



MINUTES OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY  
Children’s Commission



Wednesday, March 23, 2022

**ZOOM Meeting**

4:30 – 6:30PM

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Snohomish County Children’s Commission Meeting was held via ZOOM on Wednesday March 23, 2022. The meeting convened at 4:35 PM, Whitney Stohr and Vice Chair Courtney Wooten presiding. Quorum met.

Commissioners		County Staff		Guests	
Charlotte Zissel	✓	Karen Matson	✓	Ashvi Shah	✓
Karen O’Meara Pullen	✓	Cathy Butler	✓	Charles Adkins	✓
Nancy Mickels	EX			Janelle Burke	✓
Whitney Stohr	✓			ShaKima Tozay	✓
Lindee Tollefsen	✓			Desmond Pullen	✓
Anita Canter	AB			Monica Wilson	✓
Argelia Grassfield	✓				
Courtney Wooten	✓				

**Mission Statement**

Whitney Stohr welcomed all and read the Mission Statement.

**Introductions**

Commissioners and guests introduced themselves.

**Public Comment**

No Public Comments

**Equity Statement**

- Children’s Commission Executive Committee agreed to review, monthly, slides shared during the January 2022 meeting by Snohomish County Human Services Department Planning and Research Division Manager, Nate Marti.
- Reflected on the slide “Let’s further complicate planning efforts” that identified the variety of terms currently used by community providers as the County and community work collaboratively to identity common terms and definitions.
- Reflected on the slide that identifies those populations furthest from opportunity related to behavioral health, housing, and education.

**Approval of Minutes of February 23, 2022 meeting**

- ✚ **ACTION ITEM.** *Charlotte Zissel made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2022 Snohomish County Children’s Commission meeting as written. Lindee Tollefsen seconded the motion. Motion passed.*

### **Farewell to Commissioner**

- ✚ Desmond Pullen submitted his resignation from the Children’s Commission effective earlier this month to assume a new role on the Snohomish County Racial Equity Advisory Board.
- ✚ Commissioners and staff shared their appreciation for the 11 years of his time, commitment, and contribution to the Children’s Commission.

### **County Update**

- ✚ Snohomish County is moving forward on equity initiatives, including additional resources and support for boards and commissions. Anticipate that by early summer the Children’s Commission will have access to these resources.
- ✚ ARPA funds are being distributed including focuses on funds for basic needs, family employment services, increased food resources, early learning (including child care) stabilization and expansion, and housing – all consistent with the Children’s Commission’s recommendations to the County Executive and County Council.
- ✚ State budget includes a 16% reimbursement rate increase for WCCC.
- ✚ Applications for new appointments (4) and re-appointments (2) to the Children’s Commission have been completed and are being submitted to the County Council for approval.

### **Strategic Plan for Children’s Commission**

- ✚ Whitney reviewed the current Children’s Commission strategic plan.
- ✚ The plan is consistent with the Annie E. Casey Kids Count Report that includes 16 indicators within Economic Well-Being, Education, Health, Family and Community.
- ✚ Briefly reviewed the 2020 Children’s Commission Annual Report.
- ✚ Reviewed the Strategic Plan action steps for Year 3 - the focus for 2022.
- ✚ Discussed, in small and large groups, where the Commission would like to focus the work over the next few months.
- ✚ Economic Well-being: seems to be the very foundation of stability for children and families. Discussed after-school programs and the benefit for children of working families and the possible challenges for accessing these programs, including costs. Also, COVID seems have impacted single-female heads of households and loss of employment/income. Focus could be on ensuring access to after school and childcare programs. Also, access to equipment and supplies that support school success. There is also a need for additional distribution of food to address food insecurity. Also want to acknowledge that many families are at a “middle” income that is not sufficient to afford resources for their family and yet they have too much income to qualify for public benefits.
- ✚ Education: children 3-4 years of age not in school – still want to understand what “in school” refers to. Transportation to early learning/childcare is often a challenge to access early learning. Part-day programs do not work for working

family schedules. There is a need for financial support for families to access quality childcare and allows them to pursue career/wage progression for increased family stability. Wondering how schools in our County are doing related to literacy (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) and math achievement (8<sup>th</sup> grade). Recommend looking at data from other sources such as School House Washington - connected to Building Changes.

- ✚ Health: Discussed how to locate and review data that will help identify the gaps – would like to provide policy recommendations for state and federal legislation. Group was wondering about the support currently available to the significant number of youths identifying as having used alcohol. Also had a lot of questions about the causes for death rates and low birth weight rates.
- ✚ Family and Community: There is a lot of overlap/connections with this area and the Economic Well-being area. It is challenging to focus on a single domain without losing that valuable connection and truly impacting the domain. See attachment for additional information related to the conversation – Local Data and Outcomes Dashboards: Student Homelessness in Washington's K-12 Public Schools – Building Changes  
<https://buildingchanges.org/resources/local-data-and-outcomes/>
- ✚ Commissioners requested that County staff establish and provide access to the County SharePoint system to share and keep Children's Commission documents.
- ✚ Group agreed that as they establish a priority, they need to maintain a focus on those furthest from opportunity.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

- ✚ ***ACTION ITEM. Courtney Wooten made a motion to adjourn the Snohomish County Children's Commission meeting. Karen O'Meara Pullen seconded the motion. Motion passed.***

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 6:32 P.M.

#### **MEETING ADJOURNED**

***\*\*The next Snohomish County Children's Commission meeting will be held via ZOOM on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM.\*\****