



# JOHNSON COUNTY Decategorization Program

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Laurie Nash – Decat Coordinator

## Draft Decat Board Meeting Minutes DRAFT

April 11, 2023

Room 214 HHS and Zoom.

Board members in attendance: Susan Vileta (Chair), Dee Dixon (DVIP), Kristi Tisl (DHHS), Carrie Hough (C&FR), Jon Green (JCBOS) V Fixmer-Oraiz (JCBOS), Erin Altheide (JCS)

Staff in attendance: Laurie Nash, An Leonard

Guests in attendance: None

The meeting was called to order at 2:37 p.m.

Introductions were made.

Approve previous minutes- After a brief discussion, D Dixon **motions to approve March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes, seconded by V Fixmer-Oraiz. Motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Report- None provided at today's meeting.

FY24 Informal Solicitations- This Decat Board identifies 3-priority focus areas, Mental Health Supports, Positive Youth Development, and Parenting Supports all targeted to families at risk of involvement in the child welfare system. Solicitations were issued for Youth and Family Mental Health Supports (\$35,000), Positive Youth Development Services (\$45,000), and Parenting Supports (\$15,000) on 2/28/23 with applications due 4/3/23. The Oversight Committee met on 4/7/23 to review all application's and make informed recommendations regarding funding.

L Nash would like to discuss solicitations, review how those funds were used this fiscal year for contracts not eligible for renewal, and then discuss the new applications.

### **Mental Health Supports (DCAT4-24-002)**

Mental Health Supports funding previously supported UAY's Youth & Family Advocacy Program to provide crisis intervention, counseling, mediation services for youth and families in Johnson County at \$35,000 per year. They did not apply for Decat funds to continue that programming. The Mental Health Supports (DCAT4-24-002) solicitation received 1 application. United Action for Youth (UAY) requests \$35,000 to provide 20 bi-weekly mental health support focused groups for 30 LGBTQ youth, 120 sessions of individual mediation and advocacy to provide immediate support and bridge access to mental health therapy for up to 60 youth, and up to 20 Community trainings/presentation/ consultations focused on the mental health needs of LGBTQ youth. Training requests come from schools, churches, and other community partners. UAY sees this request as an expansion of the current Youth and Family Advocacy contract which ends 6/30/23, with an emphasis on LGBTQ youth and families. UAY will continue to provide youth and family advocacy with funding from other sources including JJYD and private donors. The Contract Oversight committee asked if UAY would be open to expanding their audience. They responded they are open to that, but that they could utilize all of those funds for LGBTQ+ youth. Laurie shared concerns that the community trainings do not fit the

intent of the solicitation, as it is not a direct mental health service to youth/families at risk for involvement in the child welfare system. She shared that there are other groups such as One Iowa provide similar services. Laurie said this seems more like professional development and not a mental health service. She shared that Matt Majeski (Service Area manager at DHHS) shares those concerns. Funding flows through his office at DHHS. L Nash asked if anyone from the Contract Oversight Committee wanted to comment. None. V Fixmer-Oraiz asked about the timeline and how much time we have to make a decision. L Nash noted it needs to happen soon. V Fixmer-Oraiz states LGBTQ youth and families are feeling pretty dire right now and believes there is serious need for mental health supports for this group. L Nash believes it is not a question of whether there is a need for this kind of service, but whether it is an appropriate use of these Decat funds. K Tisl noted that Decat funding is going to be greatly reduced this year and moving forward. She asked if the JC Board has looked at the full board budget to review funding moving forward into next year. She has concerns about locking up that much funding in mental health services to such a narrow population. V Fixmer-Oraiz clarified that this was the only application received. L Nash verified that and shared that the solicitation was sent to Families Inc., Four Oaks, and UAY. V Fixmer-Oraiz asked if the funds would go unspent if not allocated to this proposal. L Nash outlined options including approving the application as-is, negotiating terms with UAY, or opening up to another solicitation. Board may award full funding, partial funding, or no funding. If full funding is not allocated, then funds can be re-issued to a more extensive audience. **V Fixmer-Oraiz motions to fund for \$35,000 UAY Pride: Mental Health Supports for LGBTQ Youth and their Families with the caveat that any trainings will focus on mental health, seconded by E Altheide.** E Altheide expressed concern that if programs are not already up and running, \$35,000 isn't much money to develop a new program for only 2 years. S Vileta said she does not believe a new solicitation would result in additional applications. K Tisl clarified that this was sent to only 3 organizations; she then noted that other Decat areas sometimes issue solicitations widely and not direct to a limited number to maybe get more bids. **Motion passed with 6 yea and 1 nay. KTisl DHHS representative opposed with concerns that programming does not focus on the Decat objective to preventing youth from entering the Child Welfare System. Motion carries.**

**The Positive Youth Development (DCAT4-24-003) apps sent to NCJC, UAY, Dream City** solicitation received 1 application. United Action for Youth requests \$45,000 to provide 40 group-based youth services for up to 40 youth at 2 rural schools sites in Johnson County, increase summer programming with an additional week of Pride Rock, add one day each week of LGBTQ+ Pride Hang Out at the Swaim Center for up to 40 youth, and pilot a Peer Leadership Program with 20 sessions of activities for up to 15 youth. All programming would occur during non-school hours. This request is for an expansion of the Pride Group programs, which will be funded by another source for FY24. KTisl reports M Majeski has concerns about 90% of Decat funding going to the same provider. Majeski would also prefer that we fund services for youth and families of color. We have issued funding for BIPOC youth and families for several solicitation years and gotten very little interest from providers. After additional discussion, **J Green motions to fund UAY Pride: Positive Youth Development Services for LGBTQ+ Youth in the amount of \$45,000 seconded by V Fixmer-Oraiz. Motion passed with 6 yea and 1 nay. KTisl DHHS representative opposed with concerns that programming does not focus on the Decat objective to preventing youth from entering the Child Welfare System. Motion carries.**

**The Parent Supports (DCAT4-24-004) apps sent to NCJC, UAY, Dream City, Families Inc, Four Oaks**

solicitation received 2 applications. Families, Inc. requests part of this funding to provide the Nurturing Parent Program, and United Action for Youth requests funds to provide a pilot program for UAY Pride: Parenting Supports for LGBTQ+ Families. UAY is willing to provide most of their original request for \$9,500 and Families, Inc. is willing to provide fewer sessions for \$5,500. This would allow both projects to be available for families. V Fixmer-Oraiz discussed the impact of State legislation on queer adults LGBTQ+ kids and trans kids especially. V Fixmer-Oraiz states they are glad to see this targeted to bewildered parents and supports UAY looking at the current political landscape and seeing a pressing group who have no supports. Decategorization is meant to meet the specific needs of communities and based on the response to our Informal Solicitations this is what our community needs. Opening this to all parents with such limited funding will prevent some parents from getting served at all. Johnson County has not gotten good response to previous parenting solicitations. After some discussion,

**D Dixon motions to approve \$5,500 to Families, Inc. for NPP, seconded by E Altheide. Motion passed with 6 yea and 1 nay. KTisl DHHS representative opposed with concerns that programming does not focus on the Decat objective to preventing youth from entering the Child Welfare System. Motion carries.**

**D Dixon motions to approve \$9,500 to UAY to provide parenting programming focusing on LGBTQ+ families, seconded by V Fixmer-Oraiz. Motion passed with 6 yea and 1 nay. KTisl DHHS representative opposed with concerns that programming does not focus on the Decat objective to preventing youth from entering the Child Welfare System. Motion carries.**

**FY 24 Contract Renewals-** L Nash discussed the Immigrant and Refugee Parenting Groups project. This contract started in mid-year (FY23) and has a 1-year renewal available. K Tisl reports that brand new smaller providers do take a while to get started. After some discussion, **D Dixon motions to renew for FY24 at \$5,000, E Altheide seconds. Motion passed unanimously.**

Program and Other Update-

CPPC- Kites for Kids will be at Weatherby Park in Iowa City on April 15<sup>th</sup> noon-2:00, and at Liberty High (with 16 vendors providing info) on April 22<sup>nd</sup> noon- 2:00 Volunteers would be welcome!

Announcements- 4/29/23 Immigrant and Refugee Families will gather at the Community Center for a meal and informational program for the Congolese members of our community.

**Meeting adjourned at 3:58**

Please direct any questions about this meeting to:

Laurie Nash, Decat Coordinator

Johnson County Social Services

Phone: 356-6090; [lnash@johnsoncountyiowa.gov](mailto:lnash@johnsoncountyiowa.gov)