



# **Colorado Human Services Directors Association**

## **Proposal for Strategic Organization**

**Adopted at CHSDA Conference**

**June 1<sup>st</sup> through June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**

**Vail, Colorado**

# Proposal for Strategic Organization of

## Colorado Human Services Directors Association (CHSDA)

### SECTION I: Background and Rationale

**Background:** As one of thirteen states operating with a state-supervised – county-administered organization model, Colorado is challenged with defining and developing the working relationship between county and state entities and their complementary and potentially competing priorities. Currently, Colorado Counties Incorporated (CCI) frequently finds itself reacting to legislation and unable to offer a cohesive platform that could influence policy prior to its implementation in a manner that will improve statewide practice and service delivery. The Colorado Human Services Directors Association (CHSDA) must provide CCI with recommendations based on comprehensive research and data at a moments notice. When rule changes occur at the State, it can be difficult to have appropriate representation present to testify and accurately reflect the broader consensus of the counties. There is a great need to have informed and prepared Commissioners and/or Directors ready to, testify at the legislature; attend high level policy meetings with State officials and/or legislators; and communicate with the media as necessary.

The current economic recession has placed significant burdens on human service programs and their staff in both dramatically increased caseloads and drastic budget constraints. County leadership teams experienced a very difficult year in 2009, and the urgent and necessary focus had to be directed to local priorities, with few if any resources remaining to be devoted to legislative or long-term planning activities. This resulted in widely-dispersed reactionary responses to state releases and positions on such important issues as the CFSR results and GCWAC recommendations, adequate funding for county administration, methods and approaches to reducing child fatalities, and the widely publicized proposal to fully centralize human services at CDHS. As both the State and the media regularly release information out of context or without framing, it has become incumbent upon the CHSDA to develop data driven communication mechanisms so that CCI, County Commissioners, and the County Human Services Departments are prepared to counterbalance those releases. This will allow a more cohesive, proactive, and unified county response that will ease all counties' workload and promote better legislation. Creating a stronger network will enable us to increase bandwidth throughout the county system to better position CCI to respond effectively, influence legislation, and inform the media. It also provides an opportunity to promote standards of excellence, build capacity throughout the counties, and enhance our efforts to protect and support our communities. As a result of the widely acknowledged challenges faced during 2009, CHSDA adopted a platform for change and a commitment to excellence at the December CCI conference in Colorado Springs. The membership directed that a strategic planning committee be established with formal representation from all the regions throughout Colorado. In addition to the formal regional representation, the committee was open to all individuals who desired to participate in the planning process. The strategic planning committee was immediately established following the CCI conference. Committee members met in person for a full day on February 17<sup>th</sup> and a half-day on March 2<sup>nd</sup> with several additional conference calls to develop the attached proposal. The work both in and out of those meetings has been distributed to the entire CHSDA.

**Rationale:** As CHSDA, we have a key role as the standard bearer for the industry. Our Commissioners and CCI as a whole must be at the forefront. There is an opportunity to establish the CCI/CHSDA position with the change in governorship this year. In addition, we may have new state directors at both CDHS and HCPF. The information and recommendations from CHSDA will enable CCI to have greater influence on outcomes, policy, programs, and financing, and to be ahead of the media with our message on what is working. We have the talent, but not the structure.

The CHSDA strategic plan recognizes and reflects that the work of the organization is accomplished in order to support the County Commissioner's in their work in the Human Services arena. The CHSDA will not be in conflict with Colorado Counties, Inc., or the CCI HHS Steering Committee, on any issue, at any time.

Most of the other states with a state-supervised – county-administered organization model have developed strong county social service directors' organizations in response to the same challenges that face Colorado. This proposal includes an attached table of the county director organizations from six states with state-supervised county-administered systems similar to Colorado, including Wisconsin, Virginia, Ohio, North Carolina, and California. The purpose of the table is to identify the potential benefits and challenges associated with elevating associations to a higher level of organizational structure than currently exists in Colorado.

At the first meeting, the CHSDA Leadership Group identified some common benefits of a strong organization, which were supported by the group's research of the other states.

Strong organizations can:

- Set the standard for the delivery of human services in Colorado.
- Be an organized and powerful voice for children, family, and adults for the state, which also strengthens the system.
- Serve as a repository and source for data and best practices for all programs.
- Allow for fair representation and input from all county demographics (small, medium, large, urban, and rural).
- Reduce barriers between counties.
- Form and utilize specialized committees within the association to respond to challenges and issues in the system.
- Communicate a more representative and comprehensive story of how we work together and serve our communities.
- Collect outcomes for groups of counties, rather than individual counties.
- Develop more effective relationships with the state departments.
- Prepare fact sheets that assist with defining the conversation with legislators, media, and state, and counties— a valuable communication tool for CCI.
- Clarify values and rely on sound decision making for systems improvements.
- Be visionary – discussions and actions are designed and planned to meet the mission.
- Increase communication and support among counties and stakeholders.
- Increase opportunities to learn and collaborate among counties and stakeholders.
- Increase efficiencies and define a strategic direction for counties.
- Make county input more cohesive, educated, and comprehensive.

- Help build consensus on issues affecting the counties and on solutions to these issues, whenever possible.
- Promote high performing counties to assist/provide TA to counties requesting assistance.
- Provide transparency in county operations and policies to stakeholders.
- Leverage resources that will allow the organization to provide professional development training.

States with organizations identified the following challenges, necessary resources, and/or caveats that need to be considered:

- 1) To mitigate overburdening local staff of leadership members, designated staff should be hired to support the organization's mission – All states.
- 2) It is best to begin structure with designated staff. Improvising in the initial stages with previously committed local county staff creates confusion and loyalty issues – Wisconsin.
- 3) It is important that the structure of the executive committee supports appropriate representation of diverse county interests and averts the development of power bases – Virginia.
- 4) While input from lower-level staff is both important and appropriate, committee chairs should be at the Director level – Virginia.
- 5) The size of the executive committee should facilitate ease of responsiveness – be wary of too large and unwieldy a structure – California and Virginia.
- 6) Transitioning to higher dues/fees met initial resistance, but the impact of the organization on state policy and the sharing of all types of resources has proven invaluable - All states.
- 7) Each state interviewed has either an on-going or as-needed contract with lobbying firms.

All states interviewed also indicated a willingness to be consulted further for technical assistance.

## **Section II: Mission and Principles of CHSDA**

**The Colorado Human Services Directors Association (CHSDA)** is a non-profit association representing the human service directors from each of Colorado's 64 counties. The Association promotes a human services system that encourages self-sufficiency of families and communities, and protects vulnerable children and adults from abuse and neglect.

**Mission:** Dedicated to the strength and well being of individuals, children, and their families, CHSDA is committed to an excellent community-based safety net throughout Colorado.

- **Revised Mission: CHSDA is dedicated to a human services system that promotes the strength, well-being, and self-sufficiency of individuals, families, and communities.**

To accomplish this mission, the Association will:

- **Support and make recommendations to** Boards of County Commissioners, Council Members, and Mayors in the governance, policy, development, and desired outcomes pertaining to local human services delivery
- **Advocate** for policies through CCI that will further the mission of the organization and produce integrated service delivery
- **Educate** state and federal policy-makers and the public regarding the impact of human services policies on individuals, communities, and county social services operations
- **Collaborate** with governmental and community-based organizations to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.
- **Facilitate** effective communication between and among county social service agencies, and state and federal administrative agencies, including the exchange of knowledge and best and promising practices.

### **CHSDA Strategic Principles (revised in bold)**

- *Recognizing local differences*
- *Promote locally relevant solutions and locally delivered services to meet community needs*
- *Commitment to Excellence*
- *Keep the primary focus of our work tied to families and communities and their needs*
- *Identify and address fairness and equity issues in the system (disproportionality)*
- *Strengthen our Leadership*
- *Focus on continuous quality improvement*
- *Develop strong statewide management*
- *Use consistent data measures*
- *Define acceptable/unacceptable outcomes*
- *Jointly define and accept shared risk*
- *Enhance our accountability*
- *Strengthen our relationships with CDHS/HCPF*
- *Develop and advocate for resources and partnerships at the state and local levels*
- *Develop community support by listening and being responsive*
- *Recognizing our interconnectedness with other governing boards*
- *Be creative, bold*

### **Section III: 2010-2011 Priorities**

*The CHSDA priorities recognize and reflect that the work of the organization is accomplished in order to support the County Commissioner's in their work in the Human Services arena. The work of the CHSDA will not be in conflict with the position of Colorado Counties, Inc., or the CCI HHS Steering Committee, on any issue, at any time.*

- 1) Create an improved CHSDA structure: governance, committees; building staff capacity. (near-term)
- 2) Develop a statement of ethical standards (near-term)
- 3) Create and publish meaningful, relevant and useful data outcomes on a regular basis to assist CCI to drive policy and elevate dialogue (fact books, white papers). (near-term and ongoing)
- 4) Explore and strengthen proactive partnerships between CCI/CHSDA and Federal, State, and Local organizations that can enhance funds, support and create strategic alliances and improve our organization. (ongoing)
- 5) Create and proliferate "standards of excellence" for the delivery of human services in Colorado. (near-term)
- 6) In coordination with CCI HHS, CHSDA will advocate and influence human services policy through the CCI HHS Committee within CO and at a national level. (ongoing)
- 7) Establish CHSDA annual strategic planning (will coordinate strategic planning efforts with CCI HHS): non-reactive platform with proactive goals (in addition to responding to emergent needs). (ongoing)
- 8) In coordination with CCI HHS, CHSDA will build strong internal communication mechanisms with committees and among counties, including a centralized website, with information from the state and the CHSDA, as well as resources. (near-term and ongoing)
- 9) Provide peer county support: organize the system to share resources and provide in-depth support/technical assistance to counties (removed "vulnerable) (ongoing)
- 10) In coordination with CCI HHS, CHSDA will assess, recommend and advocate for a statewide base level of service (near term and ongoing)
- 11) Respond to unexpected urgent issues that arise.

## **Section IV: Proposed Organizational Leadership and Governance Structure**

The proposed organizational structures evolved primarily from research of the California Welfare Director's Association (CWDA) and Ohio (PCSAO), as well as the CHSDA meetings and research into other state organizations. The organizational structure would include the creation of an executive committee, pertinent committees, as well as a staffing model to meet association goals. CHSDA Leadership would include fifteen County Directors on the Executive Committee with annually elected officers and the following sub-committee structure:

### **2010 Executive Committee**

The 13-15 members of CHSDA's Executive Committee will guide the association toward its mission. The Executive Committee is composed of five annually elected officers (President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer). The current CHSDA President will chair the Executive Committee and the immediate Past President shall sit on the Executive Committee.

Following the election of the five annually elected officers, the six Regional PAC Representatives will be elected and shall serve as the appropriate sub-committee chairs described below. The six elected PAC alternates shall serve on the appropriate sub-committee and may serve as the proxy for the PAC representative on the Executive Committee in the event of an absence.

There shall be a minimum of two representatives from the large ten counties, two representatives from medium counties, two representatives from small counties. The Manager of the Denver Department of Human Services shall have a seat on the Executive Committee.

The remaining seats will then be elected, ensuring that the above requirements are met. Executive Committee members shall chair the sub-committees described below, and will be Director-level members. Elected officers may chair the sub-committees and can serve as regional representatives and/or fulfill size requirements. The PAC regional representative shall chair regular regional meetings of the membership.

The Executive Committee will take into consideration the recommendations and concerns about feasibility questions such as capacity, duplication, resource needs, impacts on small, medium, and large counties.

### **Executive Committee Duties**

The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and of the Executive committee. The President shall perform the usual duties of this office and shall be ex-officio member of all committees. The President shall have the power to appoint any special committees. The President shall present the Association's budget for approval at the annual meeting. The President or their designee shall act as the liaison with affiliate groups specified.

The First Vice-President shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President. He/she shall be fulfill the duties of the President in the event of the President's temporary absence or disability. The First Vice-President shall be responsible for Association activities relating to membership and assist the president as requested.

The Second Vice-President shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall be responsible for proposing Constitution and By Law revisions if necessary. The Second Vice-President shall be responsible for Association activities relating to the annual conference and assist the president as requested.

The Secretary shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall keep a record of all decisions made at meetings of the Association and shall receive and file all correspondence. He/she shall also perform other usual duties of the office. The Secretary shall maintain a roster of all active members and Executive Committees

members with positions. The Secretary shall distribute the updates to the roster annually, or as necessary, to the full CHSDA.

The Treasurer shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and shall be the custodian of all funds and securities of the Association. The Treasurer shall collect dues and be responsible for the keeping of all accounts and make a report of the financial status of the Association at each meeting. In the event that a county is unable to pay the annual dues due to a financial hardship in a given year, the Treasurer will be responsible for requesting written explanation from the respective county if that county wishes to request a temporary waiver of dues. The Treasurer shall pay all bills properly allowed.

The Past-President shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee and advise the Executive Committee in the furtherance of the Association's purposes.

Following the Annual Conference in which the new Executive Committee is elected, the outgoing Executive Committee will conduct an orientation program for all incoming Executive Committee members regarding committee membership and voting rights, committee and sub-committee structure and activities, rules of order and responsibilities of CHSDA.

### **Sub-Committees with PAC Representatives**

#### **Family and Children Services Sub-Committee (2 PAC Representatives)**

The Family and Children Services Committee will advise the Executive Committee on policies and practices related to the effective administration of child welfare services, including foster care and adoptions. The Committee will also address social/human service delivery issues that affect county operation and administration of programs to children and their families. The committee will work with the CO Department of Human Services and other partner organizations to promote consistent interpretation and application of law, standards and best practices throughout the state. All policy and legislative recommendations approved by the Executive Committee will be forwarded to the CCI HHS for final approval. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

#### **Self-Sufficiency Sub-Committee (2 PAC Representatives)**

The Self-Sufficiency Sub-Committee will advise the Executive Committee on policies and practices related to the effective administration of the Medicaid, SNAP, Colorado Works, Child Support, and Child Care programs and will work with CDHS and HCPF to identify and resolve issues and promote common goals. . All policy and legislative recommendations approved by the Executive Committee will be forwarded to the CCI HHS for final approval. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

#### **Adult Services Sub-Committee (PAC Representative)**

The Adult Services Committee will advise the Executive Committee on policies and practices related to the effective administration of the Adult Protective Services (APS) and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) programs. The committee will also serve as a forum for discussion among counties to promote effective program administration and service delivery and will work with CDHS and HCPF to ensure consistent interpretation of laws and regulations pertaining to the IHSS and APS programs. All policy and legislative recommendations approved by the Executive Committee will be forwarded to the CCI HHS for final approval.



The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

### **Sub-Committees with Non-Pac Representatives**

#### **Fiscal Sub-Committee (PAC Representative)**

The Fiscal Committee will advise the Executive Committee on fiscal policies and practices related to the effective administration of human services, including identifying, resolving, and/or developing recommendations on fiscal issues such as claiming, social/human services caseload growth, and county allocations. All policy and legislative recommendations approved by the Executive Committee will be forwarded to the CCI HHS for final approval. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas and forwarding them to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

### **Ad Hoc Sub-Committees**

#### **Policy/Legislative Sub-Committee (Non-PAC position)**

CHSDA's Policy Committee will identify and analyze issues, develop program and policy recommendations for consideration by the Executive Committee, work with state agencies to develop and implement programs and services. They will meet regularly to review legislation, identify needed amendments, and recommend bill positions to the Executive Committee for final recommendations to CCI HHS. The committee will recommend budget and legislative priorities to the full CHSDA and to CCI on an annual basis. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

#### **Public Awareness/Education Sub-Committee (Non-PAC position)**

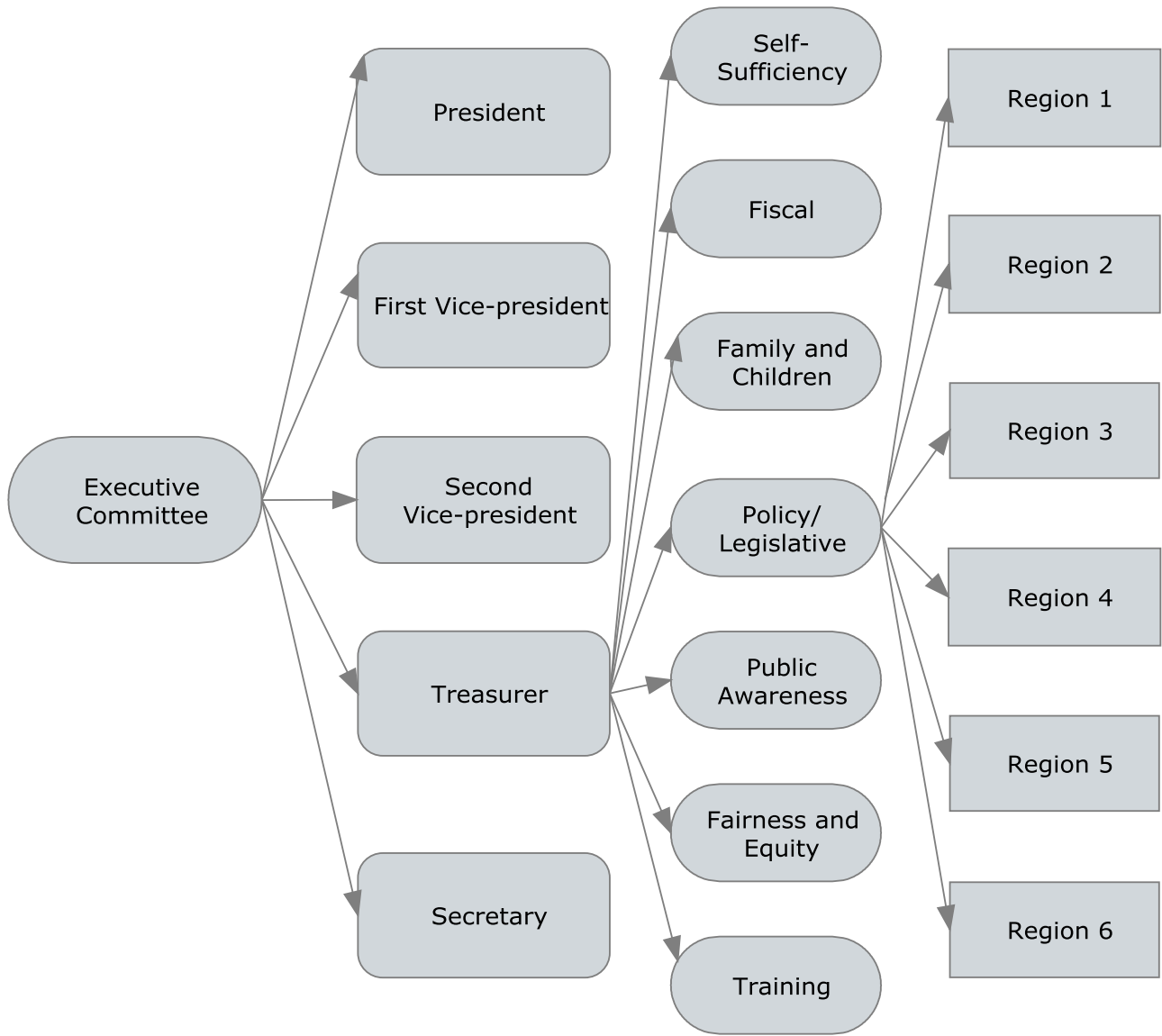
Social Service Public Information Officers (or those who serve in that capacity along with other responsibilities) and the CCI designated staff member meet monthly to: develop and provide public awareness and education strategies, consult with and assist other CHSDA committees, be a clearing house for public awareness education and materials, be a point of contact for state agency public information staff, provide networking opportunities for county PIOs, and provide media and crisis communication trainings for directors and their staff. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

#### **Fairness and Equity Sub-Committee (Non-PAC position)**

The CHSDA Fairness and Equity Sub-Committee will review and discuss disproportionality, diversity, and fairness and equity issues and will work with CDHS, HCPF, and local communities to promote practices and policies to address identified issues. The committee will work closely with state agencies to analyze data and funding and make recommendations to address disproportionality in service delivery, policy, and funding. . All policy and legislative recommendations approved by the Executive Committee will be forwarded to the CCI HHS for final approval. The chair will be responsible for organization of key issues for the meeting agendas, as well as appointing a volunteer each meeting for minutes, and forwarding agenda items and minutes to CHSDA staff for dissemination to members.

#### **Training Sub-Committee (Non-PAC position)**

The CHSDA Executive Committee will develop and appoint a training sub-committee in the near-term as requested by membership at the April 1, 2010 meeting.



## **Meetings**

The full membership of the CHSDA will meet four times a year (the summer and fall CCI conferences and two 1 and ½ day meetings in the spring and fall). At those meetings, the full CHSDA will develop the executive committee and sub-committee protocols and facilitate communication across the full CHSDA membership and in coordination with the committees. The CHSDA Executive Committee will meet monthly for approximately 10 meetings per year. The monthly Executive Committee membership meeting will be divided into two sessions; the first half dedicated to sub-committee meetings, and the latter half for the Executive Committee business meeting with sub-committee reports. Additional meetings of the executive committee or sub-committees may be added as warranted to address emergent concerns. Regional meetings will be scheduled a minimum of quarterly, within 2 weeks prior to the scheduled full CHSDA membership meetings. This inclusive inaugural-year approach will build a solid foundation, from which the group may transition to a more agile and responsive model for subsequent years.

Additional meetings may be scheduled by the sub-committees, as dictated by the needs of the association relevant to the sub-committees' responsibilities. The additional meetings may be scheduled at times and locations to best meet the needs of the sub-committee members, but shall be announced with at least 15 days notice to the membership, unless a significant emergent need prevents such notice.

Scheduled meetings may be cancelled if the President or chairperson deems there to be insufficient business items to warrant convening resources. Notice of meeting cancellations must be made to the membership at least 7 days prior to the scheduled date, unless a significant emergent need prevents such notice. Agendas and minutes for all committee meetings are mandatory, shall be coordinated by the Secretary for the executive committee or chairpersons for the sub-committee, shall be distributed to all members upon request to the CHSDA staff, and made available via an archived electronic file maintained by CHSDA staff (or website).