

accomplishments

2018-19

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2018-19

STATE BUDGET

Successfully advocated for 4.15% COLA for FFAs Starting July 1, 2019

The CA Alliance successfully mounted an intensive lobbying effort aimed at the Legislature, the California Department of Finance, the Department of Social Services, and the Governor's Office to increase the FFA rate to include a 4.15% CNI-based COLA starting July 1, 2019, which is the first time since 2001 that the FFA operational rate component has received a COLA. Although the initial advocacy requested a budget allocation to increase the FFA rate to bring FFA social worker salaries into compliance with the state minimum wage law enacted in 2016 that requires exempt employees to be paid twice the hourly minimum wage, the CA Alliance was able to broker a budget deal for the allocation of a COLA as a compromise measure achieving the same result to offset the increase in the minimum wage law.

The advocacy effort included:

- Obtaining Assembly Member Blanca Rubio as the sponsor for the FFA budget proposal;
- Recruiting key groups to support the budget request as a Coalition including the National Association of Social Workers, the California Alliance of Caregivers, John Burton Advocates for Youth, Children NOW, and others;
- Organizing 100+ Alliance members, their staff, resource parents and board members to testify before the state Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees;
- Organizing letter writing campaigns for Alliance members and coalition members to send in thousands of letters to key legislators;
- Creating grassroots advocacy materials, scripts, letter of support templates, Talking Points, FAQs, PowerPoints, graphs, charts and fact sheets for Alliance staff and FFA members to use in meetings with legislators, district staff and all other meetings;
- Researching the social worker job market, compiling labor statistics and preparing costs analysis of the FFA rates;
- Meetings between Alliance staff and the Department of Health and Human Services Agency, the Legislative Analyst Office, the Governor's staff, the Cabinet Secretary, the Assembly Speaker, Senate Pro Tem, select foster committee members, key budget legislators, legislative staff, county child welfare directors, Department of Social Services and advocacy groups.
- Continued discussions regarding a proposal for the out-of-home care formula within the special education budget.
- Track and monitor Trailer Bill Language on school based mental health services, special education, early childhood initiatives and foster youth education issues.
- Develop Alliance Issue Alert on all Alliance tracked budget items upon budget finalization.

LEGISLATION

Letters of Support

AB 150 (Cooper): requiring that youth be credited and/or that partial coursework be combined to credit youth with completion

Status: Active bill in committee process

AB 175 (Gipson): reflecting additions and revisions to the Foster Care Bill of Rights

Status: Senate Appropriations

AB 307 (Reyes): establishing a Homeless Youth Grant Program

Status: Senate Appropriations

AB 465 (Eggman): defining dual status youth (youth involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems)

Status: Senate floor – third reading

AB 718 (Eggman): requiring that county workers provide information and documents to youth by the first court hearing following the youth's 16th birthday

Status: Senate Appropriations

AB 995 (Ting): expansion of funding available for THP+ programs

Status: incorporated in SB 80 (Omnibus Trailer Bill) funding for homelessness services/programs (not foster or former foster youth specific)

AB 1061 (Gipson): extends requirements for the development and implementation of a placement preservation plan enacted into law for children in child welfare to children in the probation system

Status: Senate Appropriations

AB 1068 (Cooley): requiring county workers to include specified information about child and family team activity in reports to the court

Status: Senate Appropriations

AB 1235 (Chu): renaming "Homeless Youth Centers" to "Youth Homelessness Prevention Centers" and expanding placement eligibility from 21 to 90 days

Status: Senate floor – third reading

AB 1324 (Levine): specifying additional requirements for the Department of Social Services in its contracts with non profit legal services providers to serve undocumented children

Status: Senate committee process

SB 150 (Beall): extending the time period for which youth may demonstrate satisfactory academic progress as a condition of maintaining Chafee grant eligibility

Status: Assembly Appropriations

SB 219 (Wilk): establishing the Foster Youth Grant Pilot Program to fund enrichment activities

Status: Assembly Appropriations

SB 433 (Monning): establishing the Office of Youth Development and Diversion to minimize youth involvement in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems

Status: Senate Appropriations

SB 716 (Mitchell): requiring county probation departments to ensure that youth detained or committed to juvenile facilities have access to post-secondary education

Status: Assembly Appropriations

Successfully Co-Sponsored Mental Health Legislation

AB 763 (Gray): Specialty Mental Health Services. Would require the Department of Healthcare Services to convene a workgroup tasked with development of a list of standardized forms related to determining eligibility and reimbursement of SMHS.

Successfully advocated for bills that would improve the lives of children and youth

AB 6 (Reyes): Early Childhood Education Branch. Would require California Department of Education to develop a branch on Early Childhood for implementation of early childhood education programs and future universal preschool. Would also require coordination with Department of Social Services. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

AB 337 (Quirk-Silva): Foster Care Payments for School. Would require foster parents to be notified of travel reimbursements for school of origin transportation within 3 business days. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

AB 428 (Medina): Special Education Funding. Would provide special education rate equalization, raising the ADA rate for low payment districts. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

AB 662 (Cunningham): Crimes Against Minors. Insert gender neutral language into code sections and remove language that it is illegal to “entice an unmarried female under 18 years of age and of previous chaste behavior” from code relating to prostitution. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

AB 865 (Reyes): Would require counties to include information on care and supervision of children who have been trafficked as part of the mandatory preapproval caregiver training. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

AB 898 (Wicks): Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment Services. Would develop a Children’s Behavioral Health Action Team to develop and report specified findings and recommendations, including identifying opportunities for the state to better ensure that Medi-Cal eligible children receive behavioral health services. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

Successfully advocated for bills that would improve the social services workforce

AB 565 (Maienschein): Public Health Workforce Planning. Would add county mental health plans and contracted agencies to the list of practice settings for physician loan forgiveness programs. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

SB 10 (Beall): Peer Support Specialist Certification. Would require the Department of Healthcare Services to establish a peer support services certification program as part of the mental health a substance use disorder delivery system. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

Successfully drafted amendments to legislation impacting Nonpublic Schools

AB 1172 (Frazier): Nonpublic Schools. Would make numerous changes to oversight of Nonpublic Schools. The California Alliance successfully advocated expanding the educational requirements for administrators and adjusting monitoring language. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

Successfully advocated to prevent bills from moving forward

AB 8 (Chu): Pupil Mental Health. Would require schools to have at least one mental health professional for every 60 pupils by December 2024. The definition of mental health professionals was broad and outside the scope of clinicians and could be paid for using Mental Health Services Act Innovations Funds. *Status:* Delayed until 2020.

AB 216 (Weber): Pupil Restraint. Would have addressed school restraint safety measures and placed a ban on use of prone restraint. The Alliance advocated for increased training requirements and to remove the ban on prone restraint. *Status:* Delayed until 2020. Sponsors have indicated that next year it will no longer ban prone restraint. The Alliance will work with the sponsor in the fall to address concerns for our highest needs students.

AB 826 (Reyes): Medi-Cal, Foster Youth. Would make presumptive transfer inapplicable to foster youth placed in a group home or STRTP. *Status:* Delayed until 2020. The Alliance will work with the author to develop a workgroup in the fall of 2019.

AB 1354 (Gipson): Juvenile Court Schools. Would require a county office of education, in collaboration with probation, to develop and implement an individualized transition plan to meet the academic, behavioral, social-emotional and career needs of each court school pupil detained for more than 20 consecutive school days. *Status:* In Senate Appropriations.

SB 35 (Chang): Trafficking and Slavery Task Force. Would reconvene the California Alliance to Combat Trafficking and Slavery Task Force, include a survivor of trafficking and assess the feasibility of a prevalence study to better understand the human trafficking landscape, including sex trafficking and labor trafficking. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

SB 66 (Atkins): Federally Qualified Health Centers. Would authorize reimbursement for a maximum of two visits taking place on the same day at a single location. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

SB 150 (Beall): Chaffee Grant Awards. Will authorize awarding up to 200% of the Chaffee allocation amount during the first award cycle and details plans to address spending overages in the event funds are over awarded. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

SB 428 (Pan): Would require a local educational agency, on or before January 1, 2023, to certify to the department that at least 10% of its classified employees and at least 10% of its certificated employees having direct contact with pupils at each schoolsite, or at least 2 classified employees and at least 2 certificated employees having direct contact with pupils at each schoolsite, whichever is greater, have received the youth mental and behavioral health training identified by the department. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

SB 582 (Beall): School Health Partnerships. Would restore the 40% cut to mental health triage grants under the 2018 budget, allocate at least half of these funds to services for youth, encouraging partnerships between schools and local mental health services under the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission authority. *Status:* In Assembly Appropriations.

DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC POLICY & REGULATIONS

California Department of Social Services (DSS)

- Met bi-weekly with DSS CCR Branch Chief, Foster Care Audits and Rates Branch Chief, Child and Youth
- Permanency Branch Chief, Community Care Licensing Regional Administrator and Bureau Chief and staffs to
- monitor and advocate on issues pertaining to CCR implementation
- Clarified process and timelines for group home providers to transition to STRTP on an ongoing basis Advocated for and drafted revisions and additions to proposed STRTP Interim Licensing Standards Version 3 Advocated for and drafted revisions to STRTP Placement Agreement pertaining to STRTP transportation to
- school of origin
- Facilitated between Alliance members and CCR program statement/plan of operations review team in order to
- expedite issuance of provisional and permanent licenses
- Catalyzed “Achieving Permanency” Work Group comprised of Alliance members with STRTP licenses
- together with CCR Branch Chief to address serving youth with highest level needs
- Reviewed and provided feedback to CDSS pertaining to its survey regarding use of the ARCTIC tool for
- assessing integration of trauma informed care into programs and operations
- Met with Community Care Licensing leadership to understand CCL’s new technical assistance process
- Worked extensively with CCR Branch Chief, CBHDA, CWDA, CPOC and county representatives to identify
- and begin addressing systems-level barriers to successful CCR implementation
- Advocated for and drafted revisions and additions to CDSS proposed regulations pertaining to Transition Age
- Housing Programs (THP for Minors, THP for Nonminor Dependents)
- Collaborated with ACHSA in advocacy related to THP for Nonminor Dependents regulations and rates
- Participated in DSS filming of video explaining CCR to be posted on the DSS website
- Participated in DSS Advocates meetings
- Participated in DSS CCR Stakeholder Implementation Advisory Committee meetings
- Participated in CCR State/County/Provider meeting
- Participated in FFPSA QRTP and Court Hearing Legislation Work Groups to identify and develop plans for achieving fidelity to FFPSA

California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

- Continued advocating for additions and revisions to proposed STRTP Interim Licensing Standards

County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)

- Met with CWDA leadership to consider county-level collaboration and shared advocacy efforts
- Attended CWDA Advocates meetings

California Legislature

- Participated in Child Welfare Policy Roundtable with Legislative staff, sister advocacy organizations and interested stakeholders

Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC)

- Met with CPOC leadership to review status of STRTP implementation from perspective of county Probation departments
- Facilitated and supported creation of STRTP work shop for presentation by Alliance members at CPOC annual conference

Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health (CCJBH)

- Participated in CCJBH Roundtable
- Participated in CCJBH Stakeholder Engagement Work Group and on Live Stakeholder Event Planning Committee; facilitated panel presentation by Alliance member agency leadership in kickoff event

California Mental Health Advocates for Children and Youth (CMHACY)

- Participated together with CCR Branch Chief and LA County DCFS Deputy Director in conference Work Shop presentation on CCR at CMHACY

“Core 10” (community based advocacy organizations)

- Participated in sub group initiative together with THP providers, housing advocates and children’s attorneys to develop advocacy agenda; worked collaboratively to develop and implement strategy for THP for NMDs rate increase

Supported School Based Mental Health Services including Residentially Based Services as related services

- Represented members concerns regarding AB 114 to the Advisory Commission on Special Education and to the ACSE Mental Health Subcommittee.
- Built partnerships with the SELPA Association to address mental health concerns.
- Facilitated Department of Finance staff visits to Alliance member agencies providing school based mental health services.
- Education and Marketing Committee’s Developed Guide to School Based Mental Health Services.
- Sponsored Mountain Valley’s resource fair for schools.

Participated in CCR Education Subcommittee

- Represented Alliance members in subcommittee focused on supporting education of foster youth under CCR. Working with SELPA’s to address issues related to SELPAs and educational placements in STRTPs.

Successfully Advocated for Alliance Positions on Implementing Intensive Services Foster Care

The CA Alliance co-wrote the Intensive Services Foster Care (ISFC) statute in AB 404 (enacted in 2018) and continue to work collaboratively with the counties and the Department of Social Services to implement ISFC as a statewide program for the youth and children who are identified as needing ISFC supports and services.

- Provided assistance to help all Alliance FFA agencies obtain an approved statewide ISFC Program and ISFC Rate Letter.
- Successfully streamlined how children and youth are identified as needing ISFC to include:
 - obtaining a score of “7” in either the Behavioral/Emotional or Health Domain;
 - use of the static criteria which includes certain behaviors or conditions that indicate the need to provide a higher level of supervision;
 - adding Special Health Care Needs population to be included on the Static Criteria chronic indicator list (to be released in an upcoming All County Letter [ACL]);
 - use of the Interagency Placement Committee (IPC) process (to be released in an upcoming ACL); and
 - obtaining a score for ISFC in the Level of Care Protocol Tool.
- Represented the Alliance on six-month statewide ISFC DSS Workgroup.

Successfully Co-Sponsoring Legislation in AB 819 (Stone) to Increase Flexibility in the Number of Children Allowed Together in an ISFC Home

- The DSS ISFC Workgroup identified that the current ISFC limitations on maximum capacity of two non-related children in the home, unless there are siblings, is having negative unintended consequences. While these limitations may have been intended to guarantee a high level of care to the ISFC child, there is no local discretion to do what is in the best interest of the child including listening to the child’s voice and choice; or taking into account the recommendations of the Child and Family Team (CFT) or the Interagency Placement Committee (IPC).
- Current amendments in AB 819 will do the following (if passed by the Legislature and signed into law):
 - Allow up to three non-related foster children to be in an ISFC home with a maximum of two ISFC eligible children (up to a maximum of six children altogether inclusive of bio, adoptive and guardian);
 - Allow for additional children to be placed together in an ISFC home beyond three foster children or two ISFC eligible children, including, but not limited to, when there are siblings, a pre-existing relationship with the family or children in the home, or other compelling reasons (includes in order to accommodate the extraordinary needs of a specific child which the resource family has a unique ability
 - to meet);
 - Allow a child to remain in their current Resource Family home if they become eligible for ISFC after placement and the capacity has exceeded the maximum of two ISFC children; and
 - Allow for more than three ISFC children if they are all related (could be cousins, siblings, etc.).

Court Ordered Supervised Visitation

- Forming the strategy for fall 2019 and throughout 2020 for a wide ranging discussion between legislators and their staff, DSS, DHCS, the Department of Finance, FFAs, other child welfare advocacy groups and counties to better understand the roles and responsibilities of the different entities to fund and to provide the services needed for supervising and providing the transportation for court ordered visitations with biological and related family members for children placed with FFA approved resource parents.

CCR Home-Based Care Executive Subgroup

- Representing the Alliance twice a month in meetings with DSS, CWDA, CPOC and CBHDA to address how to meet youth with unmet needs in CCR, specifically looking at:
 - Youth higher than STRTP level, including complex cases and/or potentially CTF-qualified);
 - Youth needing STRTP intervention, but STRTP is struggling to meet their needs and/or there is inadequate intensive, family-based capacity to serve them;
 - Youth in Group Homes who need intensive permanency or specialized mental health services in order to transition; and
 - Youth in family-based care settings that are considered “temporary” and additional stabilization/support services are needed.

Represented and Advocated Alliance Positions on the FFA Interim Licensing Standards

- Analyzed the 4 version of the FFA Interim Licensing Standards (ILS) and coordinated recommended changes and questions from Alliance members with CCL.

Provided Technical Assistance to Alliance Member Agency Executives and Staff on New Changes Required in CCR: RFA, Interim Licensing Standards, Converting Families and Background Checks

- Provided technical assistance and answers to member inquiries regarding background checks and out-of-state clearances on Resource Family Approvals and “portability” when families transfer from one FFA to another FFA or county and vice versa.

CCR Strategic Implementation Meetings (SIM)

- Representing the Alliance in monthly meetings with DSS and CWDA to discuss regulations, legislation, budget, realignment, policy, data, best practices, waivers, rates, state, local and federal policy affecting the child welfare system’s efforts to implement CCR to reach the goal improving the child welfare system.

CDSS Advocates Meetings

- Representing the Alliance in the quarterly meetings where child welfare advocacy organizations meet with key staff of the Department of Social Services to discuss and receive key updates on child welfare policy.

CCR Stakeholders Implementation Advisory Workgroup

- Representing the Alliance in the quarterly CCR Stakeholders meetings where DSS seeks input and recommendations from stakeholders on policy, best practices and other aspects of CCR and updates stakeholders on the latest developments related to CCR and inter-agency collaboration.

Co-organized National Adoption Day Awareness Committee

- Co-organized National Adoption Day Awareness Committee with Alliance member adoption agencies, Sacramento County, DSS and other stakeholders.
- Co-ordinated event on the Capitol steps and in a Capitol hearing room where dignitaries read the names for foster youth waiting for permanency. The event is attended by families, children, legislators, advocates and state and local representative representing the child welfare and probation community.

Family First Prevention Services Act

- Representing the Alliance twice a month in executive and subcommittee meetings with DSS, CWDA, DHCS, CBHDA, CHHS, Judicial Council, advocacy groups and tribal representatives on the implementation of the new federal law, the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), and its implications for California on the following issues (partial list):
 - Prevention Services including services including for pregnant and parenting youth and youth with substance abuse or use
 - Kinship Navigator Programs and Support of Kinship Families
 - Use of evidence-based programs (promising, supported and well-supported)
 - Intervention and Treatment
 - Treatment Family-based Care
 - Congregate Care Reform
 - Funding Streams
 - State Review of Licensing Standards
 - Provision for State Law Changes

LOCAL SUPPORT, GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION

Participated on the Child Welfare Council's CSEC Action Team

- Represented the Alliance at the Child Welfare Council CSEC Action Team.
 - The goal of the CSEC Action team is to set California on a path to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Provide guidance to state and county agencies and their partners on how to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children, especially those who are currently involved in the child welfare system. Identify, serve, and support commercially sexually exploited and at-risk children through a coordinated and collaborative response.
 - Serve on the Data and Outcomes Workgroup

Participated on CHMACY board and conference

- Helped plan the 2019 CHMACY Conference
- Participated in efforts to develop an education track at conference

Participated on the Foster Youth Education Task Force

- Address concerns regarding STRTP's and foster youth under CCR.
- Attend monthly meeting addressing foster youth education issues.

Chair, Fact Sheet, and Legislation Committee

- Facilitate Fact Sheet and Legislative Committee calls and work in partnership on the update to Foster Youth Education Law Fact Sheets

Attend monthly meetings of the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

- Track and monitor activities of the MHSOAC including legislative and budget items addressed by the Commission

Attend Advisory Commission on Special Education

- Represent Alliance members, elevating mental health services and foster youth. Provide public comment and distribute the Guide on California Programs Serving Students with Mental Health Needs.
- Attend ACSE Subcommittee on mental health. Provide legislative and budget updates on mental health issues to the subcommittee and highlight partnerships with CBOs.

Represented Alliance in ongoing meetings of advocacy coalitions

- Founding member of Behavioral Health Action, a large coalition of leaders in Behavioral Health working to raise the dialogue on behavioral health in the upcoming state election.
 - Participated on the California Model drafting subcommittee.
- CDSS Child Welfare Advocates
- Children's System of Care Committee (CBHDA)
- Children's Roundtable quarterly meetings where topics germane to child welfare services are discussed and analyzed
- Mental Health Irregulars monthly legislative meeting
- MHSA Partners Forum
- Student Mental Health Policy Workgroup

ADDITIONAL MEMBER SUPPORT

Provided Technical Assistance and Advocacy for STRTPs

- Provided technical assistance to some 20 Alliance members in process of gaining provisional and permanent STRTP licenses by reviewing CCR Branch and CCL revision notes and providing guidance to support effective responses
- Created and broadcast STRTP Licensing webinar for Alliance members
- Monitored and reviewed DSS “confidence” lists with CCR reviewers identifying status of group home licensing transitions to STRTP licensed status to address challenges and facilitate progress toward licensure
- Participated in technical assistance calls with DSS, CBHDA, county mental/behavioral health to resolve barriers to STRTP licensure
- Facilitated resolution of Community Care Licensing issues for individual Alliance members
- Participated in Alliance member host visit for state and county CCR stakeholders
- Provided staff support for Residential Care, Juvenile Justice and TAY Services Committees
- Developed and disseminated TAY Services Committee member survey regarding THP for NMD rate
- Reached out to engage incoming chairs of Residential Care and Juvenile Justice Committees in preparation for ongoing committee activity and Executive conferences