

**STATE AND LOCAL ADVISORY TEAM (SLAT)
CHILDREN’S SERVICES ACT (CSA)
1604 Santa Rosa Road
Second Floor
Richmond, VA 23229**

**MINUTES
February 5, 2026**

Members Present:

Mills Jones, SLAT Chair
Sabrina Gross, Vice-Chair, Department of Education (DOE)
Lesley Abashian, Community Policy and Management Team (CPMT) – Local Government Representative
Kimberly Ayers, CPMT – DSS Representative (*virtually*)
Cristy Corbin, Parent Representative
The Honorable Marilyn Goss, Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court (J&DR)
Patti Hodge, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
Katherine Hunter, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)
Grace Hughes, Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
Linda McWilliams, Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) (**arrived at 9:42 AM**)
Em Parente, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) (*virtually*)
Laura Reed, Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)
William Stanley, CPMT – Court Services Unit (CSU) Representative (**arrived at 9:40 AM**)
Shannon Updike, Virginia Coalition of Private Provider Associations (VCOPPA)
Kristina Williams-Pugh, CPMT – School Representative

Members Absent:

Sandy Bryant, CPMT – Community Services Board (CSB) Representative

CSA Staff Members Present:

Stephanie Bacote
Mary Bell
Gezelle Glasgow
Scott Reiner
Kristi Schabo
Carrie Thompson

Welcome/Opening

Mills Jones called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made.

Pursuant to SEC Policy 2.1.3 and § 2.2-3708.3 of the *Code of Virginia*, Kimberly Ayers and Em Parente’s request to participate virtually was approved on a motion by Lesley Abashian, seconded by Grace Hughes.

Mr. Jones informed the members that the agenda item SLAT Member Reports would be amended to reflect that the listing for DARS should be *Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services*. The amended meeting agenda was approved on a motion by Cristy Corbin, seconded by Laura Reed.

Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

The November 6, 2025, meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Lesley Abashian seconded by Patti Hodges and carried.

Workgroup Updates

- Cristy Corbin provided an informative update on the Center for Evidence-Based Partnerships Transformation Zone project. The work group has focused on working with local leaders to identify a local team to design and implement changes to improve access and use of high-fidelity wraparound.
- Mr. Jones provided an update on the Sponsored Residential Workgroup, outlining its purpose and current activities. He explained that the group was established to convene a broad range of stakeholders to review all aspects of sponsored residential services, including funding methodologies and the applicable match rate. The workgroup has engaged in in-depth discussions and data analysis to support equitable and sustainable practices statewide.
 - The workgroup met for the first time since December due to prior weather and scheduling conflicts. Members continue developing a comprehensive rate determination tool to enhance consistency, transparency, and informed decision-making. In addition, the group is preparing a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document to address outstanding issues related to rate setting and assessment.
 - Discussion topics included:
 - Appropriate licensing requirements for children with a mental health diagnosis only
 - Exploration of a universal assessment tool to determine level of care
 - Transition planning for youth moving into the adult service system
 - Guidance regarding rate structure and its relationship to Medicaid reimbursement rates
- Acknowledgment was given to DBHDS, DMAS, and the private provider community for their continued participation and collaboration.
- **CHINS Workgroup**
 - Policy is currently under Public Comment period. CHINS Documentation of Eligibility Form updated language in appeal of FAPT decision (file CHINS in court NOT appeal to CPMT) and statement 3 has been edited for clear language.

- **Medicaid Redesign Workgroup**

- The workgroup continues monitoring alignment between CSA and Medicaid redesign efforts.
 - Discussion focused on reviewing current standardized CSA service names and identifying areas requiring clearer definitions, refined language, or potential replacements.
 - Members emphasized the importance of distinguishing between:
 - Clinical services, which should be Medicaid-funded and administered, and Non-clinical, family-supportive services, where CSA programs provide primary value.

Old Business

- Policy Update – Kristi Schabo provided an update on the following policies:
 - Policy 3.5.1 – Records Management
At its December meeting, the SEC approved for a 60-day public comment period. As of this date, no public comments have been received. Will ask the SEC for approval at the next meeting.
 - Policy 4.1.1 – Children in Need of Services (CHINS)
At its December 12, 2025, meeting, the SEC approved an additional 60-day public comment period for draft Policy 4.1.1 following revisions to the language in Appendix A. The public comment period is scheduled to close on February 13, 2026. As of this date, no public comments have been received.
- DMAS Behavioral Health Redesign Update – Laura Reed, SLAT representative from DMAS, provided an update on the DMAS Behavioral Health Redesign Project. Ms. Reed reported that the project is scheduled for implementation on July 1, 2026, and noted that draft policies are currently posted on the DMAS website for informal public comment.

SEC Report

Mills Jones provided an update on the following items from the SEC's December 12, 2025, meeting, noting that Ms. Schabo already presented the policy updates:

- The Winchester County CSA Program was recognized as the December recipient of the Excellence in CSA Award. Established in March 2025, the award honors local CSA programs that demonstrate a strong commitment to improving outcomes for children, youth, and families through collaboration, meaningful engagement, and implementation of systems of care principles.
- Ms. Schabo encouraged members to notify Mary Bell, Anna Antell, or herself of noteworthy initiatives and activities taking place at the local level so they may be shared with OCS.

OCS Update

Ms. Schabo provided updates on the following:

- HB 1373, currently under consideration during the legislative session, directs the Office of Children's Services (OCS), in collaboration with the Department of Education, the school boards within Planning District 16, and other identified stakeholders, to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a regional

public day school in Planning District 16. The proposed school would serve students with disabilities who are otherwise placed in private day schools pursuant to their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), if an appropriate public option was available. OCS is required to report its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Appropriations and Education Committees and the Senate Education and Health and Finance and Appropriations Committees by November 1, 2026.

- The Virtual CPMT Academy launched in January 2026 and is held twice monthly on Fridays. The next session is scheduled for February 13, 2026. Members were advised to contact Anna Antell for additional information.
- The New CSA Coordinator Academy is scheduled for May 12–14, 2026. Interested participants may contact Anna Antell for details.
- Ms. Bell reminded members that the 2026 Annual CSA Conference will take place October 13–15, 2026, at Hotel Roanoke, with a focus on Systems of Care. Nominations for the Rookie of the Year Award and the Paul Baldwin Outstanding CSA Coordinator Award must be submitted by July 17, 2026.
- OCS Office Hours are held on the third Friday of each month from September through May. The February 20, 2026, session will include a presentation by VDSS.

New Business

- Ms. Thompson presented an overview of the FY 2025 CSA Service Gap Survey findings. OCS has conducted this survey annually for 17 years to assess service gaps across the Commonwealth, identify challenges in addressing those gaps, and highlight efforts underway at the local level. The survey was announced through an OCS Administrative Memorandum sent to CPMT Chairs and CSA Coordinators on March 4, 2025, with responses due by May 30, 2025. Each locality was permitted to submit one response, although some partnered and submitted jointly under a shared CPMT. Of the 126 CSA localities, 103 submitted responses, resulting in an 82% participation rate, consistent with prior survey cycles. Localities were organized by VDSS geographic regions for reporting purposes. The presentation covered survey background, statewide trends in identified service gaps, common barriers, regional patterns, and overall observations.
- The interactive dashboard remains available on the CSA website for continued reference. A follow-up survey is planned for March to gather updated information.

Member Updates

Members reported for their agencies and organizations on their projects, new programs, other ongoing activities and workforce issues. Members continue to work within their agencies and advocate through their associations for improvements to services and service delivery for Virginia's children, youth, and families.

Representatives from state agencies shared updates regarding leadership transitions effective January 17, 2026, as well as legislation currently under consideration by the General Assembly.

DSS will be participating in OCS Office Hours on February 20, 2026, where they will be discussing

Trafficking Prevention Designation, the IV-E Review, and Sponsored Residential.

DBHDS will be hosting monthly activities for parent representatives, which include peer training and support opportunities.

The DARS Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) section of the Virginia Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan Modification for Program Years 2026–2027 will soon be released for public comment.

Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 12:21 p.m. on a motion by Cristy Corbin, seconded by Shannon Updike and carried. The next meeting is scheduled for May 7, 2026.