

**NEVADA'S COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY OF DEPENDENT
CHILDREN (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT
DECEMBER 2009**



*Nevada Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts*

**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL BASIC ASSESSMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2009**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The past year has been one of the best years yet for the Court Improvement Program. Building on its foundation and continuing the work of such a progressive and proactive program has been a true honor. I have also appreciated the opportunity to work with the leadership of Supreme Court Chief Justice James Hardesty and Associate Justice Nancy M. Saitta. Without their wisdom, clear direction, passion, and patience, the Nevada Court Improvement Program would not be where it is today. Such strong leadership and advocacy protects the rights of all of our children and families, and assures CIP will continue to make progress toward improving outcomes for children and families.

CHAPTER 1

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE

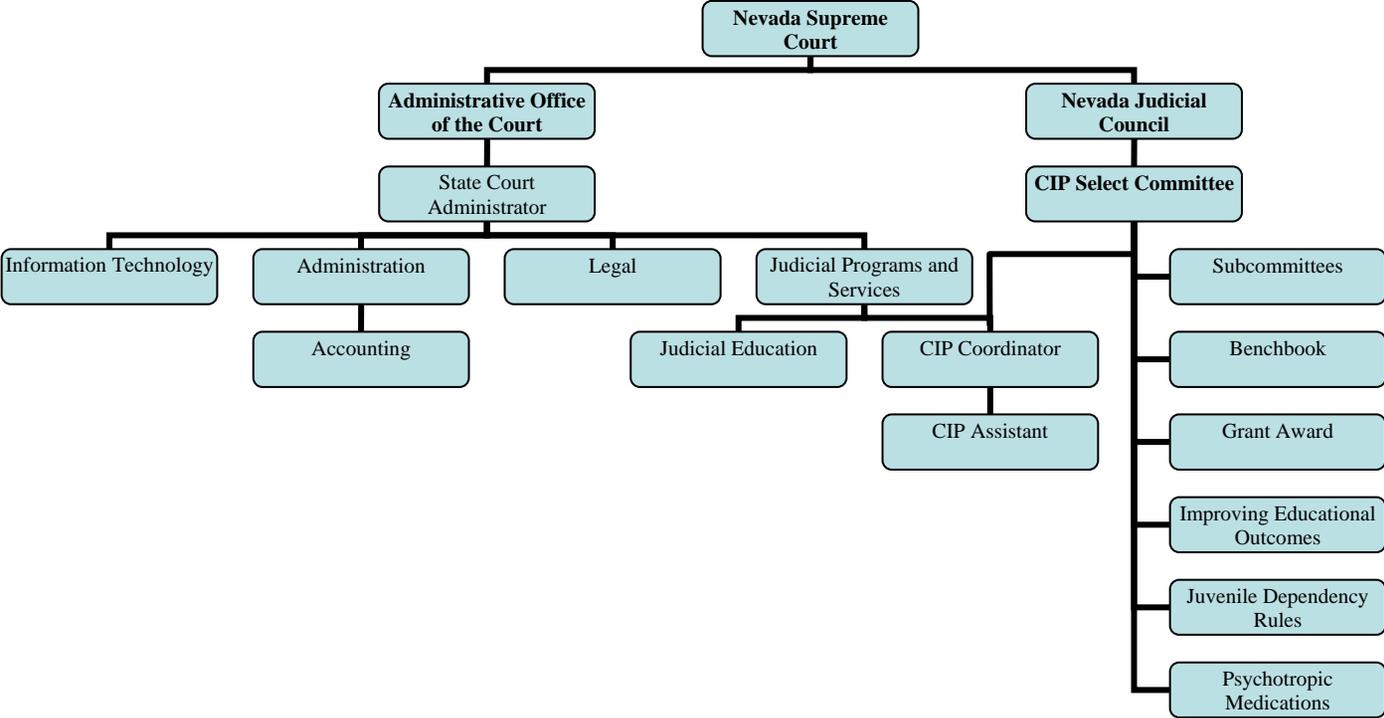
The Court Improvement Program is a multidisciplinary program that seeks to improve how interrelated systems respond to and serve the needs of children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of CIP is to make the system more efficient and reduce the amount of time child victims of abuse and neglect spend in the foster care system and provide safe and secure homes for children.

As a standing committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada, the Committee serves in an advisory capacity. Each year the CIP program begins with the CIP Annual Meeting/Retreat where the CIP Select Committee reviews progress on the strategic plans and priorities for the current year. Agendas for the subsequent quarterly meetings are structured around specific action items and are developed by Select Committee members in coordination with the CIP coordinator. The CIP Select Committee Chair serves on CIP-related subcommittees, helps direct and oversees policy development, and reviews and approves new project proposals for funding. A CIP Select Committee Roster is attached as **Appendix A**.

The CIP Select Committee is directly supported by two individuals employed by the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), specifically, the CIP Coordinator and a full time CIP Assistant. Additionally, CIP is supported by other departments within the AOC on an as-needed basis. The following organizational chart depicts the structure of CIP as well as the Supreme Court and departments within the AOC which support CIP.

Finally, the work of CIP could not be accomplished without the dedicated teamwork and assistance of Nevada's federal, state, and local collaborative partners, which are listed in the attached **Appendix B**.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND STATUS

The table starting on the next page lists the activities found in the Administrative and Planning (or “Basic”) Strategic Plan, as well as providing a list of initiatives associated with each activity, and the status of each of these initiatives.

**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
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Prepared by Sheryl Overstreet, CIP Coordinator
Phone: (775) 687-9809 Fax: (775) 687-9811
E-Mail: soverstreet@nvcourts.nv.gov

Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP1

Continue the focus of the Court Improvement Program Select Committee more directly towards advancing the outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being for children and families.

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| AP1.1 – AP1.5 | <p>Hold meetings with CIP Chair, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) Director, and Deputy Director of Judicial Programs and Services (JPS) (AP1.1 & 1.2); continue review of internal CIP processes and implement needed changes (AP1.3), including beginning the development of CIP Manual with procedures. Develop CIP policies and procedures. (AP1.4) Develop and sign a Declaration of Cooperation between the Judicial and Executive branches of government. (AP1.5)</p> | <p>Meetings continue to be held with the CIP Chair, AOC Director, and Deputy Director of JPS. Strengthening the existing infrastructure and revising internal operations to include the review and revision of reports, review and revision of internal documentation, as well as improving documentation provided externally. Meetings/telephone conferences take place regularly with stakeholders and federal representatives. Monthly task lists are developed linking projects with strategic goals. Quarterly and yearly reports are prepared. Broad outreach to the public is a core function of the CIP committee and chair focusing on making important connections that can be linked to the work of the subcommittees, and collaborative resources for children and families. After the quarterly meeting on November 6, 2009, with Regional Officer Jewel Roberts, pulling together policies and procedures used by the AOC Director and management staff will begin the development of the CIP manual during the 1st quarter of 2010. A draft Declaration of Cooperation between the Judicial and Executive branches of government was developed and circulated to the CIP Select Committee at the 3rd quarter meeting. Utilization of the Declaration of Cooperation has not been necessary to date.</p> |

Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP2

Formally establish the Court Improvement Office within the Administrative Office of the Courts with adequate personnel and resources to effectively staff the expanded mandate of the Court Improvement Committee and accomplish outreach and public education goals

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| AP2 - AP 2.3 | Continue support of the Court Improvement Program and Coordinator through the assistance of staff assistant | After utilizing the services of two part-time contract employees, the CIP Administrative Assistant position was approved by the Supreme Court Justices and the position was funded as of November 2, 2009. Robbie Taft accepted the employment offer and is now a full time employee. |
| (continued on next page) | <p>AP 2.1</p> <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>CIP funded and administered 11 contracts/subgrant agreements over the course of 2009, including the 8 listed below. Those include working with Supreme Court and AOC staff, as well as staff from each of our federal, state, and local partners, together with numerous community volunteer entities (identified in Appendix B of collaborative partners) on the following pilot projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) was the grantee for \$50,000 for the Children’s Attorneys Project (CAP) Pro Bono Lawyers and an Educational Surrogate Advocacy Project. The Pro Bono Lawyers project recruits and trains private lawyers to represent child victims of abuse and neglect. LACSN provides CLE, training manuals, and bi-monthly support meetings for volunteers. Additionally, a LACSN CAP Staff Attorney is assigned as a mentor on each case. During the grant period, 109 new CAP cases (individual child or sibling groups) were assigned to pro bono volunteers. That number was up from the 64 cases that were assigned during the same period in 2008. The biggest barrier faced is providing a volunteer attorney for every child. Attorneys are assisting approximately one-third of the children under the jurisdiction of the courts in the Eighth Judicial District (Las Vegas). |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|--|---|
| <p>AP 2.1 <i>(continued)</i></p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Because the court is convinced that an attorney for a child makes a difference in the outcome (i.e., quicker resolution of the case or expedited services for the child), the court is referring more children to LACSN than it can handle. LACSN continues to try to secure additional funding for staff attorneys and to recruit and support pro bono attorneys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Educational Surrogate Project involves the recruitment and training of volunteers to advocate on behalf of the educational rights of the children living in group homes or institutional settings, specifically regarding special education services. The program provides support and assistance regarding special education issues to CAP Staff Attorneys and CAP Pro Bono Volunteers. The Clark County Department of Family Services and Division of Child and Family Services social workers and foster-parents, have been trained on state and federal laws regarding special education rights and services. During the current grant period, four such training sessions were conducted. Throughout the grant year, educational surrogates were assigned to ninety (90) children. Twenty-four (24) new volunteers were trained in the last quarter of the grant cycle and 11 others were awaiting training and assignment. Under the program, children in foster care who reside in group homes are paired with volunteer educational surrogate “parents” to represent their academic, social, and emotional needs, specifically under IDEA. These surrogates deal solely with this aspect of the child’s life, working with the school to understand the child’s educational performance and challenges and to advocate for changes in services, assignments, and additional support. • Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) was the grantee for \$17,109 for the Children’s Attorneys Project (CAP) Adoption Subsidy Project. The purpose of this project was to help adoptive parents navigate the adoption subsidy process, potentially reducing the backlog of children in the foster-care system awaiting adoption. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|---|--|
| <p>AP 2.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Estimates are that there are more than 200 children in Clark County whose parents' parental rights have been terminated or relinquished, who are waiting for their adoptions to be finalized. LACSN has developed an informational pamphlet to assist prospective adoptive parents with understanding adoption laws and regulations, the federal and state requirements for adoption subsidy, and their rights and responsibilities as prospective adoptive parents. A copy of an informational pamphlet, <i>Navigating Nevada's Adoption Subsidy Program - A Guide for Clark County Families</i>, is available at no cost to the public on the LACSN website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Basin CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate). Grantee is the Great Basin CASA. This CIP grant provided partial funding of \$25,000 for the start-up of a new CASA program in White Pine and Eureka Counties in the Seventh Judicial District. Additional funding was provided from National CASA and private funding sources. The first case appointed to Great Basin CASA was in August 2008 and since then CASA has advocated for 16 children, 12 of whom were subjects of dependency petitions. Data was obtained through records kept by Great Basin CASA and the Division of Child and Family Services in White Pine County. The concept of merging with the statewide Nevada CASA Association, Inc., is under consideration. • Nevada CASA Association, Inc., (NCA). Grantee is Nevada CASA Association, Inc. CIP has provided second year funding of \$22,500 for operating expenses for the Nevada CASA Association, Inc. The purpose of the Nevada CASA Association is to support existing local CASA programs with volunteer recruitment, training, and other resources and support as needed; expand the program to at least one additional county annually in a Judicial District; and, to have sufficient CASA volunteers to provide a CASA volunteer for every abused and neglected child. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|---|---|
| <p>AP 2.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>The number of rural CASA programs increased by 1, and the number of abused and neglected children served by CASA volunteers increased from 661 to 721. With this increase, more children have a one-on-one connection with a caring adult who is also an advocate, who can help ensure that their needs are met while working toward the ultimate goal of permanency. The statewide CASA organization continues to promote the CASA mission and the following include their efforts in this regard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In early June 2009, NCA negotiated with the Reno Rodeo free space (the usual charges amount to \$800) so that they could set up an information booth to speak with the public about CASA and the Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF). Between June 18 and 27, 2009, the CASA representatives made presentations about CASA to approximately 260 people. • On September 19 and 20, 2009, NCA sponsored Bowling for CASA in Carson City, Las Vegas, and Reno, with a combined turnout of more than 100 participants. While the main purpose was to promote CASA, there is a fund-raising component as well, and the funds raised by NCA were shared with the local CASA programs in Carson City and Las Vegas. • On November 13 and 14, 2009, NCA and Sierra Association of Foster Families collaboratively sponsored a <i>WhoDunnit</i> Murder Mystery event at the historic Caughlin Ranch House in Reno. Over 300 people attended the event, which was presented three times over the 2-day period. The collaborative fundraising efforts netted \$20,000, and will be split equally between the entities. • Bill Fowler of NCA met with the Carson City CASA program board of directors on September 14, 2009, and it was decided that NCA and the Carson City CASA program would sponsor a joint fundraising event in Carson City on the afternoon of April 10, 2010, after the conclusion of the 2010 Nevada CASA Association annual conference in Reno. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|---|--|
| <p>AP 2.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On October 13, 2009, Bill Fowler and the AOC Director met with the CASA Foundation of Clark County to discuss several issues, including possible joint fundraising initiatives. • NCA has joined the Alliance for Nevada Non-Profits, whose geographic territory includes all of Nevada, except for the four most southerly counties of the state. • NCA's director maintains contact with the Associate Counsel of the Washoe Tribe. The Washoe Tribe is currently pursuing a two-step process to introduce the CASA program to tribal communities. The first is to have the Douglas County, Nevada, and El Dorado County, California CASA programs train prospective Washoe Tribe CASA volunteers so that they can advocate for abused and neglected children of that tribe in the courts of those two counties. Second, the Washoe tribe has discussed submitting an application to National CASA for funding to establish a Washoe Tribe CASA program. If such funding is approved by National CASA, the tribe would start up its CASA program after July 1, 2010. • NCA continues to work with a small group of concerned citizens in Nye County who are interested in establishing a CASA program. • Northeastern Nevada CASA – Grantee is Northeastern Nevada CASA and was funded \$25,000 for program development. A new CASA program was established in October 2006. The program is sustained through a combination of two CIP subgrants and funds raised from the private sector through local fund raising. NE Nevada CASA has a Board of Directors and two ¾-time staff who provide ongoing training and support for volunteers to ensure that they are properly performing their duties and have the necessary resources. Sixty-four (64) children were assigned CASA volunteers through this program, and it currently has 16 active volunteers trained and available for appointment. • Washoe Legal Services received a grant (\$20,000) to expand their representation of children. Washoe Legal Services (WLS) has been providing representation for children in abuse and neglect proceedings |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|---|---|
| <p>AP 2.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>for over a decade. This subgrant expands the capacity of WLS to meet the growing demand for representation by funding the representation of 15 more children with complex cases during the 12-month term of the subgrant while maintaining a caseload that allows intensive interaction with the children, their families, caretakers, and service providers. Such expert representation ensures that the best interests of the children are fully presented to reach timely permanency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada was funded for an Early Representation pilot project (\$135,000). Begun in February 2009, this pilot project follows best practices research regarding improving outcomes for children by reducing to a minimum the time a child spends in placement, and expediting comprehensive case planning, while focusing on reaching an early resolution of plan and permanency. The core of the program is immediate appointment of counsel for children and parents, exchange of all reports and necessary information, and a facilitated series of meetings with all counsel and stakeholders within days of removal, to identify and resolve conflicts and reach a collaborative solution. As of this report, 80 children were accepted into the pilot program. Forty-one (41) of those children have returned home and their cases have been closed. Of the remaining 39 children, 9 are living with another parent, 12 are with a relative, and 18 have been placed in foster care. All of these cases are assigned to a single judicial officer and originate from a single geographic service area. • Volunteer Attorneys of Rural Nevada (VARN) received \$10,000 funding to develop a curriculum and conduct training for CASA volunteers and others working with families on the <i>Co-Occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment</i>. Training occurred on April 2, 2009, at the Carson Plaza Convention Center in Carson City, and on November 7, 2009, in Elko. Approximately 60 persons were trained including CASA volunteers, attorneys, and service providers. The curriculum included materials and presentations on: |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| AP 2.1 <i>(continued)</i> | Continue working together with public and private entities and individuals to raise the level of knowledge and awareness of abuse and neglect and provide direct services to at risk children and families by developing and administering a contract solicitation and issuance process with requirements for outcome measurements, financial reports, in-kind match reports, and organizing and participating in community events that involve support and advocate for our children, youth, and families <i>(continued)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Relationships between domestic violence and child abuse and neglect; ➤ Dynamics of domestic violence; ➤ Nevada law and domestic violence; ➤ Effects of domestic violence on children: The New Hampshire Approach; ➤ Other considerations: Safety planning and confidentiality; ➤ Protection orders; and ➤ Working within the court system and with attorneys. <p>A binder was produced containing the curriculum that can be used for further training in this area and as a reference. A copy is available for reference through the CIP Office.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP Library List - Meetings were held with Supreme Court Law Librarian and Library staff to discuss creating a CIP Library List of resources. Staff created an easily trackable list for the Court Improvement Program of resource materials that are available to the CIP committee, AOC staff and court staff. The resource materials will continue to be housed in the CIP office and personnel will continue to work with the Law Library staff on adding and cataloguing materials. |
| AP2.2 | Revised. Development of listserve unnecessary as one has been established by the ABA Center on Children and the Law for CIP Coordinators | No benchmarks. |
| AP2.3 | Work with AOC webmaster to revise and maintain CIP website | Worked with AOC Web Services staff and AOC Information Technology staff to expand the CIP webpage to include a CIP Calendar of Events, including quarterly CIP meeting dates, training opportunities, important links, a map of Indian Reservations and Colonies, news articles, and CIP Library List of Resources. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| AP2.4 | Revised: This is a large project that will require leadership outside of CIP and has been delayed until July 2010 | No benchmarks. |
| AP2.5 | Research topics and models to develop pamphlet on legal and procedural issues, what children should expect from the courts, their attorney and social worker, rights of youth leaving care, understanding the juvenile court and rights in general | CIP received a proposal from Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF) in December 2009 to develop this pamphlet, entitled, <u>Welcome to My Court</u> . Utilizing multi-media, SAFF staff will expand on the project making it downloadable, accessible, and interactive on-line. The proposal is currently under review. The Executive Director Joseph Galata has indicated to the CIP Coordinator that technical assistance will be requested for this project. |
| Basic 2.7 | Work to improve foster parent recruitment, retention and training | <p>See the Training Assessment Report Status column ED5.1, bullets 1 and 2 on two pilot projects, Licensed Kinship Caregivers and Parent to Parent Mentoring, managed by CIP subgrantee Sierra Association of Foster Families (SAFF).</p> <p>As part of a Regional Partnership Grant (RPG) to Increase the Well-Being of and Improve the Permanency Outcomes for Children Affected by Methamphetamine or Substance Abuse, Court Improvement Program staff teamed up with Sierra Association of Foster Families, the Division of Child and Family Services, the National Foster Parents Association, and Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association to host a 1-day Institute at the National Foster Parents Association Education Conference in Reno, NV, at the Grand Sierra Resort, May 4, 2009.</p> <p>The institute provided a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the impact of methamphetamine on Nevada families, with presentations by experts on assessment, treatment, and community resources. The Institute was a great success with 102 participants, including foster parents who were provided scholarships to facilitate attendance from across the state.</p> |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| AP 2.8 | CIP Coordinator and other CIP members attend national conferences pertaining to Strategic Planning and annual Court Improvement Program | <p>The Children’s Bureau Annual Courts and Agencies Conference was held Aug. 3-6, 2009, in Arlington, VA. Invitation to attend was extended by Chair Justice Saitta to CIP Select Committee member Erika Pike Turner. The AOC Deputy Director of Judicial Programs and Services (JPS) and CIP Coordinator also attended. The forum allowed for critical networking and sharing of information between mid-level managers from Nevada’s Administrative Office of the Courts, the Court Improvement Program, and our three child welfare agencies, strengthening existing connections and fostering new ones.</p> <p>Quoting from a report provided by the AOC’s Deputy Director of JPS after the conference, “The annual CIP meeting was the first day and was especially informative as supervisor of the CIP Coordinator position. Generally, it helped confirm that we are heading in the right direction with our efforts related to CIP. Our collaboration efforts with DCFS and others are an important part of improving the systems and processes. The final speaker of the day, Judge James Payne from Indiana, was a wonderful speaker with good insights to share. His talk was a great way to end the day and remind folks what we are working toward!”</p> <p>The New Strategies for Changing Times meeting (next 3 days) was much more focused on the collaboration and agency side of the process. One session that was especially valuable was learning about engaging state legislators in the CFSR and resources available through the National State Legislature Association. Of most value, however, was the networking opportunities afforded with the other attendees from Nevada. “We were able to break down some of the barriers and finger pointing by education and outreach among ourselves. We all hoped to continue that effort somehow.”</p> |
| Basic 2.9 | Appropriate funds on an annual basis for local pilot programs relating to improving educational resources for children at risk | All required project status reports, financial reports, and in-kind time reports received from CIP sub-grantee Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) on pilot project, CAP Educational Surrogate project. See Status AP2.1 bullet 1 above. |

| Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP3 Establish a Committee on Improving Safety for Children as a permanent CIP standing committee (Established Juvenile Dependency Rules and Legislation Subcommittee) | | |
|---|--|---|
| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
| AP3.1 – AP 3.7 | Establishment of Juvenile Dependency Rules and Legislation Subcommittee. | <p>CIP Chair unable to proceed. Subcommittee on hold at the request of the Subcommittee Chair and approval by the CIP Chair.</p> <p>The AOC Rural Courts Coordinator, as the contact person in the AOC for legislative matters, was in continual contact with rural Nevada Judges, sharing information on various bills including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AB65 – This bill provides discretion to judges to use some of the increased fee revenue for CASA. The language is permissive and each judge/district is free to make the choice on their own, however, in the rural districts, some monies may be spent for CASA projects. http://www.leg.state.nv.us/75th2009/Reports/history.cfm?ID=142 Effective July 1, 2009. |
| Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP4 Establish a Committee on Improving Permanency for Children as a permanent CIP standing committee | | |
| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
| AP4.2 | Survey courts on appointment practices and policies | A Representation survey was developed for Judicial Officers (Judges and Juvenile Hearing Masters who have calendars of child welfare cases) and distributed on June 25, 2009, utilizing <i>Esurveyspro.com</i> . The CIP Coordinator reviewed survey responses and received a draft report and final report from contract liaison. The final report received in December 2009, includes detail on the appointment of counsel for parents and children, compensation, and alternative models used to provide for representation. |
| AP4.3 | Survey attorneys on appointment practices and policies | A survey for attorneys regarding appointment, compensation, courtroom practice, and training needs has been drafted. This will be finalized and disseminated after the Judicial Officer study above is reviewed by the CIP committee. A tentative project plan and request for assistance has been submitted to the Deputy Director of JPS requesting help of an AOC Analyst. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| AP4.6 | Develop and organize special training curriculum for pro bono attorneys | CIP sub-grantee Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN)'s Pro Bono project included the development of a manual for training pro bono attorneys. The manual continues to be used to train volunteer attorneys, and is available for other legal services agencies training pro bono attorneys to represent children in dependency proceedings. |
| AP4.10 | Revised: Review at each CIP Select Committee meeting, UNITY data for preceding six months on Performance Measures, (i.e., foster care re-entry, foster placement stability, permanency goals for children, finalization of adoptions, and the use of Other Planned Permanency Living Arrangements (OPPLA) as a permanency goal. | At the November 5, 2009, monthly meeting of AOC/CIP and Child Welfare, discussion was held around sharing data. AOC/CIP staff will work with DCFS to survey Judges about what data would be useful to them in their jurisdictions. Additionally, a meeting is scheduled for January 19, 2010, for the CIP Coordinator and Paul Bowen, DCFS Information Systems Manager, to view the data currently accessed by Senior Model Court Second Judicial District Court staff to initiate the data sharing pilot project. (Linked to D3.1). |
| AP4.11 | Institute recommended Rules of Court and forms to facilitate ICPC and effective use of cross jurisdictional resources. Revised: Based on the 2008 Nevada State ICPC Assessment and best practices identified from sister states, CIP Select Committee will appoint a working group to recommend any needed changes to the Rules of Court so as to facilitate cross jurisdictional placements | <p>ICPC Summary and recommendations have been listed on CIP webpage along with website information below. Meetings held in July and August, beginning July 16, 2009, with DCFS Deputy Administrator, state ICPC Coordinator, CIP Coordinator, and CIP Consultant Joanne Brown. Specialized training for social workers and attorneys was identified as a next step.</p> <p>E-mail outreach to CIP Members and Judges and Masters about the University of Michigan Law School Program on Children and the Law launching a new website with resources for students, practitioners, and policymakers. The link to the website is: http://www.law.umich.edu/centersandprograms/ccl/Pages/default.aspx.</p> <p>On the site, Vivek S. Sankaran, a Clinical Assistant Professor of Law, created a page with articles and resources for ICPC litigation. The direct link to the page concerning ICPC litigation is: http://www.law.umich.edu/CENTERSANDPROGRAMS/CCL/SPECIALPROJECTS/Pages/ICPCAdvocacy.aspx.</p> |

Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP5

**Establish a Committee on Improving the Well Being of Children and Families as a permanent CIP standing committee
(Established Ad Hoc Working Group on appropriate use of psychotropic medication)**

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| AP5.1 | CIP Ad Hoc Working Group appointed in January 2009 to study and make recommendations regarding mental health services for children in foster care, specifically the appropriate use of psychotropic medication | The first quarterly report by the Ad Hoc Working Group was distributed to CIP Select Committee at CIP meeting, April 17, 2009. The chair reported that the subcommittee has met telephonically and will apply for training grant money to convene a major symposium on psychotropic medication. The symposium would have two primary goals: (1) education for all decision makers, including judges and those individuals without mental health backgrounds, who are signing consent forms and otherwise making mental health decisions for children who are wards and DCFS clients; and, (2) developing policies, procedures, and protocols for the use of psychotropic medications. The subcommittee members have identified and contacted experts throughout the country who have either developed protocols or who have helped other states develop protocols. Researchers on a major psychotropic medication foster children project that originated at Florida International Institute have expressed an interest in the Symposium and willingness to participate. The next report of the Ad Hoc Working group is due at the CIP quarterly meeting on January 22, 2010. |

Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP6

Organize statewide initiatives to increase public awareness on issues related to the safety, permanency, and well being of children, and strengthening families at risk

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| AP6 | Meeting the needs of tribes and tribal children is a priority. Collaborate with the Nevada State Indian Commission, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, AOC’s Tribal Consortium, UNLV Boyd School of Law, UNR and UNLV’s Schools of Social Work, and other entities as appropriate on the development of training curricula related to the complex issues around tribal children and parents | The CIP Coordinator participated in a 1-day Regional Roundtable sponsored by the Nevada Indian Commission and Division of Child and Family Services working with Casey Family Programs on July 27, 2009 in Reno, NV. As a follow up, the Coordinator was invited to attend the Nevada Division of Child and Family Services Children’s Justice Act Task Force Subcommittee on Indian Child Welfare exit conference. In the presentation, the CIP Coordinator reaffirmed the court’s commitment to work with tribes on behalf of CIP Chair Justice Saitta. The CIP Coordinator participated in a panel at the 44 th Annual Convention of the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada, Inc., co-sponsored by DCFS on November 17, 2009, in Reno. A copy of the presentation given by the CIP Coordinator is available in the CIP Office or on the CIP webpage. |
| AP6 | Organize statewide initiatives to increase public awareness on issues related to the safety, permanency, and well being of children and strengthening families | Project status reports, financial reports, and in-kind reports were received timely pursuant to subgrant agreement with Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) on pilot CAP Adoption Subsidy project. LACSN has developed web-based reference information to assist prospective adoptive parents in understanding adoption laws and regulations, the federal and state requirements for adoption subsidy, and their rights and responsibilities as prospective adoptive parents. An information brochure, <i>Navigating Nevada’s Adoption Subsidy Program - A Guide for Clark County Families</i> , is also available at no cost to the public. This brochure is available on the LACSN website. |
| AP6.1 | To focus on educational well-being, the CIP Select Committee Chair appointed co-chairs of the Education Subcommittee to present recommendations to the Select Committee on priorities for improving educational outcomes through the courts | A report on behalf of the Chair of the Education Subcommittee, Second Judicial District Senior Model Court Lead Judge Deborah Schumacher, will be provided by Mr. Tom Murtha, the Education Liaison for the Second Judicial District Family Court, to the CIP Select Committee at the 1 st quarter CIP meeting, January 22, 2010. |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| AP6.3 | Develop and host statewide Summit including multidisciplinary stakeholders, e.g., CIP, court staff, legal representatives, welfare agencies, service providers, schools, foster parents, children, families, and legislative liaison to raise the level of awareness around issues of child well-being, foster youth in transition, and strengthening families | CIP Chair, CIP Coordinator, Deputy Director and Manager of Judicial Education determined dates of Summit to be held in September 2010, in Las Vegas, NV. "Save the Date" information will be sent to CIP Members via CIP Calendar of Events, posted on CIP webpage, and a card will be developed for general distribution in February 2010. |

Administration and Planning (AP) or “Basic” Strategy AP7

Improve permanency outcomes for children and families through increased court and legal representatives’ involvement in Child and Family Service Reviews, statewide preparation in the CFSR and PIP process, and Title IV-E Foster Care Eligibility Reviews, as appropriate

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Basic 7.1 | <p>Provide information regarding CFSR/PIP and IV-E processes including on-site review reports to all court personnel, interested judges, and legal representatives. Revised: Disseminate CFSR PowerPoint presentation to judges and invite DCFS to submit additional information regarding the August CFSR</p> | <p>A PowerPoint presentation, previous CFSR report and findings, and Title IV-E review report were provided to CIP Chair Justice Saitta. Justice Saitta met with DCFS Administrator Diane Comeaux, Clark County Director of Family Services Tom Morton, and Eighth Judicial District Model Court Lead Judge Diane Steel, regarding the outcomes of the CFSR held in August 2009.</p> |
| Basic 7.2 | <p>Review materials provided and convene appointed workgroups to identify issues in on-site review reports and develop plan and activities to address those issues. NOTE: Title IV-E report received from DCFS on May 29, 2009</p> | <p>The CIP Coordinator obtained a copy of Title IV-E report on May 29, 2009. A courtesy copy of CFSR outcomes report provided to DCFS was shared with CIP. DCFS invited representatives from the courts, CIP, attorneys, providers, UNR, and UNLV to the Program Improvement Plan (PIP) kickoff meeting, and formed committees from those attending.</p> |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| AP7.1 – AP7.5 | <p>Provide information regarding CFSR/PIP and IV-E processes, including on-site review reports to all court personnel, interested judges, and legal representatives.</p> <p>Disseminate CFSR PowerPoint presentation to judges and invite DCFS to submit additional information regarding the August CFSR, and facilitate legal and judicial participation in the CFSR/PIP and Title IV-E reviews as appropriate</p> | <p>Summary the final Title IV-E report was disseminated to CIP members. Prepared draft responses per ACF request for the August Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) summary. Solicited input from NV courts and agencies to prepare and submit responses to COSCA survey on behalf of the Court. Connected with and received commitment from 9 Judges and Juvenile Court Masters to participate in CFSR the week of 08/31/09 - 09/04/09. Information distributed to judicial officers concerning the CFSR process at the request of Chair Justice Saitta on behalf of Diane Comeaux of the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS).</p> <p>The CIP Coordinator participated in CFSR training in Reno, as an on-site reviewer in Carson City, as an interviewee with Chief Justice Hardesty and CIP Chair Justice Nancy Saitta, and attended the CFSR Exit Conference. Prepared and delivered summary of exit conference for Chief Justice and CIP Chair Justice Saitta. CIP Coordinator will review the CFSR courtesy report and identify any deficiencies related to the judiciary, prepare a report regarding how they relate to current CIP Strategic Plans, and identify related activities.</p> |

APPENDIX A

**Judicial Council of the State of Nevada
COURT IMPROVEMENT FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY
OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE**
(Revised August 27, 2009)

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Supreme Court of Nevada

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Executive Director
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2nd Judicial District Court

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Assembly District 30, *Nevada*

Chief Judge Teresa Sprouse
Tribal Judge
Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court

Judge Cynthia Dianne Steel
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APPENDIX B
LIST OF NEVADA COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Administration for Children and Families
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Attorney General's Office
Attorneys for Children
Attorneys for Parents
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Casey Family Programs
Child and Family Futures Program
Children's Bureau
Clancy Productions
Clark County Department of Family Services
Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Clark County Special Public Defender's Office
Community Volunteers
Court Improvement Program Select Committee & Members Emeritus
Creating Effective Organizations
Department of Public Safety State Parole & Probation
District Attorney's Offices (Carson City, Clark, Lander, and Washoe Counties)
Division of Child & Family Services
Foster Parents
Government Financial Management, Inc
Great Basin CASA
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
National Association of Drug Court Professionals
National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators
National Foster Parents Association
National Resource Centers
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.
Nevada Indian Commission
Nevada Inter-Tribal Council
Nevada Judges, Hearing Masters, & Court Staff
Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
Nevada State Legislature
Northeastern Nevada CASA
Sierra Association of Foster Families
State CIP Coordinators
Supreme Court & Staff
Supreme Court Clerk's Office
Supreme Court Law Library
Tru Vista Program

University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)
University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans
Washoe County Department of Social Services
Washoe County Public Defender's Office
Washoe Legal Services
Waterhole Software, Inc.
WestCare

Table of Collaborative Partners includes agencies and individuals who have at some time worked on a CIP-related project, including our contract and subgrant partners, and/or individuals or entities (including both staff and volunteers) who share our common goal(s).

**NEVADA'S COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY OF DEPENDENT
CHILDREN (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT
REPORT DECEMBER 2009**



*Nevada Supreme Court
Administrative Office of the Courts*

**STATE OF NEVADA
 COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
 COORDINATOR’S ANNUAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2009**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The past year has been one of the best years yet for the Court Improvement Program. Building on its foundation and continuing the work of such a progressive and proactive program has been a true honor. I have also appreciated the opportunity to work with the leadership of Supreme Court Chief Justice James Hardesty, Associate Justice Nancy M. Saitta, and Associate Justice Michael Douglas. Without their wisdom, clear direction, passion, and patience, the Nevada Court Improvement Program would not be where it is today. Such strong leadership and advocacy protects the rights of all of our children and families, and assures CIP will continue to make progress toward improving outcomes for children and families.

CHAPTER 1

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE

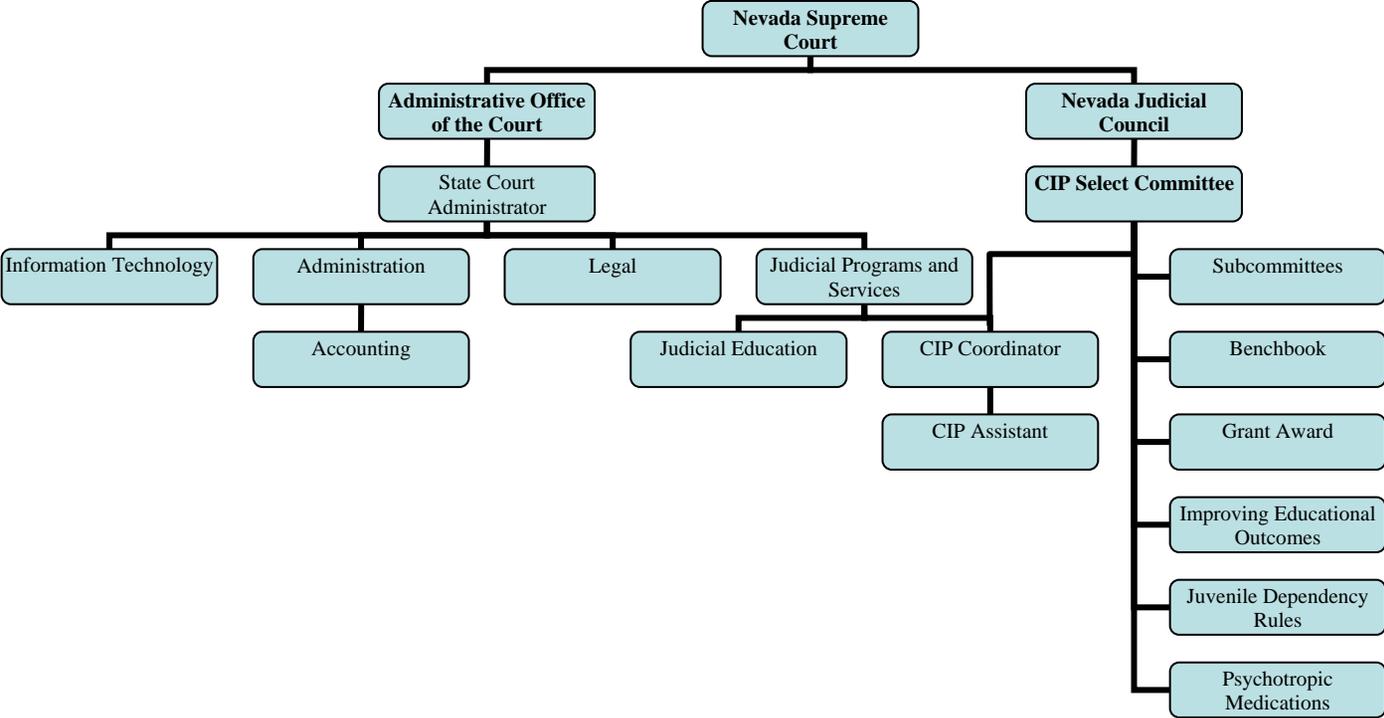
The Court Improvement Program is a multidisciplinary program that seeks improvement of interrelated systems serving children and families who enter the child welfare system. The program operates through team-oriented court and agency initiatives. The goal of CIP is to make the system more efficient and reduce the amount of time child victims of abuse and neglect spend in the foster care system.

As a standing committee of the Judicial Council of the State of Nevada, the Committee serves in an advisory capacity. Each year the CIP program begins with the CIP Annual Meeting/Retreat where the CIP Select Committee reviews progress on the strategic plans and priorities for the current year. Agendas for the subsequent quarterly meetings are structured around specific action items and are developed by Select Committee members in coordination with the CIP coordinator. The CIP Select Committee Chair serves on CIP-related subcommittees, helps direct and oversees policy development, and reviews and approves new project proposals for funding. A CIP Select Committee Roster is attached as **Appendix A**.

The CIP Select Committee is directly supported by two individuals employed by the Nevada Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), specifically, the CIP Coordinator and a full time CIP Assistant. Additionally, CIP is supported by other departments within the AOC on an as-needed basis. The following organizational chart depicts the structure of CIP as well as the Supreme Court and departments within the AOC which support CIP.

Finally, the work of CIP could not be accomplished without the dedicated teamwork and assistance of Nevada's federal, state, and local collaborative partners, which are listed in the attached **Appendix B**.

COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND STATUS

The table starting on the next page lists the activities found in the Education and Training (or “Training”) Strategic Plan as well as providing a list of initiatives associated with each activity and the status of each of these initiatives.

**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2009**

Prepared by Sheryl Overstreet, CIP Coordinator
Phone: (775) 687-9809 Fax: (775) 687-9811
E-Mail: soverstreet@nvcourts.nv.gov

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED1

Provide training opportunities for child welfare stakeholders, lawyers, members of the judiciary to keep current on national trends, federal child welfare law, and best practices

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|--|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">ED 1.1</p> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Send up to three representatives to national conferences.</p> <p style="text-align: left; margin-top: 20px;"><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Washoe County Deputy Public Defenders Jennifer Rains and Paige Dollinger attended the ABA conference on Improving Representation for Parents in the Child Welfare System: <i>Representing Your Client and Advocating for Change in Challenging Times</i>: The 2009 National Conference on Children and the Law May 13-16, 2009. Attendees will provide a 1-hour presentation on best practices at the Youth Summit scheduled in September 2010. (See AP6.3).</p> <p>An analyst with the Administrative Office of the Court’s Judicial Programs and Services Division attended the 12th National Child Welfare Data and Technology Conference June 22-24, 2009 to gain a better understanding of national standards for data collection on juvenile cases. The analyst is involved in finalizing Phase II Uniform System of Judicial Reporting requirements for juvenile case types and has already applied information gained at the Conference to data collection, identifying outcome measures, and analyzing of the CIP Early Representation pilot project.</p> <p>Tom Morton, Director of the Clark County Department of Family Services, attended the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators Child Welfare Directors’ Policy Summit in Washington, D.C., September 14-16, 2009. Mr. Morton submitted a CD and binder of materials to the CIP office as part of his report that will be delivered at the January 22, 2010, CIP meeting.</p> |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| ED 1.1 <i>(continued)</i> | Send up to three representatives to national conferences. | <p>Nevada Supreme Court Associate Justice and CIP Chair Nancy Saitta extended invitations to attend the Third National Judicial Leadership Summit on the Protection of Children sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trust and Casey Family Programs to Eighth Judicial District Family Court and Lead Model Court Judge Diane Steel, Clark County Department of Family Services Director Tom Morton, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) Administrator Diane Comeaux, and the CIP Coordinator. The Summit was held October 15-17, 2009, in Austin, TX and the team of five participated.</p> <p>Prior to attending the Summit and working with Administration for Children and Families Region IX Representatives, Jewel Roberts and Linda Mitchell, retired Judge CIP Contract Liaison Joanne Brown, Executive Director of Government Relations Office for the National Center of State Courts Kay Farley, Principal Court Management Consultant Dick Van Duizend, and DCFS Quality Improvement Manager Jan Fragale, preparatory materials were gathered and distributed to the team by the CIP Coordinator and Assistant.</p> <p>In November 2009, CIP training opportunities such as the Beyond the Bench conference in California in June 2010 were distributed to judges and masters who have calendars of NRS432B cases.</p> |
| ED1.2 | Appoint CIP member to work with Youth Advisory Councils as required by FCIA (aka Chaffee) | Appointment to be made at the January 22, 2010, quarterly CIP meeting. |

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED2

Develop and implement continuing education programs and materials for Judges and Juvenile Hearing Masters on child welfare issues

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| ED2.1 | In collaboration with the Judicial Education Division of the AOC and national consultants, establish a baseline for training curriculum and priorities | Request granted to form a training Ad Hoc Working Group to be appointed approved by CIP Chair Justice Saitta. A meeting was held between the AOC Manager of Judicial Education and his staff, and the CIP Coordinator, on December 10, 2009, to discuss the logistics, assistance from Judicial Education staff, budget, and potential dates for the Youth Summit in September 2010. A list of training issues developed by CIP Coordinator was provided to the Judicial Education Manger. |
| ED2.2 | Develop “nutshell” dependency training in conjunction with agency, AOC Judicial Education, correlated with the Judicial Benchbook on child welfare cases for courtroom practice | The Ad Hoc Working Group will be utilized to advise the development of the curriculum. |
| ED2.3 | Adapt “nutshell” dependency course as a 4-hour refresher courses (for subsequent years) | The Ad Hoc Working Group will be utilized to advise the development of the curriculum. |
| ED2.4 | Provide training on child welfare issues at annual Family Law Judges and Nevada District Judges Association conferences | Agenda was already established for 2009 conferences; the Ad Hoc Working Group will collaborate with AOC Judicial Education staff to schedule training for the 2010 judicial conferences. The CIP Coordinator made a connection between the AOC Judicial Education Manager, his staff, and Judge James Payne from Indiana. Judge Payne offered his PowerPoint presentation on the Child and Family Service Reviews (CFSR) to be used at an appropriate training for Judges, and the CIP Coordinator shared that information along with contact information for Judge Payne. |
| ED2.5 | Send up to two judicial officers to Child Abuse and Neglect Institute (CANI) National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) training | No applications were received in 2009. In addition to the existing link to NCJFCJ on the CIP webpage, the CIP Coordinator will continue sending out email to Judges and Hearing Masters regarding similar training opportunities during 2010. |

Education and Training (ED) or “Training” Strategy ED3

Develop and implement continuing education programs and materials for court staff involved in child welfare issues

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| ED3.1 | Identify and develop baseline training and education material for court staff involved in child welfare cases | <p>The original plan to distribute information from the Senior Model Court was modified as CIP members were notified that materials would be available in the CIP office, and electronic versions would be provided upon request. Due to the large volume of the dependency manual materials and the specific and technical information regarding one specific case management system utilized in the Second Judicial District, the above materials were not used. Additional materials for the webpage may be considered. A CIP display board with information about piloted projects and the state and federal partnership was put on display throughout the 2009 Court Staff Conference. Color printouts of statewide piloted projects and CIP contact and webpage information was disseminated to 150 participants.</p> <p>A one-page CIP informational brochure was developed and will be circulated at the 1st quarterly CIP Select Committee meeting in 2010.</p> |
| ED3.2 | Update training and education material for court staff (for subsequent years) | |
| ED3.3 | Provide training on child welfare issues at the Court Administrators and Clerks Conference | |

APPENDIX A

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FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY OF DEPENDENT
CHILDREN (CIP)
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DECEMBER 2009**



*Nevada Supreme Court
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**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
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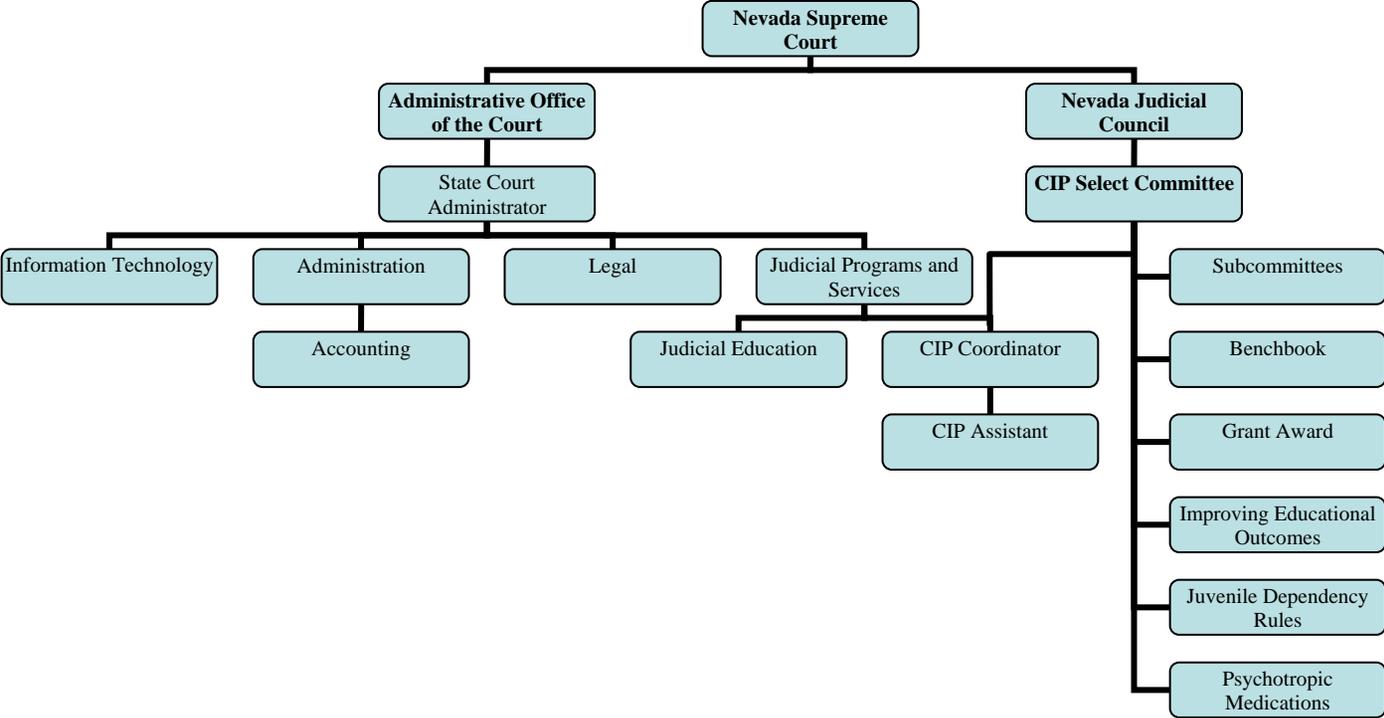
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COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP) ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVES AND STATUS

The table starting on the next page lists the activities found in the Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (or “Data”) Strategic Plan as well as providing a list of initiatives associated with each activity and the status of each of these initiatives.

**STATE OF NEVADA
COURT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)
COORDINATOR'S ANNUAL DATA ASSESSMENT REPORT – DECEMBER 2009**

Prepared by Sheryl Overstreet, CIP Coordinator
Phone: (775) 687-9809 Fax: (775) 687-9811
E-Mail: soverstreet@nvcourts.nv.gov

Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (DC) or “Data” Strategy DC1
**Keep current on national trends and requirements pertaining to data collection, analysis, and planning
pertaining to child welfare cases**

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|--|--|
| <p>Linked to AP 2.1 and ED 4.1</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Measuring outcomes for the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada (LACSN) Children’s Attorneys Project (CAP) Pro Bono Lawyers Project and</p> <p>Educational Surrogate Advocacy Project</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>The CAP Pro Bono Lawyers Project is measured by (1) the number of volunteer attorneys recruited and trained and (2) successful advocacy for services (e.g., mental health treatment; interim placement that is safe and meets the needs of the child; and timely and individualized progress towards permanency). LACSN tracks the number of hours spent by each volunteer attorney, actions taken by the attorney, and results for each of the CAP cases assigned. As a result of the 29 new volunteers recruited to the project, 109 new children or sibling groups have attorneys. Approximately 25 attorneys attended the 3-hour CLE training programs LACSN offered on “Representing Child Victims of Abuse and Neglect” in both May and October 2009, in Las Vegas. In the prior year, LACSN offered only 1 training and had 13 attendees.</p> <p>The Educational Surrogate Advocacy Project’s success is relative based on the outcome achieved for each individual client. For some, admittance to college may be the ultimate goal and only through reaching that goal could their case be considered “successful.” For others, merely maintaining good attendance in school may be a success, and for others, gaining the skills to sit at a single desk for an entire class period is a success. The program works toward reaching the highest, most functional point possible for each child. Progress in each case is followed closely through contact with each surrogate by the project coordinator through telephone calls, personal meetings, and email.</p> |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Linked to AP 2.1 and ED 4.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Educational Surrogate Advocacy Project</p> <p>CAP Adoption Subsidy Project</p> <p>Nevada CASA Association, Inc. (NCA)</p> <p>Great Basin CASA Project (continued on next page)</p> | <p>Information from the volunteer is entered into each child and surrogate's individual files, as well as documented in LACSN's online database. Ninety (90) children were represented by surrogates during the year.</p> <p>The goal of the Adoption Subsidy Project is to help adoptive parents navigate the adoption subsidy process, potentially helping to reduce the backlog of children in the foster care system awaiting adoption. LACSN has developed written information to assist prospective adoptive parents in understanding adoption laws and regulations, the federal and state requirements for adoption subsidy, and their rights and responsibilities as prospective adoptive parents. An information brochure, <i>Navigating Nevada's Adoption Subsidy Program- A Guide for Clark County Families</i>, was developed and is available at no cost for the public. This brochure is available on the LACSN website (www.lacsn.org).</p> <p>The Nevada CASA Association (NCA) Project has been provided with second year funding to support the Nevada CASA Association, Inc. The purpose of the Nevada CASA Association is to support existing local CASA programs with volunteer recruitment, training, and support as needed; expand the program to at least one additional county annually in a Judicial District; to provide a CASA volunteer for every abused and neglected child; and to promote the CASA mission throughout Nevada. With more CASA programs and more volunteers, more abused and neglected children have advocates working toward the ultimate goal of permanency. Local CASA programs are now serving abused and neglected children in eight counties. NCA has published its first brochure, which is used for publicizing the CASA mission and recruiting activities throughout Nevada. NCA has formed an advisory committee comprised of CASA volunteers to (1) promote awareness of the CASA mission in Nevada; (2) seek grant opportunities for NCA; and (3) help solicit donations for NCA.</p> <p>The Great Basin CASA Project was provided partial funding by CIP to cover the start-up of a new CASA program for the White Pine and Eureka Counties in the Seventh Judicial District. The first case appointed to Great Basin CASA</p> |

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Linked to AP 2.1 and ED 4.1 (continued)</p> <p>(continued on next page)</p> | <p>Great Basin CASA Project</p> <p>Early Representation Project</p> | <p>was in August 2008, and since then, CASA has advocated for 17 children. Great Basin CASA, which is based in White Pine County, was assigned its first two cases in Eureka County in late spring 2009.</p> <p>The Early Representation Project begun in February 2009 follows best practice research regarding improving outcomes for children by reducing to a minimum the time a child spends in placement, and expediting comprehensive case planning while applying efforts to reach an early resolution of plan and permanency for the child. The core of the program is immediate appointment of counsel for children and parents, exchange of reports and necessary information, and a facilitated series of meetings with all counsel and stakeholders, within days of removal to identify and resolve conflicts and reach a collaborative solution. All cases were assigned to a single judicial officer and originate from a single geographic service area. Stakeholders include the Clark County Department of Family Services, the offices of the District Attorney juvenile division, Special Public Defender, conflict counsel, and the Children's Attorneys Project of Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada.</p> <p>The goal of assigning attorneys to all parents and all children at the initial protective custody hearing was met, thus assuring counsels' participation in hearings, safety team meetings, and any subsequent child and family team (CFT) meetings. In every case, the court assigned the Special Public Defender, the private conflict counsel, or both at the protective custody hearing. The project transforms the traditional conflict and litigation-based model of dealing with abused and neglected children into a more family-friendly model that encourages early parental cooperation, rapid engagement in services, and development of a circle of supportive relatives and friends. As of this report, 80 children were accepted into the pilot program. LACSN is very proud to report that 41 of those children have returned home and their cases have been closed. Of the remaining 39 children, 9 are living with another parent, 12 are with a relative, and 18 have been placed in foster care.</p> |

Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (DC) or “Data” Strategy DC3

Develop data exchange requirements

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|---|---|--|
| <p>DC3.1</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>Review National Exchange Model and prioritize implementation order of exchanges in Nevada</p> <p><i>(continued on next page)</i></p> | <p>AOC Deputy Director of Judicial Programs and Services and Interim Deputy Director of Information Technology participated in a National Data Exchange Modeling Meeting in Austin, TX, on September 10-11, 2009, to work on creating the templates for administrative exchanges such as appointment of counsel. A good start was made on three administrative exchanges, the Notice of Hearing, Representation Notification, and Placement Change Notification.</p> <p>The advantage of an automated and shared Notice of Hearing between court and agency case management systems is that it can be used across all court hearing types. A request to schedule a hearing can come from an agency attorney, parent attorney, the agency, the court, a child attorney or GAL (Guardian ad Litem) and the Judge or clerk for the court (e.g., deputy clerk, judicial assistant, case manager, court coordinator, etc.) can schedule.</p> <p>A court will typically receive a request for appointment of an attorney; however, the court can appoint representation on its own motion. The document is for the appointment of attorneys (e.g., for the child, parent, Guardian ad Litem, etc.), or may be for a program (person or organization). An exchange of the Representation Notification is from the court to the agency. The notification is necessary to track the continuity of representation and ensure that attorneys are called equally. It will allow for the addition or removal of appointment from a case, and tracks the client representation assigned to, the court, and the start and end date of the appointment.</p> <p>The Placement Change Notification is an exchange from the agency to the court. It is initiated by a change in placement by an appropriate case worker or supervisor in the child welfare case management system. The exchange describes a single placement of a child, and one and only one child per</p> |

| DC3.1 (continued) | Review National Exchange Model and prioritize implementation order of exchanges in Nevada | <p>placement notification. Previous and new location is mandatory and the agency sends this information to the court to keep the judge advised of placement changes in real time, as opposed to waiting for the next court report.</p> <p>Documentation and meeting notes have been posted to the “Wiki” under the title “IEPD’s in Development” and the link is: http://www.ncsconline.org/childwelfarewiki/index.php?title=Data_Modeling_Committee#IEPD.27s_In_Development.</p> |
|--|--|--|
| Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (DC) or “Data” Strategy DC8 Implement Video Conferencing Capabilities in Courts for use in Child Welfare Cases | | |
| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
| DC8.1 – DC8.5 | Perform business analysis and develop implementation blueprint for video conferencing capabilities | <p>The CIP Coordinator worked in conjunction with the AOC Information Technology Administrative Assistant and an AOC Court Services Analyst, to conduct a needs assessment. The assessment has been completed and the results were incorporated into a plan for implementation of videoconferencing in three pilot judicial districts.</p> <p>Contracts were developed for three pilot courts by the AOC’s Legal division for videoconferencing equipment to be delivered and installed in Humboldt, Elko, and White Pine County District Courts. A tracking form on usage was developed, distributed for review, and approved for use by the courts. Equipment has been delivered and installed in Elko, and delivered to Ely and Winnemucca. The AOC is working on connectivity issues experienced. The first quarterly reports are expected April 30, 2010. This videoconferencing equipment will be used for the purpose of utilizing remote testimony, court interpreters, and expert witnesses as related to dependency and related matters, as well as facilitating meetings and trainings.</p> |

Data Collection, Analysis, and Sharing (DC) or “Data” Strategy DC9

Provide Project Management Oversight for Data Projects

| Strategic Plan Activity Code | Current CIP Initiatives | Status |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| DC9.1 | Obtain part-time Project Manager to oversee data projects identified in activities DC4.2, and DC4.3 | A contract has been drafted with Aaron Gorrell (Waterhole Software, Colorado Springs, Colorado). Mr. Gorrell has been consulting with the National Center for State Courts on the National Data Exchange Project, and has worked in numerous data exchange projects in other jurisdictions, which will save time and money for the Nevada project. Once we have data from the Data Exchange Pilot Project, we will be able to identify a scope of work for the other activities identified. The pilot will be implemented in the Second Judicial District Family Court and the long term goal of the project is to implement an electronic data exchange of the dependency petition between the Second Judicial District Court Family Division case management system and the Department of Child and Family Services SACWIS system. The initial phases of the project will begin in January 2010 and end June 30, 2010. At the appropriate time, an advisory group will be appointed with representatives from the court, social services, and CIP/AOC. This is a critical first step in the much larger picture of implementing national data model exchanges as discussed in activity DC3.1 above. |

APPENDIX A

**Judicial Council of the State of Nevada
COURT IMPROVEMENT FOR THE PROTECTION AND PERMANENCY
OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN (CIP) SELECT COMMITTEE**
(Revised August 27, 2009)

Justice Nancy M. Saitta, Chair
Supreme Court of Nevada

Diane J. Comeaux
Administrator
Division of Child and Family Services

William "Bill" E. Fowler
Executive Director
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.

Tom Morton
Director
Clark County Dept of Family Services

Kathleen M. O'Leary
Chief Deputy Public Defender
Washoe County Public Defender's
Office

Judge Andrew Puccinelli
District Court Judge
4th Judicial District Court

Cynthia "Cindy" Pyzel
Chief Deputy Attorney General
Office of the *Nevada* Attorney General

Kevin Schiller
Director
Washoe County Dept of Social
Services

Judge Deborah E. Schumacher
District Court Judge
2nd Judicial District Court

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Assembly District 30, *Nevada*

Chief Judge Teresa Sprouse
Tribal Judge
Duckwater Shoshone Tribal Court

Judge Cynthia Dianne Steel
District Court Judge
8th Judicial District Court! Family
Division

Ron Titus
Director and State Court Administrator
Administrative Office of the Courts

Erika Pike Turner, Esq.
Attorney at Law
Gordon Silver

Janice Wolf, Esq.
Attorney at Law
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada

Members Emeritus
Mike Capello
Consultant

Judge Michael Gibbons
District Court Judge
9th Judicial District Court

Mary Herzik
Director
Washoe County CASA

Tammy Tovey Stephenson
Senior Deputy Attorney General
Office of the *Nevada* Attorney General

Pat Thacker
Director
Clark County CASA

Committee Staff
Sheryl A. Overstreet, CIP Coordinator
Robbie Taft, Administrative Assistant
Court Improvement Program (CIP)
Administrative Office of the Courts

APPENDIX B
LIST OF NEVADA COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

Administration for Children and Families
Administrative Office of the Courts
Attorney General's Office
Attorneys for Children
Attorneys for Parents
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Casey Family Programs
Child and Family Futures Program
Children's Bureau
Clancy Productions
Clark County Department of Family Services
Clark County Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Clark County Special Public Defender's Office
Community Volunteers
Court Improvement Program Select Committee & Members Emeritus
Creating Effective Organizations
Department of Public Safety State Parole & Probation
District Attorney's Offices (Carson City, Clark, Lander, and Washoe Counties)
Division of Child & Family Services
Foster Parents
Government Financial Management, Inc
Great Basin CASA
Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
National Association of Drug Court Professionals
National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators
National Foster Parents Association
National Resource Centers
Nevada CASA Association, Inc.
Nevada Indian Commission
Nevada Inter-Tribal Council
Nevada Judges, Hearing Masters, & Court Staff
Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence
Nevada State Legislature
Northeastern Nevada CASA
Sierra Association of Foster Families
State CIP Coordinators
Supreme Court & Staff
Supreme Court Clerk's Office
Supreme Court Law Library
Tru Vista Program

University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV)
University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
Volunteer Attorneys for Rural Nevadans
Washoe County Department of Social Services
Washoe County Public Defender's Office
Washoe Legal Services
Waterhole Software, Inc.
WestCare

Table of Collaborative Partners includes agencies and individuals who have at some time worked on a CIP-related project, including our contract and subgrant partners, and/or individuals or entities (including both staff and volunteers) who share our common goal(s).