



Dallas Area Partnership to End and Prevent Homelessness

Meeting Minutes March 7, 2024

Members Present: Cara Mendelsohn, Chair, Commissioner Dr. Theresa Daniel, Vice-Chair, LaKeysa Townsend, Rob Hays, Kin Oldham, Dr. Fred Cerise, Ashley Brundage

Members Absent: Michael Pegues, Mita Havlick, Celeste Arista Glover, Carol Lucky, Dan Micciche, Chief Brent Hurley

1. **Call Meeting to Order and Roll Call** Cara Mendelsohn, Chair
 - a. Declare A Quorum Present
 - b. Declare Legal Notice Posted and Meeting Duly Called

The hybrid meeting (in person and virtual) was called to order by Cara Mendelsohn, Chair, at 12:18 p.m.

2. **Public Comment** (2-minute limit per speaker)

Mr. Robert Ceccarelli expressed concerns regarding crime safety at boarding homes where background checks are not performed, and IDs are not required. Mr. Ceccarelli has communicated these concerns to the city council via email.

3. **Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2024,** Cara Mendelsohn, Chair

Vote: Kin Oldham moved to approve the January 4, 2024, minutes, seconded by Rob Hays. The minutes were approved.

4. **Presentation – Parkland (Homeless Outreach Medical Services (HOMES))** Dr. Fred Cerise, Partnership Member

A program overview of the Homeless Outreach Medical Services Program was given through a PowerPoint presentation by program director Kyla Rankin.

HOMES is a federally qualified health center a Section 330(h) program of Parkland. It is a partnership of the health resources Services Administration. The program's purpose is to provide primary care to individuals living in Dallas County who are unsheltered. The target population is anyone who is unhoused. The program serves families, individuals, children, youth, veterans, or anyone in that category who may be at risk. The program operates Monday through Friday and collaborates with at least 20 different community partners. It has a fleet of seven mobile medical units and on any given day about four mobile medical units will run simultaneously with the three fixed site locations and the mobile dental clinic. Some locations include homeless shelters, domestic violence, drug treatment day programs and social service centers.

The program has an operating budget of about \$8M, 42% of which comes from HRSA and 57% comes from Dallas County hospital district. In 2023, there were about 40,000 visits, 8,522 of those were from unduplicated patients.

The program has a staff of about 62.3 FTEs composed of providers, behavioral health nursing staff, dietitian, pharmacist, and drivers who drive the mobile units.

Services provided: Comprehensive Primary Care, Comprehensive Dental Care, Behavioral Health Care, Substance Use Disorder, Transgender Clinic, Nutrition, Peer Navigators, Podiatry, Medication Assisted Treatment, Diabetes Team, Targeted Campaigns (Flu, COVID, cervical cancer screening), Diagnostic Radiology, Obstetrical Care (Prenatal Care, Intrapartum Care (Labor and Delivery), and Postpartum Care).

Collaborative Relationships: FQHC (Foremost Family Health Centers, Los Barrios Unidos Community Clinic, Healing Hands Ministries), Community Partnerships: Housing Forward, Dallas County Health Department, City of Dallas Office of Homeless Solutions & Metrocare.

Chair, Cara Mendelsohn asked out of the 62.3 full time equivalents, how many are medical professionals as opposed to outreach administrative. Ms. Rankin stated that 25 are medical professionals including nursing and dental. It was also asked about the partner Family Gateway not being on the list. Ms. Rankin stated that they were a good partner, however, Collin County, which is where they moved to, is out of the service area and that the pediatric population has more options as they tend to be a funded population. Chair, Cara Mendelsohn suggested Ms. Rankin to consider asking if perhaps Family Gateway can provide residency information before somebody becomes homeless, because she estimates that the vast majority are Dallas County and not Collin County residents. Dr. Cerice added that the program gets indirect federal support for people that come in from out of county that feed into the uninsured cost and a portion of that is reimbursed but it does not cover the full cost and conversations with surrounding counties about covering those costs have not been successful.

Rob Hays asked if individuals receiving services are integrated within the HIMS System. Ms. Rankin stated they may or may not be in the HIMS system. They do not enter them in the system, but by virtue of them being in either permanent supported housing or sheltered based, they may be in the system.

5. Homelessness in Dallas ISD

Ashley Marshall,
Manager, District Homeless Liaison, Homeless Education Program
Dallas Independent School District

Mr. Israel Rivera, Executive Director for Dallas ISD leading three departments: Family Community Engagement, Parent Advocacy and Homeless Education Program, introduced Ashley Marshall.

Ashley Marshall gave an overview of what homelessness looks like in the Dallas ISD. Dallas ISD has 4,200 homeless students living in their district. Dallas ISD follows the McKinney-Vento law's definition of homelessness where the students lack a fixed regular and adequate place to stay at night, which DISD refers to as their nighttime residence, which means that they go home to the same place most nights. Many highschoolers may have been kicked out of their house if they do not follow the rules and they do what DISD calls sofa surfing or couch surfing. They are never in the same place, usually more than one night. They might stay at a friend's house for the school week. But then on the weekend they go stay in the park and maybe they get to come back to that friend's house the next school week, but they never have a regular place to stay that is a fixed place to stay. Regular means that housing is there on a routine basis. It is predictable. Many families move from apartment to apartment. They get one month free, and then the next month they are going to the next apartment complex where they can get another free month of rent. It is never predictable what they may be doing. Maybe from hotel to hotel. Many kids stay at Budget Suites. Nothing is regular for them. Adequate, just means that where they are living there is running water, electricity. It is a place that we would go home to, and we would consider it a place to stay that is safe for us and safe for our kids.

Four ways that students can be homeless in the district.

- Doubled-Up-Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, incarceration of parent/guardian, or similar reasons. *(About 75% of DISD homeless students are living doubled up)*
- Hotel/Motel-Living in motels/hotels/extended stay hotels.
- Emergency Shelters/Transitional Living: Living in emergency or transitional shelters.
- Unsheltered: Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, campgrounds, substandard housing, etc.

DISD assists families during the registration process and provides free meals to students as it is sometimes the only food that they are getting. The school district provides school supplies and has emergency food, an Amazon wish list and are always advocating for donations to have for families in crisis.

DISD helps connect pre-kindergarten kids to Head Start (early childhood services)
American Rescue has provided funding that helped in hiring of 17 staff to assist the district hand-holding kids through graduation.

The Homeless Education Program (HEP) offers:

- Assist with enrollment advocacy, school transportation, school uniforms and supplies.
- Assist with transportation for out of district students that want to stay at their school of origin (work with 22 surrounding school districts)
- Provide emergency food and hygiene items.
- Offer referrals to additional resources for food, housing, and other specific needs.
- Provide referrals to counseling and medical services as needed.
- Serve as liaison between campus staff and central staff to ensure students are receiving all support, especially at the high school level to ensure their graduation.
- Assistance in crisis situations with parents/students/community (Hurricane Harvey, Highland Hills Apartments explosion, apartment fires, etc.)

At the end of 2023, DISD had 4,354 students that had been coded as homeless.

As of March 7th, 2024, DISD is currently at 4,297 students as homeless and still have 3 months of school. A breakdown of the number indicates that 3,112 students are doubled-up, 651 are in shelters/transitional housing, 435 are living in motels and 79 are unsheltered.

In working with families, the comments from them have been that a lack of affordable housing has caused them to seek refuge with friends/family members or try to move into hotels/extended stay hotels.

Helping support DISD's work:

Everyday Needs:

- Hygiene items, soap, 3-in 1 (shampoo, conditioner, body wash), feminine hygiene, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hair care for natural hair, washcloths, teen face wash, deodorant, teen body sprays, lip balm, smaller sized hand sanitizer, body wipes, 2-in 1 shampoo/conditioner.
- Shelf-Stable food: granola bars, single serving microwavable meals, Vienna sausages, tuna (cans and kits), peanut butter/cheese crackers, snack packs of cookies/chips etc., ramen, beef jerky, fruit gummies/rollups, dried fruit, trail mix, etc.
- Gift cards.

Big Dreams:

- Crisis/Weekend Support: a place we could call for students that need a place to go on a Friday afternoon when there is no place to send them.
- Drop-In Center: a drop-in center that is open 24/7 to students for meals assistance, a place to rest, a way to get off the streets during times when they would be most susceptible to trafficking, etc.
- **November Homeless Youth Awareness Month:**
Collaboration with the Partnership to promote the November campaign to increase awareness throughout the DFW area.
Dr. Daniel suggested helping promote awareness through a Dallas County Resolution.

Chair, Cara Mendelsohn asked if DISD knows about what the number of families that they are seeing in cars may be. Mrs. Marshall stated that the number of unsheltered families is about 80 or 85.

Chair, Cara Mendelsohn also suggested bringing the "Big Dreams" items for discussion at the next DAP meeting to see if those are items that the partnership could help with.

Rob Hays asked if there is any coordination with Dallas County, the City of Dallas Office of Homeless Solutions, Housing Forward or the Continuum of Care. Ashley Brundage commented that there is a disconnect between the groups because the Office of Homeless Solutions is working from the HUD homeless definition.

Email to reach the DISD Homeless Education Program: HomelessEducation@dallasisd.org

6. Revision/Draft Distribution: Articles of Incorporation / Bylaws Cara Mendelsohn, Chair

- This item will be on the agenda next month.
- Everyone to review the initial draft and bring back feedback.

7. Committee Report: System Performance Dr. Theresa Daniel, Vice-Chair

Dr. Daniel commented that during the last couple of months she has been going around the state and around the country talking with other counties in particular and recognizing the cooperation among the housing homeless entities within the Dallas County is admirable and comparatively, Dallas is doing well.

8. Proposed Items for Next/Future Meetings (no discussion, debate, and/or vote) Cara Mendelsohn, Chair

9. Announcements of Upcoming Events and Meetings:
Dallas Area Partnership to End and Prevent Homelessness Local Government Corporation
 Next Meeting April 4, 2024
 Dallas City Hall, 1500 Marilla St., Dallas, TX 75201, 6th Floor (6ES)

10. Meeting Adjournment:
The meeting adjourned at 1:35 pm.

Cara Mendelsohn, Chair

Approval Date