

CSA Meeting Minutes

OCTOBER 08, 2019, 3:30-5:30 PM, NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE

Attendees

CSA Council Members: Betty Emarita, Brook LaFloe, Carri Jones, Chong Thao, David Cournoyer, Erika Boelk, Etonde Awaah, Luisa Trapero, May Losloso, Sommer Green

MDH Staff: Ann Linde (Refugee and International Health), Dr. Courtney Jordan Baechler (Assistant Commissioner for Health Improvement), Helen Jackson Lockett-El (Center for Health Equity), Kou (Bruce) Thao (Center for Health Equity), Madison Olmsted (Center for Health Equity), Sara Chute (Center for Health Equity)

MDE Employees: Amanda Varley

Other: Bharti Wahj, Joan Brandt

Agenda

Welcome

- Presented by Kou (Bruce) Thao and Dr. Courtney Jordan Baechler

Quick Introductions

Background on Community Solutions Legislation

- Presented by Bharti Wahl, *Executive Director, Children's Defense Fund*
- Background content presentation
- Questions and reflections
 - How do we keep *community* in Community Solutions? How do we get outside the bureaucracy, the systems that are steeped in whiteness?
 - Skepticism from many in the room, and our communities, about State of MN administering this grant program
 - On the other hand, we confront skepticism from legislators and others that community-led solutions will work
 - Past funding programs have often set communities up to fail: too-brief grant periods, lack of technical assistance ...
 - For example, in 2016, the state granted money to organizations that did not have capacity to work under a state grant and were blamed when they were unable to end employment and income disparities in the time allotted
 - We need time to talk about real stories, case studies and learn from what has happened in the past
 - How do we communicate our steps and our learning as we go? Who needs to understand this process?
 - Final reporting doesn't always reflect culturally specific organizations' values. Will we have an opportunity to be a part of designing the reporting structure for the grant? Yes!
 - What are the constraints (real and imagined) on us, the CSA Council, as we develop this grant program and distribute state funds?

Grounding in Shared Values

- Facilitated by Kou (Bruce) Thao, *Center for Health Equity*
- Question one response: Elders missing; implied transnational awareness
- Question two response: Equity and service come up a lot
- Question three response: Lots of repeats and common themes

Council Role, Timeline, Logistics

- Presented by Helen Jackson Lockett-El, *Center for Health Equity*
- Helen will draft an outline of a charter for the Community Solutions Advisory Council; we'll create together

ROLE

- Provide input for the development of the Request for Proposals
- Speak openly and honestly in order for us to create something worthwhile to community
- Review responses to the Request For Proposals (grant applications)
- Help select grantees and advise on award amounts
- Advise on ongoing oversight and support for the grant program, including site visits
- Make sure that we are not working in siloes; connect us with ways to align with other efforts
- Be transparent and objective

TIMELINE

- Reviewed timeline document
- Our timeline is tight partly to allow as much time as possible for applicants to prepare their applications. We also built in time for site visits as part of application review, aspiring to a more equitable approach
- Meeting times and venues can be adjusted in the future
- Home visiting RFP will be open during the same time. Is it possible to stagger these so as not to overburden community? Home visiting staff will provide more information on these dates.
- Since the timeline is short, we should notify community in advance so they can prepare to apply
- How will communities be notified about the Request For Proposals? MDH has many email lists, and council will help design the promotion (and promote!)
- Council will have a draft of the Request For Proposals before 10/21 to review
- Council will also help develop the scoring criteria, which will be included in the RFP

Overview of RFP and Discussion of RFP Questions

- Facilitated by Ann Linde, *Refugee and Immigration Health*
- Reviewed Request for Proposals QUESTIONS DOCUMENT
- Are there other types of organizations/entities we should prioritize?
- Want to see the county data in a map with numbers and colors: a visual representation of which counties we're prioritizing
- Orgs that have parent / caregiver advisory boards or councils as part of infrastructure (could mention here or just put in scoring criteria)

- Orgs serving prenatal to grade 3 (early childhood, family systems)?
 - Some disagreement among council members. Want to make sure that this doesn't become a reason not to fund people, and result in funding the usual orgs led by white people
 - Don't want to leave out orgs in communities that would want to do this work if they could
 - After some discussion, council seemed to agree that we don't need to include in list of priority orgs, since it's clear that the grant is to fund projects for children prenatal to third grade
- Considered prioritizing smaller or lower-capacity organizations, but we think the line about organizations that haven't traditionally received state funding is sufficient
- What does the word prioritize mean?
 - We will build those criteria into scoring and potentially weight those scoring criteria
- Smaller organizations that have fewer resources to apply to state grants
 - What kind of TA, resources and support in applying can we provide for orgs?
- More open-ended, broad, inclusive definitions may be better because we do not know what is working on the ground
 - Want orgs to be able to see themselves in the criteria, and want to welcome approaches we hadn't anticipated

What do our children need to thrive?

- Preschool Development Grant project already asked this question of ~1,000 people across the state
 - Amanda (MDE) can pull this data

What kinds of activities would you like to see grantees do to promote racial equity and healthy child development and reduce health disparities experienced by children of color and American Indian children from prenatal to grade 3 and their families?

- Empower parents and promote their voices, training and mobilizing them to be advocates for changes in school systems, other systems, policy
- All of this yes, but we're always teaching POC to access white systems, instead of asking systems and institutions to change. Are there organizations working with institutions to make them come to the community, change and adapt to the community's needs? Those are orgs we should be funding.
- Build community, bridges, support among parents and families
- Recognize what is working well in communities and expand it. Invite communities to say what is working well; invite applicants to build on successful existing projects
- Can the dollars be used for capacity-building and general operations?
- Let's hear about orgs that are doing well and then reverse engineer the RFP so that groups doing work like that would be successful applicants (not tailoring the RFP to particular orgs, but making sure it would accommodate orgs like these)
- Are applicants allowed to apply these funds to work they are already doing? Need to consider longevity
- Flexibility for both planning and implementation grants in the initial framing from Voices and Choices

What kind of background data/information would you find helpful as you provide input on the Community Solutions RFP?

- Rule-making process: how is it playing out with respect to this legislation?
- List of orgs doing this work
- County data in a map form: Wilder report, state demographer
- Lessons from EHDI, DHS grants, Preschool Development Grant
- Other RFPs (DEED, nonprofit infrastructure, whole family systems, EHDI)
- Suggest reading materials and resources to each other (such as a couple of key pages in a report)

Questions and Answers Session

- Facilitated by Ann Linde, *Refugee and International Health*

Next Steps and Upcoming Meetings

- Facilitated by Ann Linde, *Refugee and International Health*

Upcoming Meetings

Monday, October 21, 3:30-5:50 pm at Neighborhood House

Continue to discuss Request for Proposals

Thursday, November 7, 3:30-5:30 pm at Neighborhood House

Continue discussing RFP: Scoring criteria. Work plan template. Evaluation and accountability strategies. Reporting process and template.

Wednesday, November 20, 3:30-5:30 pm at Neighborhood House

Either final discussion of grant RFP or discussion of evaluation contractor RFP (depending on whether timeline is modified).

Meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM

01/27/2020

To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5813.