



## BACKGROUND

In 2019, the Children’s Endowment Fund of Oklahoma was created in statute. These funds are to be administered by OCCY, at the direction of the OCCY Commissioners, through a grant process to “stimulate a broad range of innovative programs, activities or research or evaluation that will improve the well-being and reduce the adverse childhood experience of Oklahoma’s children.”

Professionals in the social service sector increasingly recognize the importance of consumer voice in decision-making at the individual, local, state, and national levels in order to improve policy and practice. For that reason, when the Children’s Endowment Fund was enacted, so too was the OCCY Parent Partnership Board (PPB). The aim of the PPB is to connect individuals with lived experiences with OCCY Commissioners for the purpose of advising the Commissioners and the agency in its efforts improve Oklahoma’s child-serving systems.

## PPB PLANNING COMMITTEE

The OCCY has several parents/guardians working alongside staff and serving on the PPB Planning Committee. Planning Committee Members include:

- Amber Adams
- Danielle M Dill
- Adrienne Elder
- Betty Hawkins-Emery
- Kara Georgi
- Michael Huesca
- Meryl Levine
- La’Chanda Stephens-Totimeh

Planning Committee members have been asked to share their insights and recommendations over the next four months as they accomplish the following tasks:

- Detailing the purpose the of the PPB to ensure consumer voice is included in decision-making
- Determining the membership size of the PPB
- Determining the tentative PPB operations: date/time/locations of meetings
- Developing in the PPB membership orientation
- Defining the role and expectations for PPB members
- Developing a recruitment plan for PPB members
- Developing an application process for PPB members



## PPB MEMBERSHIP

The OCCY Commission is comprised of 19 Commissioners that represent state agencies as well as individual disciplines and private stakeholders. The areas of work addressed by OCCY and the Commission is broad and stems from “light touches” of prevention or support to intervention and court involvement. Therefore, the Parent Partnership Board would like to have five to 13 members that fit into the following categories:

- Parent with child with special needs;
- Parent with child impacted by criminal or juvenile justice system;
- Parent with child who has been in the custody of, or who have received services from, the Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Office of Juvenile Affairs, Oklahoma State Department of Health or other child-serving entity including nonprofits; or
- Parent with child who has received services including, but not limited to, home visiting, local county health department child guidance services, parenting support groups or education classes, TANF, SNAP, WIC, and SoonerCare.

OCCY will commit to selecting well-qualified members, striving for diversity in the areas of race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, age, religion and religion status, caregiver status, sexual orientation, and geography. In addition, the membership should represent varied life experiences and those with negative as well as positive experiences with a child-serving system should consider applying.

## CONNECTION TO COMMISSIONERS

Once the PPB Members are chosen, our goal is to assure that each Member feels valued by the Commissioners and the agency and that their knowledge and expertise is utilized to its fullest potential. While the PPB does have specific duties outlined in statute, it is also hoped that the PPB and its individual members may assist in additional ways, such as:

- Review educational materials, policies, forms, requests for proposals
- Serve as a guest speaker
- Assist with strategic planning
- Mentor, coach, or train other parents taking on leadership roles within different organizations

## BUILDING A NETWORK

OCCY recognizes that there are parent/family/ consumer advisory groups already in existence and some that are just now forming. Often these groups have a fairly narrow focus. OCCY has a unique opportunity to create a cross-sector body with our PPB. Because it is anticipated that the PPB membership will be varied, OCCY would be pleased to serve as a hub or connector for these more localized groups. OCCY envisions that it will have occasions to bring such entities together to share information, best practices, trainings, and resources.

## SPECIAL THANKS

OCCY would like to especially thank the Children's Trust Fund Alliance staff, consultants, and members for sharing their “parent voice” expertise with us. For more information about the CTF Alliance, go to: <http://ctfalliance.org>.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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“Nothing  
About Us  
Without Us”

