

**Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council (CECLC) Meeting Minutes**  
**February 21, 2014 from 11:30 until 2:00, Wilder Foundation**  
<http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/CulturalEthnicLeadershipCouncil>

**Members Present:** Anna Mazig, Dave Haley, Hassan Samantar, Hector Garcia, Pa H. Lor, Sia Her, \*Kamala Puram, \*LaRone Greer, \*Maria Sarabia, \*Nathan Moracco, \*Rev. Janet Johnson, \*Paula Haywood, \*Vayong Moua, \*Yende Andersen  
(\* via phone)

**Members Absent:** Annamarie Hill, Bauz Nengchu, Jose Gonzalez, Kamaludin Hassan, LaJuana Whitmore, Mitchell Davis, Jr., Pahoua Yang, Pamela Cosby, Saciido Shaie, Sarita Ennis, Titilayo Bediako, Rep. Jim Abeler, Rep. Tara Mack, Rep. Tina Liebling, Rep. Tom Huntley, Sen. Julie Rosen, Sen. Kathy Sheran, Sen. Michelle Benson, Sen. Tony Lourey.

**Guests:** Sue Koch (DHS), Meredith Martinez (MDE), Katy Schalla Lesiak (MDH), Catherine Wright (DHS)

**DHS Staff:** Antonia Wilcoxon, Denise Flock, Mee Cheng

**1. Welcome, Introductions, Opening**

Antonia Wilcoxon began meeting by asking one of the members to lead meeting as acting chair since Pam Cosby was not present. Hassan Samantar volunteered to be acting chair and brought the meeting to order. Guests and members introduced themselves.

**2. Review Proposed Agenda, Approval**

Anna Mazig made a motion to approve the agenda. Dave Haley seconded the motion. Vote to approve the agenda passed.

**3. Review of Minutes—January meeting**

The minutes from the January meeting was provided and Council members reviewed the minutes. Paula Haywood made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. Anna Mazig seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

**4. Legislative Report—Action Plan**

The Legislative Report was provided and Council members reviewed the Action Plan (page 19). Antonia Wilcoxon gave explanation to exercise. Hassan Samantar led group discussion on the five objectives as stated in the plan.

**Objective 1: Awareness**

Question 1: What do we know about this objective?

- Vayong Moua— Awareness is essential but make sure that the process and promoting awareness is done in a culturally appropriate way. Do not be overly reliant on awareness itself.
- Kamala Puram— Not everyone is on the same wavelength. Each objective alone can solve our programs and problems. Objectives cannot stand alone.
- Sia Her— Look at DHS internally to be culturally competent—be a model for objective #5. Cultural competent is meaningful; ownership of ideas and experience of disparities, the norm is not okay, true awareness.
- Hassan Samantar— All objectives intertwine and go hand-in-hand.

Question 2: What seems to be most critical?

- Dave Haley— Not only awareness. But what are we going to do? What steps to take to change disparities that exist? Cannot craft perfect solution here; however, need to commit to creating a plan/steps to work toward goals. Learn as we go.
- Sia Her— “Partnership”. How do we know our stakeholders? API Council relies on nonprofit organizations who are entities that deal with the issues at the community level. Who are our stakeholders? How do we move entities forward and how do we support those stakeholders?
- Hassan Samantar— Agree with previous points. Sometimes entities at local level have better relationships within the community but don't have the technical support.

- Paula Haywood— It is difficult to give feedback to questions when not in-person. How do we engage in this over a five-year plan (used BCBS as an example)?

## **Objective 2: Leadership**

Question 1: What do we already know about this objective?

- Dave Haley— Majority of the leadership at county and state levels are all white. We've (Ramsey County) been trying to diversify and broaden our workforce to reflect the population we serve. It's been difficult and we still need to work.
- Sia Her—Diversity doesn't always have to take one person from a specific community to solve our problems. Language is one window to serving communities of color. Sometimes an individual or providers from a different color can just be as effective. Think beyond skin color. Leadership must be meaningful, genuine and effective.
- Hassan Samantar—Having been on both sides, leaning toward Dave's point. There's a need to both understand and to change how to serve communities. Services not always aligned with culture and values. Interpreters are very limited, may not achieve purpose as desired.

Antonia Wilcoxon stated there is no expectation that Council members think with one mind. Bring integrity, honesty and experience to share with the group. Own the experience.

- Sia Her: We need to put the onus on interpreters who "represent" the community. Interpreters need to be linguistically competent.
- Paula Haywood: Culturally appropriateness or lack of leadership. Experience with Hennepin County— leaders of color who get to the top get snuffed. Passion for communities in need is not well-received by colleagues at top with same passion. Leaders of color lose favor because you don't fit in with majority of leadership at county level.
- Vayong Moua: Important to balance representation and support allies. Need to lift up champions who may not look like us. Not reinforcing already marginalized communities. Would like to see Commissioner Jesson to speak up and support this. Need to build capacity at community and state agency levels as well.

Antonia Wilcoxon noted today's discussion is preliminary. When Council members gather again in March, group can engage in more thorough discussion.

## **Objective 3: Community Health and Health System Experience**

- LaRone Greer: We need to add "Child Welfare" to this section.
- Sia Her: Access. People cannot access services if there is no awareness of the services
- Nathan Moracco: Access is a key issue within Health Care Administration at DHS. We work with providers. We are moving from just providing health services payment toward "how well are you serving the community health"? How do you integrate community health? Cannot always help those who show up on day of need. Some providers are very engaged in the concept and some are not.
- Paula Haywood: Are providers required to include a plan to address inequity when contracting with DHS?
- Nathan Moracco: There are expectations of providers to have a plan to address health disparities. We don't have exact measurements that relate to race and ethnicity that connect to community health. DHS works with MN Community Measurement to report on quality measures on three issues of health disparities: depression, diabetes and well-child visits.  
DHS Framework for the Future 2014 (Link: <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-6464B-ENG>)

## **Objective 4: Cultural and Linguistic Competency**

- Anna Mazig: Policy-driven updates around this area. Most critical is cultural competency. Need leadership and awareness. Share directions and experience with others. One cannot happen without the others.
- Hassan Samantar: Include "more inclusion", "more partnership". Expand fourth bullet point of Objective 4 (page 19).
- Yende Andersen: Be sure to expand minority providers to include international providers.

## **Objective 5: Research and Evaluation**

Due to limited time, there was no discussion.

## 5. Presentation of Establishing a “Birth-8 Referral System”

Catherine Wright (DHS), Meredith Martinez (MDE) and Katy Schalla Lesiak (MDH) presented information about Minnesota’s “Help Me Grow” program and are seeking feedback from Council members before group moves forward. This program does not provide direct services, only referrals.

- Current structure: One centralized phone number for families to call if families have questions about child(ren)’s development. Open to children ages birth to 5 years old.
- Limitations: The phone line is a resource connector to services and resources. There is no great mechanism to connect children and families to other resources in communities if they are not eligible for early childhood education resources and services at first point of contact (on the phone). Would like make sure that ineligible children and families can be referred elsewhere and not be dropped altogether.

- Proposal: Expand it to age 8

### Council members’ feedback:

- Wise to have a warm hand-off transfer to make referral process smoother.
- Phone lines need to be staffed with interpreters.
- Interpreting: Need to not only speak language but need to know and understand cultural context
- Staffing of this program should understand available programs, and have good language and cultural knowledge.
- If program is reliant on Internet only—many communities have limited access to a computer and Internet.
- New immigrants want to do things in person. Any programs that can do that will only build trust and relationships with participants
- There are three physical centers that are currently doing similar work—connect with these centers to see what they are doing.
- Very complex program. What other states are doing this? How do they do it? What model is out there? Can this program involve health insurance companies?
- Good idea to work with Medicare/Medicaid agencies that will pay for services.
- Follow through may be low if program is too complex. Make process as easy as possible.

## 6. Public Comment

There were no public comments at today’s meeting. Antonia Wilcoxon made announcement regarding two upcoming grants: BCBS & Bush Foundation Community Innovation Grant.

## 7. Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ)

Council members took a few minutes to fill out form to provide feedback to Antonia about meetings

Please take about five minutes to respond to each of the questions below about today’s meeting. Don’t put your name on the form - your responses are anonymous. I will be sharing the group’s responses with all of you. Thanks for taking the time to do this. What you write will help me make our meetings more responsive to your concerns.

1. At what moment in the meeting today did you feel most engaged with what was happening?

- During the discussion of Action Plan Objectives
- Throughout, I participated way more than I should have.
- Presentation as well as Q & A “Birth 8 & Referral System”
- Legislative Report
- All of it was engaging
- All the time
- Engaged throughout. Spoke up numerous times and rec’d feedback/recognition.
- Felt most engaged when there was the ability focus on the core topics stated in the report.

2. At what moment in the meeting today did you feel most distanced from what was happening?

- Conference call→ we need to meet as a group to be most productive.
- None. I appreciated the discussions. Even when we don’t answer the questions, we’re still encouraged directly to speak.
- Birth 8 & Referral System
- Only when there was a mention about the materials we did not have in advance.

- I had the opportunity to participate by phone, the communication utilized created a natural distance of me not being there initially.
3. What action that any one (facilitator or someone) took in the meeting today did you find most affirming or helpful?
- That even though people could not be physically present, they were available by phone.
  - Raising hard questions
  - Reaffirming that different opinions are valued.
  - Listening
  - Hector's suggestion to Catherine Wright to partner with the newly developing centers
  - It was good that Antonia addressed the topic of differences in opinion and that although we are one council; we bring many perspectives so it was not a bad thing to have different opinions. You should stand by your opinion. This really helped everyone feel comfortable and not hesitate to speak their mind.
  - Antonia does well in guiding everyone and affirming understanding
  - Overall, the inclusion of those who were on the phone was very affirming and the reminders from Ms. Antonia helped.
  - The reframing of topics being presented and ideas for clarity done the chair.
4. What action that anyone (facilitator or someone) took in the meeting today did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- Resistance to opportunities offered (probably derived from lack of clarity)
  - Not the agenda. Coordinating and communication through teleconference was not helpful.
  - Only when people had noise feedback on their phone it made it difficult to hear.
5. What about the meeting today surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurred to you).
- That so few people present by phone than in person.
  - Limited attendance
  - I was surprised the willingness of people to show up with this weather.
  - The meeting ended early. I am glad we had it anyways to keep the momentum. Felt bad about the weather but, it was nice to have the ability to participate.
6. What do you feel you can do to make a difference in your setting? What do you need from this group to do what you envision?
- Greater clarity
  - To listen to the wisdom of other Council members. To not feel that I have to come up with the entire answer.
  - Perhaps, I could speak less so others can insert their thoughts? Prepare in advance a protocol for mobile conferencing. That way we can honor the norms for all to participate.
  - The forming of the particular workgroups to give feedback to Administration and Community of the work being started.

*The Classroom Critical Incident Questionnaire(1-5) Brookfield, S. (1995)  
Becoming A Critically Reflective Teacher.  
San Francisco: Jossey-Bass*

## 8. Adjournment

Paula Haywood made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dave Haley seconded the motion. Council voted to approve adjournment. Meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm.

**Next meeting Friday, March 21, 2014**