



# Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the VT Department for Children and Families

## FY22-23 Report

July 1 2022 – June 30 2023\*

### I. FY22-23 VCAB Meetings

#### A. Vermont Citizen's Advisory Board held four quarterly meetings:

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. September 7, 2022 | 3. March 31, 2023 |
| 2. December 7, 2022  | 4. June 7, 2023   |

#### B. Meeting Location and Times:

VCAB's quarterly meetings were held from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon, via on-line videoconference.

### II. VCAB Operations and Leadership

#### A. VCAB Co-Chairs and Membership

1. VCAB Co-Chairs serve two-year terms, with elections scheduled In March for each on alternating years. Co-Chair Dr. James Metz was re-elected in April 2023 to a two-year term. Co-Chair Sally Borden continues her current term until 2024.
2. VCAB membership is staggered so that approximately half of the members are up for re-appointment for two-year terms each year in March. New member Lynn Messier representing kinship care joined VCAB in Dec. 2022. A list of members re-appointed in March 2023, as well as those whose terms continue until March 2024 is *attached*.  
Action: VCAB will review membership appointment process in the upcoming year.
3. An average of 16.5 empaneled members attended FY22-23 VCAB meetings. Additionally, from two to five Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF) staff attended, including the Commissioner and/or Deputy Commissioner. KidSafe Collaborative staff attended to take minutes and provide administrative support. 20 to 25 individuals, an average of 21.5, attended VCAB meetings in FY22-23.

## B. VCAB Process and Operations

1. VCAB operates in accordance with the Board's approved by-laws, per the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Reauthorization Act of 2010, provisions for community advisory panels (§106(c)(4)).
2. VCAB is empaneled under the provisions of Vermont law: 33VSA49§17. Annual (re)empanelment was submitted and authorized by the Department for Children and Families Commissioner effective October 1, 2022.
3. VCAB administrative and operational support is provided by KidSafe Collaborative, Inc. per a grant from the VT Department for Children and Families.
4. Vermont Department for Children and Families Interim Commissioner Chen or Commissioner Winters, appointed in March 2023, and/or Deputy Commissioner Aryka Radke participated in all VCAB meetings, along with Operations Director Brenda Gooley and/or Child Safety Manager Nancy Miller.
5. An agenda for each meeting is sent to all members and to the DCF regular participants prior to each meeting. Meeting minutes/notes are taken at each meeting by KidSafe Collaborative staff, and sent to all members with the subsequent meeting agenda.
6. VCAB's webpage, established in 2018 and maintained on the VT DCF website, provides the public with information about and access to VCAB. <https://dcf.vermont.gov/boards-councils/VCAB>
7. VCAB has one active committee, the Membership Committee, established at the 2021 VCAB Retreat/Planning Meeting. Two additional committees, *Case Review* and the *Collecting Lived Experience Stories*, are not currently active.
  - a. *Membership Committee* is comprised of two VCAB members and one DCF Family Services staff member and an alternate. The committee focuses on expanding the membership and diversity of VCAB, as well as looking at membership role overall. It has met seven times this fiscal year. Committee reports to the full VCAB board.

## C. VCAB Role and Relationship to DCF

1. *Discussion* pertaining to lack of information shared by DCF regarding the Woodside lawsuit, and more broadly to information sharing by VCAB members as a Board and an empaneled team under 33VSA4917.

VCAB recognizes the need for further clarification of what VCAB's advisory and oversight responsibilities are according to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and in accordance with the VCAB By-Laws.

**Action:** VCAB requested regular updates from the Commissioner regarding any new information available about the Woodside lawsuit. VCAB seeks to clarify with DCF how and what information will be shared both from DCF to VCAB, as well as the responsibility of VCAB members regarding disclosure of potentially confidential information.

2. Advocacy and VCAB role in relationship to new Office of the Child Youth and Family Advocate, and OCYFA Oversight Commission.

**Action:** invite newly hired Child Youth and Family Advocate to upcoming VCAB meeting.

### III. Key Issues and Actions FY22-23: Summary

#### A. System of Care: Secure Facility for Youth

1. Since the closure of Woodside, there is a lack of options for youth needing to be housed in secure setting, and those in need of crisis stabilization. More youth being housed out of state. DCF continuing to work on establishing in-state site, including temporary site adjacent to women's prison.
2. VCAB members expressed significant concerns regarding the development of a secure youth facility following receipt of information about a pending lawsuit filed against DCF on behalf of youth at Woodside.

DCF discussion: committed to ensuring that any facility will provide developmentally appropriate, holistic, trauma-informed care. Working with DOC, juvenile justice stakeholder group, those with lived experience, and professionals to ensure plan is comprehensive.

3. Youth incarcerated in adult facility. Review news article, discussion.

**Action:** VCAB requested transparency from the Department regarding the issues that have been raised relevant to the treatment of youth in secure facilities.

DCF to provide VCAB information regarding the proposed new juvenile facility(ies). In addition to site progress updates: •*Policy changes* so Woodside issues are not repeated. •*Program and oversight*: what will be different in the new program?

This will continue to be placed on the VCAB agenda for updates and review.

**Action:** VCAB members requested information from and discussion with Deputy Commissioner Radke about the practice of incarceration of youth in adult facilities.

**Action:** VCAB will follow up with DCF regarding the inclusion of those with lived experience on the task forces advising the Department on youth facilities.

#### B. IT System

1. DCF provided regular updates on the status of the CCWIS purchase and IT system project implementation. VCAB advocated for inclusion in DCF's budget priorities, and for provisions that are inclusive of youth access to their own case information.

**Discussion:** VCAB will draft a letter to Agency of Human Services Secretary Samuelson (previous letter sent to Secretary Smith, September 2021), cc Commissioner Brown, advocating for CCWIS purchase/IT system upgrade, in order to provide preemptive input to the budget process. Co-chairs will share draft with VCAB prior to sending.

**Action:** Letter written and presented to DCF Commissioner Sean Brown 9/28/22, Secretary Samuelson cc'd. Letter forwarded with cover email to new Interim Commissioner Harry Chen, 10/20/22, and VCAB will forward to Commissioner Winters. *(Attached)*

**Action:** Letter written and presented from VCAB, to **House and Senate Appropriations Joint Public Hearing on Governor's Recommended FY2024 Budget**, February 28, 2023 *(Attached)*

**Action:** VCAB requested and received a progress report from DCF at each meeting regarding CWIS implementation; next meeting: update regarding drawdown of 4Efunds.

## C. Budget and Legislation Advocacy

1. Budget priorities for DCF Family Services: staffing hiring and retention; IT System implementation.

**Action:** VCAB requests DCF provide budget updates timely and regularly during budget development, so VCAB has opportunity to advocate as Board sees fit.

**Action:** *see above:* House and Senate Appropriations Joint Public Hearing on Governor's Recommended FY2024 Budget: Letter written and presented from VCAB Co-Chair Sally Borden on behalf of VCAB, February 28, 2023. (*Attached*)

2. Legislative issues and priorities:

VCAB and DCF discussed numerous legislative initiatives, with VCAB members Amy Rose, Voices for Vermont's Children, and former Representative Ann Pugh as well as DCF staff providing information and updates.

- *Secure Youth Facility:* ACT 160, which outlines plans for secure facilities, preliminary report from DCF was submitted to Legislature.
- H.327, revise child abuse and neglect *substantiation procedures*, put forth by DCF, linked to some of VPRC's recommendations. (*see item E. below*)
- H.224: youth input in family court custody cases. VCAB is encouraged to support.
- S.92: direct cash transfer for youth who are exiting foster care.
- H.409: restraint and seclusion policy in schools.

**Action:** VCAB to update information and consider advocacy regarding these and other legislation in next session of biennium.

## D. Anti-Racism, Justice, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1. **Action: VCAB Agenda:** Included updates from DCF Family Services at every meeting regarding the Department's progress with "JEDI" (Justice Equity Diversity Inclusion) work.
  - a. DCF received 100k general funding to support the equity work: consultation and support - case consultation, affinity group facilitation and liaison, support group for BIPOC youth with lived experience, staff training.
  - b. Policy 76 ensures that LGBTQ+ children are supported and affirmed. Corresponding policy for race and ethnicity is in development.
  - c. Updating DCF's mission, vision, and values to remove "color blind" approach that was used previously. Also working to develop data collection about reporter race/ethnicity at the time of intake calls.
  - d. Change in the nondiscrimination licensing regulations for foster homes following the court decision in *Fulton v. Philadelphia*.
2. **VCAB Membership Committee** continued to meet. Purpose includes to increase diversity of membership on the VCAB. Initial outreach made to potential members.

**Action:** IT system advocacy: included information about the need to collect and analyze accurate information about race, ethnicity, and other demographic information in order for DCF to have accurate baseline data. Current information, including culturally important

information about child(ren) and family, may be inaccurate, subjectively determined, and not shared across DCF IT data systems.

## **E. Additional Key Issues/Discussion:**

1. **VPRC Report - Broken System, Broken Promises:** highlights child protection system challenges with the primary focus: DCF substantiation decisions and Child Protection Registry.
  - a. The standard of proof for substantiation determination by DCF and criminal court are different: “reasonable person” vs. “preponderance of the evidence,” which can present a challenge.
  - b. Report recommends: substantiation should have statutory basis and changing DCF standard to “preponderance of evidence”; investigations done within 60 days with 30 extra days if needed for contingencies; recommendation for using “verified evidence,” without basis for what constitutes “verified;” altering how notifications are made; how DCF conducts their reviews; create uniformity across state by removing substantiation decisions from individual districts.
  - c. Some recommendations made in the report are now before the legislature, e.g. H327.
  - d. DCF survey and conversation from the field show inconsistency regarding the evidence standard used. Have found some areas of common ground between report contents and DCF perspective.

**Action:** Request response from the DCF prior to June meeting: What are the questions the department is grappling with in terms of the Registry and its use? What are the Department’s recommendations, how do they differ from the report’s recommendation? Place this item on the June agenda for further discussion.

### **2. Workforce: Staffing and Safety**

- a. Impact of mental health crisis needs of children in custody, need for overtime 1x1 staffing at hospital emergency departments due to lack of placement options; significant impact on workforce staffing ratios, personal impact, retention/staff turnover.
- b. Staff Safety: Survey sent to Family Services Division staff. Feedback on safety, exhaustion, racial justice scale, etc. Results from last survey have been used to support retention work.

**Action:** Request for continued review of FSD efforts to retain staff as well as foster parent recruitment, support, retention, including feedback from District “planning sessions.”

### **3. Foster and kinship families:** “feeling that they aren’t heard” by DCF. Kin care funding equity.

**Action:** Deputy Commissioner Radke is willing to meet with the Foster Parent workgroup to discuss issues, concerns and recommendations.

**Action:** Kinship care concerns including rate disparity question placed on next VCAB agenda.

### **4. Youth Justice System, Policies and Practices**

- a. Overview of juvenile justice system. As of 7/1/22 youth that are 18 are part of the VT JJ system (vs. adult system; except certain offenses). A “Youthful Offender” is someone with supervision by DCF and DOC, can be up to age 21. *Discussion:* DCF services for youth and challenges.

5. **Family First Implementation:** Invest in wraparound services to prevent removal. Encourage programs to become Clearinghouse-approved evidence-based practices for IV-E funding eligibility.
6. **Safety Science and Child Welfare:** follow up to National Partnership for Child Safety presentation. **Action:** VCAB case review presentations will include Safety Science approach.

## IV. Case Reviews

### Case Reviews: Issues Summary

- A. **Lived Experience:** Thank you to VCAB member Patiance for sharing her story and informing VCAB's work from her personal experience.
- B. **Youth in need of secure placement** for safety; cognitive/development concerns.  
Discussion:
  1. These cases highlight what it can look like in the absence of a secure facility (i.e. these youth would have gone to Woodside in the past.)
  2. System sees youth with cognitive disabilities or concerns at the case level. DCF is often in the place of working with youth with developmental needs who do not otherwise have support in that area. *DCF will look to see if there is specific prevalence data on this.*
  3. Trauma or complex trauma is practically inescapable for those who are part of the juvenile justice system unfortunately.
- C. **Safety Science Implementation:** case presentation and review conducted with Safety Science lens.
- D. **Infant Substance Ingestions**
  1. DCF worked with the University of Vermont Children's Hospital Child Safe Program to create guidelines for medical providers for reporting substance ingestion in children with goal to reduce any bias in reporting.
- E. **Medical Neglect**
  1. Nationally neglect is highest category of substantiated abuse. In Vermont, many of these situations fall into "Risk of Harm" category.
  2. Medical neglect is part of neglect statute. Substantiation requires input from medical provider.  
**Action:** review substantiation policy regarding medical neglect.  
**Action:** consider how concerns regarding children's mental health may fit with medical neglect. Forward questions/discussion and recommendations to DCF Family Services.

*\* This report is prepared for the VT Department for Children and Families for inclusion in their federally required report, demonstrating compliance with and activities of the mandated citizens advisory board. It includes information through June VCAB meeting. Per a new contractual requirement of the Department for Children and Families, VCAB must submit our Annual Report covering the period of October 1 2022 through September 30<sup>th</sup> 2023 by October 15<sup>th</sup> 2023.*

**VCAB Members April 2023**

*Chair and Member Terms: 2 yrs./ staggered*

Co-Chairs:		Title	Org	Joined	Current Term	Alt	Officer Term
Sally	Borden	Executive Director	KidSafe Collaborative	2009	2023-2025		2014-16; 2016-18; 2018-20; 2020-22; <b>2022 - 2024</b>
Dr. James	Metz	MD, Child Abuse Pediatrician	ChildSafe Program, UVMChildren's Hospital	2018	2022-2024		2020-21; 2021-2023; <b>2023-2025</b>
Members		Title	Org	Joined	Current Term	alternates	Officer Term
Stephen G.	Berry	Foster/Adoptive Parent; Pastor	First Presbyterian Church	1998	2022-2024		
Sally	Borden	Executive Director	KidSafe Collaborative	2009	2023-2025		2014-16; 2016-18; 2018-20; 2020-22; <b>2022 - 2024</b>
Kara	Casey	Director of Economic Empowerment	Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence	Dec. 2020	2023-2025		
Kelly	Dougherty	Deputy Commissioner	Vermont Health Dept.	2020	2022-2024	Alt. to E. Fredette	
Tom	Fontana	LCMHC, LADC, BASICS Program Coordinator	University of Vermont, Center for Health and Wellbeing	2016	2022-2024		
Emily	Fredette	Maternal Child Health/Inj Prev.	VT Dept. of Health	2021	2023-2025		
Linda E.	Johnson	Executive Director	Prevent Child Abuse Vermont	1998	2022-2024		
Patiance	Johnson	Community Member/Former DCF Client		2016	2022-2024		
Raenetta	Liberty	VT Forensic Nursing Program	VT Network	2016	2023-2025	alt to Tracey Wagner	
Wendy	Loomis	Executive Director	Vermont Children's Alliance	2017	2023-2025		
Judge Kathleen	Manley	Superior Court Judge (Retired)	Vermont Judiciary	Dec. 2019	2023-2025		
Lynn	Messier	Peer Kinship Coordinator	Vermont Kin As Parents	Dec 2022	2022-2024		
Dr. James	Metz	MD, Child Abuse Pediatrician	ChildSafe Program, UVMChildren's Hospital	2018	2022-2024		2020-21; 2021-2023
Mariah	Ogden	Women's Services Coordinator	Vermont Health Dept. ADAP	June 2022	2022 - 2024		
Laurel	Omland	MS, NCC, Director Child, Adolescent & Family Unit	Child, Adolescent & Family Unit, VT Dept of Mental Health	2018	2022-2024		
Jennifer	Poehlmann	Executive Director	Center for Crime Victim Services	2017	2023-2025		
Ann	Pugh	Retired	VT Legislature; University of VT	June 2021	2023-2025		
Dana	Robson	LICSW, Children's Mental Health Operations Chief	Department of Mental Health	2019	2023-2025	alt to Laurel Omland	
Erinn	Rolland-Forky	Foster Parent		2018	2022-2024		
Amy	Rose	Policy Associate	Voices for Vermont's Children	2018	2022-2024		
Laura	Schaller	GAL Coordinator	Vermont Judiciary/GAL Program	2019	2023-2025		
Cynthia	Seiwright	Division Director	Vermont Health Dept. DSU (ADAP)	2018	2022-2024	alt to Mariah Ogden	
Lt. Michael	Studin	Bureau of Criminal Investigations	Vermont State Police, Vermont Dept. of Public Safety	Dec. 2020	2023-2025		
Tracey	Wagner	MSN, RN, SANE-P, VT Forensic Nursing Program	Child Safe Program, UVM Children's Hospital	2018	2022-2024		

DCF Staff		Title	Joined
Chris	Winters	Commissioner	44986
Aryka	Radke	Deputy Commissioner, FSD	Feb 2021
Brenda	Gooley	Operations Director	2019
Nancy	Miller	Child Safety Manager	2019
KidSafe Collaborative Staff			
Meghan	Masterson	Assistant Director	2021





**Vermont Citizens Advisory Board  
to the Department for Children and Families**

**House and Senate Appropriations: Joint Public Hearing on Governor's  
Recommended FY2024 Budget**

Sally Borden, Executive Director, KidSafe Collaborative

Co-Chair, Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families

February 28, 2023

I am writing today in my capacity as Co-Chair of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families. There are many pressing issues and funding needs to support our state's vital services which support children and families and which are critical to preventing and addressing child maltreatment. IT systems do not usually come to mind first for me – yet, I am advocating today for you to prioritize adequately funding the much-needed IT system improvements for the Department for Children and Families Family Services Division, because that will have a direct impact on improving child protection in Vermont.

The DCF Family Services Division IT systems are outdated, inadequate, and cumbersome. A recent UVM report on “Custody Rates in Vermont” finds that “*data systems that support field personnel’s decision making are inadequate.*” What that means is that Family Services Workers aren’t able to get information they need in order to make critical decisions in a timely fashion. Decisions that can affect the safety of a child. Decisions that have profound ramifications for families.

Family Services Workers have to access and navigate multiple systems on multiple computer screens – a veritable alphabet soup of SSMIS, FSDNet, D.O.C. and Court records, etc. not to mention various spreadsheets and scanned documents. They have to enter and re-enter duplicative information, including on an antiquated DOS-based system. Time consuming, redundant, and there’s room for human error -- they could miss information that is terribly important. The fact that there aren’t *more* errors or missing information is remarkable.

Furthermore, our systems don’t track the information needed to do quality social work with families, or to look at results. A Child Welfare Information System (CWIS) would have fields to track client needs, referrals made, services accessed, and most importantly, outcomes. How else do any of us know whether what we’re doing as a state is effective? We need to collect and track this information in order to fully draw down federal Family First funding. Furthermore, we are committed to addressing racial and other inequities within our child welfare system – yet obtaining and tracking useful data and outcomes is virtually impossible.

Vermont needs to make a *long-term investment* in a comprehensive Child Welfare Information System. This is a multi-year effort, requiring a multi-year commitment. While the first phase of this system is underway, if we don't move forward with fully funding the implementation of a comprehensive CWIS system, Vermont stands to forfeit federal matching funds as well as the opportunity to draw down other federal funds. Most importantly, if we are really committed to improving child protection and how we serve children, youth and families in this state, we need to invest in an updated, robust information technology system to specifically meet the needs of child welfare.

Thank you.

Sally Borden  
sallyb@kidsafevt.org  
802.863.9626



**Vermont Citizen's Advisory Board  
to the Department for Children and Families**

September 27, 2022

Commissioner Sean Brown  
Vermont Department for Children and Families  
280 State Drive  
Waterbury, VT 05671-1080  
sean.brown@vermont.gov

Dear Commissioner Brown:

The Vermont's Citizens Advisory Board (VCAB) is, as you know, a federally mandated advisory board to the Department of Children and Families, whose role is to examine policies, practices and procedures of the state's child protection agency, and where appropriate review specific cases, to evaluate the extent to which the agency is discharging its responsibilities and to make recommendations for improvement.

Last year we at VCAB wrote to Secretary Smith to express our support for investments in the Department for Children and Families' data system, and we are writing today to follow up with you. As a diverse group of stakeholders in the child welfare system, we believe that this is an urgent need! We are very concerned that our outdated data system is getting in the way of good work and limiting opportunities to take advantage of promising practices to support Vermont's children and youth.

We were pleased to hear that \$2 million was set aside to update the first module of the CWIS system. We were under the impression that more funding would be needed going forward, but that the system did not need to be fully funded to begin the updates. We understood that updating the system incrementally would be preferable, in that DCF did not have the training or technical support, or funding, to update the full system at once. We understand that this is a multi-year project, requiring a financial investment over multiple years.

VCAB is interested in learning what steps have been taken to update and implement the first module of the data system. We are also interested in your projections going forward, particularly as it concerns budgeting funds for this purpose, both in the immediate budget process and longer term.

In addition to the DCF IT system, one of our particular areas of interest is DCF's operating budget. Our membership would like to gain a deeper understanding of how state budgeting decisions are made with regards to the Department and especially the Family Services Division. We often hear that understaffing and lack of financial resources causes stress for our state employees, children, foster families, service providers, and families. Lack of sufficient funding impacts our state's ability to adequately care for our most vulnerable children. It would be helpful for us to have a better understanding of how the budget is created, how decisions about staffing and services are made, and what the plans are for the upcoming budget.

We would appreciate a budget presentation that speaks to all of these pieces, and invite you to share your thoughts at our next quarterly meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup>, as well as through a written response prior to that time as we are aware that budget decisions move quickly in the Fall.

With sincere regards, on behalf of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to DCF,



Sally Borden  
VCAB Co-Chair

[sallyb@kidsafevt.org](mailto:sallyb@kidsafevt.org)



Dr. James Metz  
VCAB Co-Chair

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Cc: VT Agency of Human Services Secretary Jenney Samuelson  
Deputy Commissioner Aryka Radke  
Senator Ginny Lyons

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KidSafe Collaborative: working *together* to end child abuse



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**From:** Sally Borden  
**Sent:** Monday, October 3, 2022 5:07 PM  
**To:** Sean Brown, Commissioner <[sean.brown@vermont.gov](mailto:sean.brown@vermont.gov)>  
**Cc:** VT AHS Secretary Jenney Samuelson <[jenney.samuelson@vermont.gov](mailto:jenney.samuelson@vermont.gov)>; Deputy Commissioner Aryka Radke <[aryka.radke@vermont.gov](mailto:aryka.radke@vermont.gov)>; Sen. Ginny Lyons <[glyons@leg.state.vt.us](mailto:glyons@leg.state.vt.us)>; James Metz, MD <[james.metz@uvmhealth.org](mailto:james.metz@uvmhealth.org)>  
**Subject:** Letter from VCAB to Commissioner Brown

Dear Commissioner Brown,  
Attached please find a letter from the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families requesting information from you regarding the Department's budget process, as well as an update on funding of the much-needed IT system improvements. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.  
Sincerely,

**James Metz, VCAB Co-Chair**

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KidSafe Collaborative: working *together* to end child abuse

Cc: AHS Secretary Jenney Samuelson; Deputy Commissioner for Family Services Aryka Radke; Senator Ginny Lyons

**Sally Borden**

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**Subject:** FW: Welcome and Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to DCF  
**Attachments:** VCAB Letter Commissioner Brown re Budget FY22-23.pdf

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**From:** Sally Borden  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 20, 2022 4:53 PM  
**To:** Dr. Harry Chen, DCF Commissioner <harry.chen@vermont.gov>  
**Subject:** Welcome and Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to DCF

Dear Commissioner Chen, I wanted to congratulate you on your appointment to serve as Commissioner of the Department for Children and Families!

I look forward to working with you again, in my roles both with KidSafe Collaborative and as the Co-chair of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to DCF (VCAB) along with Dr. James Metz.

Below is a brief description of VCAB:

The *Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families (VCAB)* is authorized under the federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to examine policies, practices and procedures of the state's child protection agency, and where appropriate review specific cases, to evaluate the extent to which the agency is discharging its responsibilities. Additionally, VCAB is authorized to provide for public outreach and comment in order to assess the impact of current procedures and practices upon children and families in Vermont. As an authorized citizen review panel, VCAB is composed of members who are broadly representative of the community, including members who have expertise in the prevention and treatment of child abuse and neglect and those with lived experience in this area. It currently consists of 22 members, including two co-Chairs. VCAB is also an empaneled multi-disciplinary child protection team as authorized by Vermont statute, Title 33 Chapter 49. VCAB has met consistently since its inception in September, 1998. It meets four times per year, on the first Wednesday of March, June, September and December, from 9:00a.m.-noon. VCAB currently meets via videoconferencing (Zoom). For additional information about the Vermont Citizens Advisory Board to the Department for Children and Families: <https://dcf.vermont.gov/boards-councils/VCAB>.

I have also included an email below and attached a letter we sent to Commissioner Brown prior to his departure, and I understand from Deputy Commissioner Radke that Carlie Thibault, FSD's Quality Assurance Administrator, will address the questions we posed in this letter at our next meeting. At the same time, I do hope you will be able to join VCAB at our meeting on December 7th as well, to meet (virtually) the members and for them to meet you!

I know your plate is very full coming into this role; again I certainly look forward to working with you and if there is any way I may be of assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warmly,  
-Sally