Data Feasibility Study Advisory Group

The Children and Juveniles Data Feasibility Study Advisory Group is responsible for the oversight of “a feasibility study to identify how existing state agency data systems currently used to account for the use of all services, programs, and facilities by children and juveniles in the State of Nebraska can be used to establish an independent, external data warehouse.” As directed by Nebraska Revised Statute §43-1306, the membership of the Advisory Group represents the various state entities responsible for the collection and storage of data on Nebraska’s children and juveniles: The Office of the Inspector General of Child Welfare (IG), the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), the Administrative Office of Probation (AOP), the Nebraska Commission of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NCC), the Department of Education (NDE), the Foster Care Review Office (FCRO), the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The FCRO provides administrative support for the Advisory Committee.

The first meeting of the Advisory Group was held on September 22nd, 2017, at the Foster Care Review Office. This meeting was intended to set the direction of the feasibility study and appoint the members for the two legislatively directed subcommittees. In attendance were Kim Hawekotte, Executive Director of the FCRO, Julie Rogers, Inspector General for Child Welfare, Dick Clark, Judiciary Committee Legal Counsel, Matt Wallen, Director of Child and Family Services, DHHS, James Ohmberger, IT Manager II, OCIO, Tod Wyrick, IT Supervisor, OCIO, and Katherine Bass, Research Director, FCRO. The Department of Education, Crime Commission, Administrative Office of the Courts, and the Administrative Office of Probation were not represented at the meeting.

Children and Juveniles Data Warehouse

The creation of an independent, external data warehouse for children and juveniles in Nebraska is distinct from other data collection efforts in many ways. First, the independent nature of the data warehouse is significant. Multiple agencies will provide data, but control of the warehouse would be outside of the agencies providing data. Nebraska currently has a model for this type of data sharing, the Nebraska Criminal Justice Information System (NCJIS) hosted by the Nebraska Crime Commission. The goals of the Children and Juveniles Data Warehouse, however, are different from NCJIS. NCJIS is designed to provide information for criminal justice agencies for operational use. This initiative would not provide information for operational use, but for research purposes, with the intent to measure and improve upon the experiences of children and juveniles receiving state services. The final report of this feasibility study will need to address data ownership for each providing agency.

The primary goal of a data warehouse to improve outcomes for kids from birth to adulthood. By connecting the data already in place on children and juveniles across systems, a data warehouse will create a longitudinal data set with the ability to monitor the effectiveness of legislative and policy changes and assess the application of evidence-based practices in Nebraska. The information from the data warehouse can be used to educate all stakeholders and assist with fiscal decisions for the legislature, agencies, and departments.

Data Steering and Information-Sharing Subcommittees

In order to complete the feasibility study, the Advisory Group appointed representatives from each agency/department to participate in the two legislatively directed subcommittees. The Data Steering Subcommittee will “manage and discuss data-related items, including the technological and system issues of each agency’s current data system, specific barriers that impact the implementation of a data warehouse, and steps necessary to establish and sustain a data warehouse.” The Information-Sharing Subcommittee will “manage and discuss the legal and regulatory barriers to establishing a data warehouse and to identify possible solutions.” Both groups will report to the Advisory Group.

Table 1: Advisory Group, Data Steering Subcommittee, and Information-Sharing Subcommittee Representatives

Department/Agency	Advisory Group Representative	Data Steering Subcommittee Representative	Information-Sharing Subcommittee Representative
Statutorily Required			
Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare	Julie Rogers	Sara Forrest	Julie Rogers
Administrative Office of the Courts	Corey Steel	Jennifer Rasmussen	Jennifer Rasmussen
Office of Probation Administration	Ellen Brokofsky	Jeanne Brandner	Jeanne Brandner
Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice	Mike Fargen	Mike Fargen	Mike Fargen
Department of Education*			
Foster Care Review Office	Kim Hawekotte	Katherine Bass	Kim Hawekotte
Chief Information Office	James Ohmberger Tod Wyrick	James Ohmberger Tod Wyrick	James Ohmberger Tod Wyrick
Department of Health and Human Services	Matt Wallen	Doug Beran	Wes Nespor
Additional Resource Members			
Legislature	Dick Clark	N/A	Dick Clark

*As of the submission of this report the Department of Education has not provided this information to the FCRO. In addition to receiving the initial invitation to the Advisory Group, a follow-up email was sent requesting the names of the representatives for the Advisory Group, Data Steering Subcommittee, and Information-Sharing Subcommittee. The participation of the Department of Education is crucial to the completion of the feasibility study.

Future Action

The Data Steering and Information-Sharing Subcommittees will convene before the end of 2017. Each subcommittee will report to the Advisory Group their main objectives and the tasks, resources, and outcomes related to those objectives. The Advisory Group will provide guidance and support for the subcommittees. The final written report of the Advisory Group will be submitted to the legislature on October 1, 2018, stating if a data warehouse is feasible, and if so, detailing the technical and legal steps necessary to establish the Children and Juveniles Data Warehouse by July 1, 2019.