



OFFICE OF INNOVATION, ALIGNMENT, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Report on Outcome Measures and Progress on Agency Goals

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is prepared in compliance with HB 1661, which requires the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF or the Department) to report to the legislature on development of and progress toward achieving outcome goals for children, youth and families. Some key sections from this seminal piece of legislation are below:

Section 101(2) Beginning July 1, 2018, the department must develop definitions for, work plans to address, and metrics to measure the outcomes for children, youth, and families served by the department...

Sec 101(3)(a-b)

- (a) Beginning July 1, 2018, the department must establish short and long-term population level outcome measure goals, including metrics regarding reducing disparities by family income, race, and ethnicity in each outcome.
- (b) The department must report to the legislature on outcome measures, actions taken, progress toward these goals, and plans for the future year, no less than annually, beginning December 1, 2018.

In addition, **Sec 101(3)(c)** calls for outcome measures and additional agency performance data to be publicly available by December 30, 2018.

CHILD OUTCOME GOALS

- In September 2018, DCYF leadership approved a "working version" of nine child outcome goals in three areas -- education, health, and resilience -- that will guide the work of the agency.
 - <u>Education</u> measures that assess the educational proficiency, attainment and growth of children, youth and/or families.
 - Health measures that assess the physical, mental, emotional, behavioral and developmental health of children, youth and/or families.
 - <u>Resilience</u> measures that assess the ability to thrive, throughout and despite adversity, at the individual, family or community level.
- Overarching all of these measures is the goal of eliminating disparities in each of the
 education, health, and resilience areas so that race, ethnicity and family income are no
 longer predictors of child/youth well-being.

PUBLIC REPORTING AGENCY PERFORMANCE DATA

- The Department launched a public reporting page on the DCYF website to report on all required measures as well as data available on the nine child outcome measures.
- This initial effort will serve as a basis for future public reporting called for in HB 1661, with plans for data refresh at regular intervals, and for building out more metrics and measures over the coming years.

OTHER UPDATES

In addition, this report provides an update on other supportive foundational work for the new agency being led by the DCYF Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability. This foundational work includes a baseline performance assessment, development of an integrated services approach, performance-based contracting, and planning for an integrated data warehouse to support the reporting/analytic/research infrastructure of the Department.

CHILD OUTCOME GOALS

The purpose of this work is to establish outcome goals for children, youth and families (or "child outcome goals") that will guide the work of the Department, as identified in HB 1661 Section 101(2-3). The DCYF Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability (OIAA) has led this work since January 2018 – working with Department leadership and an internal workgroup comprised of leaders from the three agencies of origin¹, engaging multiple external stakeholder groups and partners as well as agency leaders and staff, reviewing priorities and reports from other state agencies, and examining research. A working version of the initial 10 child outcome goals was published on the agency website in October of this year.

The Department's child outcome goals are organized in three broad categories: education, health, and resilience. These categories derive from the vision for the new agency described in HB 1661 Sec 101.1(a) which states "The vision for the department is that Washington state's children and youth grow up safe and healthy – thriving physically, emotionally, and academically, nurtured by family and community". Agency leadership endorsed these categories, and they were validated by interaction with stakeholders and partners. Taken together, measures in these three categories capture the extent to which children, youth and families across the state are thriving.

- <u>Education</u> measures that assess the educational proficiency, attainment and growth of children, youth and/or families.
- Health measures that assess the physical, mental, emotional, behavioral and developmental health of children, youth and/or families.
- Resilience measures that assess the ability to thrive, throughout and despite adversity, at the individual, family or community level.

A cross-agency work group appointed by leaders from the three agencies of origin started by outlining criteria for considering and selecting outcome goals, with special attention to the data available to measure potential goals. These criteria included:

- Data to measure the goal should be accessible to the Department and OIAA.
- Data to measure the goal should be collected and reported frequently enough to assess change over time (at least every two years).
- Data to measure the goals should be collected and reported in a **granular** way, so that measures can be reported at the local level, and by disaggregated subgroups (for example by race, ethnicity and family income).
- Outcome goals and measures should be aligned with the mission and vision of DCYF.

The OIAA director and staff sought stakeholder feedback on the outcome goal priorities from May through August 2018, attending numerous existing Department advisory body meetings, staff meetings, and holding three general community input sessions in Aberdeen, Renton and Yakima. Suggestions and feedback from partners and stakeholders (internal and external) illuminated areas of common priorities, as well as areas of potential innovation. Overall the OIAA met with over 25 groups of community members, advisory bodies, tribal partners and staff for input on this work. These groups included over 375 individuals representing various roles including providers, parents, foster parents, kinship caregivers, youth, tribal partners, mental health and healthcare professionals, researchers, Department and agency-of-origin staff, other state agency staff, and others. In addition, OIAA communicated about this effort on the Department website², soliciting additional feedback from those not able to provide their input in person.

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¹ Children's Administration, Department of Early Learning, and the Office of Juvenile Justice/Juvenile Rehabilitation

² July 3, 2018, Outcome Goals – The Building Blocks of our New Agency

After this extensive process of soliciting stakeholder input, OIAA worked with an extended work group, including DCYF leaders and staff from the OIAA Data and Reporting, Research and Analysis, and Policy teams and an expert external consultant³ to refine a list of nearly 100 possible outcome goals. To narrow the list, staff compared the collected possible outcome goals to those prioritized by other state agencies and related initiatives.⁴ There was interest on the part of OIAA in recognizing the potential leverage that could be gained by aligning efforts with other state agencies, while also understanding the unique opportunity for innovation in the selection of DCYF child outcome goals. In addition, staff reviewed relevant research on factors related to positive outcomes for children, youth and families. This research helped inform how the metrics under consideration are related to one another, as well as helped the group to validate choices when comparing similar metrics.

Given these considerations, the extended work group proposed nine priority outcome goals to DCYF Strategic Leadership, and they have approved the following as a "working version." Overarching all of these is the goal to eliminate disparities in each of the education, health and resilience goals so that race, ethnicity and family income are no longer predictors of child/youth well-being.

Table 1. DCYF Child Outcome Goals (working version)

Outcome Goal Area

Measured By

Category	Outcome Goal Area	ivieasureu by
Resilience	Youth are supported by healthy relationships with adults	Healthy Youth Survey
	2. Parents and caregivers are supported to meet the needs of their children/youth	Rates of children requiring CPS response Youth detention rates
	3. Family Economic Security	Census
Education	4. Kindergarten Readiness	WaKIDS
	5. Youth School Engagement	Healthy Youth Survey ⁵
	6. High School Graduation	4- and 5-yr cohort graduation rates
Health	7. Healthy Birthweight	Low birthweight babies
	8. Child/Youth Development	EPSDT ⁶ provision Universal Developmental Screening (when available)
	9. Youth Mental/Behavioral Health	Healthy Youth Survey

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Category

³ A retired Department of Health Epidemiologist with more than two decades of experience in similar state efforts around child well-being outcome goals

⁴ These included: OSPI Washington School Improvement Framework, the Governor's Poverty Reduction Workgroup, the Interagency Council on Health Disparities Action Plan to Eliminate Health Disparities, DOH Essentials for Childhood Shared Measures, State Board of Education Statewide Indicators of Educational System Health, DOH Washington State Suicide Prevention Plan, Children's Mental Health Workgroup Recommendations, OSPI Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight Committee Annual Report, Commission on African American Affairs Creating an Equitable Future, Commission on Asian-Pacific American Affairs Strategic Plan, Commission on Hispanic Affairs Biennial Assessment Report, Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count, and the American Indian Health Commission for Washington Priorities.

⁵ https://www.askhys.net/

⁶Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/epsdt/index.html

This set of priority outcome areas will help drive aligned service delivery in a way that contributes to the achievement of outcomes that support children, youth and families to thrive. To achieve these optimal outcomes, this working version of DCYF's outcome goals represents a balanced approach, considering the different populations receiving child welfare, early learning and juvenile justice services, as well as the entire lifespan of children, youth and families in the state, from infants and children, to adolescents and young adults, adults, parents and caregivers.

These outcome goals will drive important strategic decisions within OIAA and DCYF as a whole. As directed by HB 1661, other bodies of strategic work within OIAA (baseline performance assessment, performance-based contracting, etc.) will map and align their work to the outcome goals to ensure that all the resources of the agency are supporting the agency-wide goals.

The child outcome goals project is not yet done. OIAA will translate each outcome area into an analytic framework that will communicate the current state of each outcome and serve as a tool for the agency and external partners to monitor progress and identify strategies to drive improvement. OIAA will continue to engage stakeholders to solicit input on the direction of this work; targets for each outcome area still need to be set, and the agency needs to continue to thoughtfully address equity and disproportionality in these outcomes. Rooted in research, evidence, and the experiences of affected communities, substantially improving outcomes in these nine areas, along with eliminating disparities in outcomes by race/ethnicity and family income, will ensure that Washington's children, youth and families are thriving.

PUBLIC REPORTING

HB 1661 Sec 101(3)(c) calls for outcome measures and additional agency performance data to be publicly available by December 30, 2018. Many of the performance measures identified in section (c) are already available publicly, embedded in the context of reports already produced by the Department legacy agencies and now by DCYF. For example,

- The Early Start Act Annual Report⁷, published annually since 2016, contains data on kindergarten readiness and the number of licensed child care centers and family homes.
- Many child welfare measures on child and youth safety, well-being and permanency are included in the Annual Progress and Safety Reports⁸. These include children's length of stay in out-of-home care, maltreatment while in out-of-home care, re-entry into care, and placement stability.
- The Foster Home and Adoptive Home Placement Reports⁹ contain data on licensed foster homes and the number of children in licensed out-of-home care.

OIAA policy and data staff worked to compile data on the required measures as well as data available on the nine child outcome measures, and launched a public reporting page on the Department website at the end of 2018. This initial effort will serve as a basis for future public reporting called for in HB 1661, with plans for data refresh at regular intervals, and for building out more metrics and measures over the coming years.

BASELINE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

In establishing the Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability, HB 1661 Sec 104(2) envisions a major part of the work of the Office is to be focused on measurement of agency

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⁷ 2017 Early Start Act Annual Report

⁸ 2019 Annual Progress and Safety Report

⁹ 2017 Foster Home and Adoptive Home Placement Report

performance to inform continuous improvement efforts, support systemic reform work, and measure progress toward achieving the child outcome goals.

In order to ground the performance measurement work of the new agency, DCYF leadership initiated a baseline performance assessment project in January 2018 in partnership with Chapin Hall, a nonprofit policy research center affiliated with the University of Chicago. ¹⁰ Chapin Hall has been recognized as a national leader in child and family research for three decades. The baseline performance assessment will be a report of agency functioning and recommendations in three broad arenas:

- <u>Process</u>: Recommendations for organizational structures and elements needed to support performance improvement (both day-to-day operational continuous quality improvement as well as performance improvement supports required for major reform efforts);
- <u>Performance</u>: Quantified baseline measures of key program activities for the three agencies of origin, including comparison to other states and national standards where those measures exist; and
- <u>Priorities</u>: Recommendations for a limited set of priority performance measures that, based on evidence, will produce the greatest gains in improving the child outcome goals.

The agencies of origin have gathered, monitored and reported numerous measures for many years to assess and improve their agency processes. These data and capacities represent assets to the new agency for performance measurement and improvement. Thanks to philanthropic funding, beginning in spring 2018, OIAA policy staff worked with other agency staff and Chapin Hall to identify, collect and catalogue an initial version of performance improvement measurement and infrastructure to inform the baseline assessment. Chapin Hall completed a comprehensive and systematic review of the existing policies, manuals, dashboards and reports from the agencies of origin. In addition, they interviewed staff and examined internal process documentation. When completed, the baseline performance assessment will serve as a foundation to identify priority performance measures and create an aligned performance improvement infrastructure for the new agency. The agency expects to have the completed baseline performance assessment by the end of May 2019.

This work is shepherded by an internal team of data, research and analysis experts with years of experience in child welfare, early learning and juvenile justice. DCYF has communicated externally about this body of work. The work has been informed by engagement of external and internal stakeholders and partners, leveraging the public input processes described above in the child outcomes section. Additionally, OIAA staff have also led feedback sessions with a broad sample of staff about their use of data and evidence in decision-making. From clients, advocates and social service professionals of all kinds, the OIAA staff have gathered information about how people experience their interactions with the agency, and what agency processes or policies make a difference for them.

INTEGRATED SERVICES APPROACH

HB 1661 Sec. 1 sets forth the expectation that existing services must be *restructured into a comprehensive agency*. DCYF is dedicated to the safety, development and well-being of children with an emphasis on prevention, early childhood development and early intervention, and supporting parents to be their children's first and most important teachers. The legislation

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¹⁰ Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

¹¹ July 16, 2018, Turning Data into Action: Assessing the Performance of DCYF

anticipates an integrated agency providing a continuum of services. The purpose of the integrated services approach project in OIAA is to provide the initial assessment and recommendations to support integrating services in DCYF.

In December 2017, DCYF leadership held two half-day meetings with more than 50 key staff from the three agencies of origin to establish the framework and direction for an integrated services approach. In early 2018, leaders from the three legacy agencies appointed a cross-agency integrated services approach (ISA) workgroup to guide the work and develop recommendations for a unified agency. Workgroup members bring subject matter expertise from child welfare, early learning, field operations and juvenile rehabilitation. The guiding principle of the ISA project has been to keep children and youth from entering, having lengthy involvement with, or reentering child welfare or juvenile justice systems, and to improve the health, education, and resilience of Washington's children.

The ISA workgroup is a microcosm of the new agency. Workgroup members bring questions and concerns on the minds of the broader agency staff as they consider their work in the context of the new agency. The workgroup has discussed shared values across the three legacy agencies, such as treating families served as they would want their own families treated; and shared concerns, such as the fear of losing the strengths each agency brings in serving clients effectively. Some initial shared lessons were:

- The three legacy agencies often served the same families at different points in the continuum;
- Families served often have needs that are universal across the continuum (early learning, child welfare, juvenile justice); and
- Staff and leadership of the three legacy agencies shared a core value of serving clients with respect and providing supports to enable children, youth and families to flourish upon exiting these systems.

The workgroup began by addressing the following questions in order to better understand each agency's landscape:

- What are the existing programs and services across each of (now) DCYF's service sectors?
- What ages of children and youth are served by these programs and services?
- How frequently do children, youth and families access these services, and are they available when clients need them?
- What are the barriers to accessing services?
- How do people reach necessary services? What is the system of referral for services?
- How are issues of racial/ethnic inequity being addressed throughout?
- Which services are informed by research and evidence, and which are promising practices?
- How can we achieve stronger outcomes through our services and programs?

The integrated services work has been informed by engagement of external stakeholders and partners, leveraging the public input processes described above in the child outcomes section, and through the use of the agency's blog for general updates. ¹² Common themes and suggestions have emerged around access, quality, and integration of services:

- Design the system to meet children, youth and families where they are; don't expect children, youth and families to fit the system;
- Offer more trauma-informed training for employees and caregivers, as well as evidencebased, trauma-informed services;

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¹² July 19, 2018, Putting it All Together – Integrating Services at DCYF

- Ensure timely access to more substance abuse and mental health services statewide and provide the number of treatments needed to be effective;
- Make mental and behavioral support services available along the entire age continuum (infants to young adults);
- Identify opportunities to link families in need to community prevention services;
- For children and youth involved in child welfare and juvenile rehabilitation systems, involve the whole family in planning at the earliest possible time;
- Partner with communities in planning and delivery of services that meet families where they are, in culturally-relevant and community-based ways; and
- Provide earlier supports for parents and provide more access to high quality early learning settings with a focus on prevention.

With respect to the last point above, OIAA is pursuing an on-the-ground pilot to align child welfare and early learning services through a collaboration with the Harvard Government Performance Lab (GPL). ¹³ This work has three objectives: first, to operationalize the vision of a unified system that drove the creation of DCYF; second, to support families with young children who are involved with the child welfare system and ultimately help prevent them from needing subsequent higher-level child welfare intervention; and third, to connect this uniquely vulnerable population of children with the supports they need to be ready for kindergarten.

This project started in summer 2018 with a series of interviews with DCYF staff knowledgeable of on-the-ground child welfare and early learning systems, and four site visits to child welfare offices. This information was used to investigate barriers that prevent the Department from systematically connecting families who are early in their child welfare system involvement (prior to any placements) with voluntary and supportive community-based early learning resources. The second stage, currently in process, consists of piloting a series of changes that include use of data to strengthen the referral process between the community-based child welfare and early learning systems. The ultimate goal of this work is to develop new policies and practices that can be scaled across the state to ensure that child welfare-involved families with young children receive access to voluntary, high-quality early learning supports they need.

The integrated services approach workgroup expects to deliver recommendations on service alignment and service gaps to DCYF leadership by January 2019. The child welfare-early learning pilot began in November 2018 and is expected to have sufficient data and experience for recommendations to agency leadership during the spring of 2019.

PERFORMANCE-BASED CONTRACTING

HB 1661 Sec 101(6) requires DCYF to implement performance-based contracting for all contracts for client services. The new agency will issue more than 1,000 contracts each year to purchase approximately \$1 billion in client services. The intent is to align these contracts with child outcome goals in order to leverage this substantial investment as an important tool to drive improvements in outcomes for children, youth and families.

In early 2018, leaders from the three legacy agencies appointed a cross-agency workgroup to guide the beginning of the new DCYF outcomes-oriented, performance-based contracting initiative, with an eye towards building on the work already accomplished in this area by the three agencies of origin. Using philanthropic funding, DCYF engaged Third Sector Capital Partners¹⁴ to help support this major effort. Beginning in January 2018, DCYF staff and

¹³ Government Performance Lab

¹⁴ Third Sector Capital Partners

consultants worked with internal and external stakeholders to identify performance-based contracting standards that hold contractors accountable for providing high quality services that improve outcomes for children, youth and families. In June, the Secretary communicated about the proposed performance-based contracting standards for the new agency that would be implemented in the three key areas. ¹⁵ These standards were approved by agency leadership in July 2018. As outlined in Figure 1 below, under the new DCYF performance-based contracting initiative, contractor performance will be evaluated in three key areas – services, quality and outcomes – in order to achieve the agency's long-term child outcome goals.

Figure 1. DCYF Performance-Based Contracting Framework



Following the merger of Children's Administration and the Department of Early Learning into DCYF in July 2018, the agency revised the governance structure of the performance-based contracting initiative to better reflect the cross-functional nature of this major agency-wide effort. The current governance structure now includes:

- Oversight: The PBC Steering Committee, an 11- to 13-member cross functional leadership team focused on policy/strategy development. Includes leaders from OIAA, contracts, program, finance, IT/data systems, Juvenile Rehabilitation, tribal relations, government relations and communications.
- Implementation:
 - FY19 outcomes-oriented PBC Cohort including FY19 contract groups [Home Visiting (NFP¹⁶ and PAT¹⁷), ESIT¹⁸ (family support), ECEAP¹⁹ (early learning), combined in-home services (child welfare)]
 - PBC Support Team cross-functional team from program, contracts, finance, IT/data systems, Juvenile Rehabilitation, and other key staff to support systemwide alignment of contracts for client services to PBC standards, starting with services and quality. Provide training and technical assistance to build capacity in programs to participate in outcomes-oriented PBC cohorts.
 - PBC Project Management Team cross-functional team to coordinate and monitor project progress and to address issues as they arise.
- <u>Learning Community</u>: To capture learnings and insight, build peer-provided support, share tools and processes, and build capacity in DCYF to engage in system-wide outcomes-oriented, performance-based contracting.

¹⁵ June 8, 2018, Turning a Mandate Into a Movement

¹⁶ Nurse Family Partnership

¹⁷ Parents as Teachers

¹⁸ Early Support for Infants and Toddlers

¹⁹ Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, Washington's state-funded preK program.

Contracted service providers will be required to measure and report performance data in each area, beginning with "services" in FY19, in order to receive payment. Incrementally over a 5-year period, DCYF will identify and incorporate quality and outcome measures into all contracts for client services, adding additional cohorts of contract groups each year. DCYF is proposing an incentive approach to ensure providers can continue to provide critical services as they work to improve or demonstrate their performance and has submitted a decision package to support this work in its 2019-2021 agency budget request. The timeline in Figure 2 below illustrates the anticipated progression from implementing service standards, to quality standards, to outcomes.



Figure 2. Envisioned PBC Implementation Timeline

The large and comprehensive nature of the DCYF outcomes-oriented, performance-based contracting initiative cannot be overstated. A review of other state-level PBC efforts revealed only a handful of states that have attempted this level of reform statewide in child welfare agencies (Florida, Illinois, Maine, and Tennessee). However, none have been undertaken in a comprehensive child/youth serving agency such as DCYF, and none across all client service lines. Given the initial thought, investment and planning that has gone into crafting the incremental approach described here, DCYF is confident that over time this approach will produce the desired results – alignment with agency outcome goals and contributing to improving outcomes for children, youth and families. Nevertheless, success in this effort in future years will require continued:

- Executive leadership and support;
- Substantial cross-functional engagement and capacity building across DCYF;
- Transparent communication and engagement with providers and partners;
- Funding to support incentives to higher levels of performance; and
- A commitment by the agency to build the field of services in geographic areas and market segments where services to children, youth and families are lacking.

INTEGRATED DATA WAREHOUSE PLANNING

HB 1661 identifies numerous requirements for the use of data, analytics and research within the new agency. Taking these references together, the goals for an integrated data warehouse in the new department include:

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²⁰ Implement Performance-Based Contracting

- Monitoring progress on child outcome goals, including analyzing outcomes by subgroups.
- Research on the needs of children, youth and families served by the Department.
- Data to drive and evaluate reform efforts, including evaluation to support new and improved evidence-based programs and services.
- Evaluation of services and programs to ensure their contribution to improving child outcome goals, including contracted services, direct services, and building capacity to match services to the specific needs of children, youth and families.
- Continuous performance improvement including fidelity monitoring and data feedback to support business practices.
- Data linkage so that we can see how children and youth may be participating in multiple services across the agency.
- Public reporting and accountability around agency performance as well as contract performance.
- Longitudinal analysis of how children, youth and families flow through agency services, identifying opportunities for improved service delivery and integration.
- Predictive modeling to help identify earlier opportunities for effective service delivery.

DCYF currently does not have the ability to meet the data requirements of HB 1661. In order to fulfill the goals of the department to be a data-driven organization with a focus on child outcomes, a modern, integrated data platform is needed to combine the legacy databases from the legacy agencies and also incorporate advanced data analytic capabilities to improve outcomes for Washington's children.

In creating the OIAA, DCYF brought together the data and reporting unit from the former Children's Administration, and the research and analysis units from the former Department of Early Learning and the current Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration. Together, these staff represent substantial data management, reporting, analysis and research capacity, with institutional knowledge and expertise in the program content areas and legacy data systems from the three agencies of origin. However, translating this capacity into the kinds of data, analysis and research envisioned by HB 1661 will require a modern and integrated data warehouse that brings together data from the three legacy agencies.

The planning process for implementing this data platform is currently underway in the OIAA. DCYF now understands the requirements to build such a platform and is taking interim steps to prepare now for the desired future data structure. A decision package for funding this effort was included in the DCYF 2019-2021 biennial budget request²¹ with the hope of beginning work at the start of fiscal year 2020.

Additionally, DCYF is exploring opportunities in the interim that will help the transition to a new data platform, such as implementing proof of concept projects for advanced analytics or other current agency work that might be suitable to exercise various aspects of the planned future platform.

With the help of philanthropic funding, DCYF has partnered with Foster America²², a non-profit agency that runs a fellowship program to support innovative reform projects to improve the child welfare system. They have provided a fellow to manage the planning effort of the integrated data warehouse through June 2019.

²¹ Build an Integrated Data Warehouse

²² Foster America

The agencies of origin – Children's Administration, Department of Early Learning and Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration – all have existing data systems in place, and the bulk of this planning work has been to perform a detailed analysis of the analytic capabilities of these systems in order to identify the gaps between the current systems and a future integrated data-warehousing infrastructure built to modern best practices. To support this, a cross-agency workgroup comprised of the data leaders of the originating agencies has been meeting regularly throughout 2018 to identify current capacity that should be maintained, and areas of concern that need to be addressed in the new platform.