Child and Family Services Reviews

Delaware

Final Report

October 2015

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

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Final Report: Delaware Child and Family Services Review
Report Issued: October 2015

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Delaware. The CFSRs enable the Children's Bureau to: (1) ensure conformity with certain federal child welfare requirements; (2) determine what is actually happening to children and families as they are engaged in child welfare services; and (3) assist states in enhancing their capacity to help children and families achieve positive outcomes. Federal law and regulations authorize the Children's Bureau, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, to administer the review of child and family services programs under titles IV-B and IV-E of the Social Security Act. The CFSRs are structured to help states identify strengths and areas needing improvement in their child welfare practices and programs as well as institute systemic changes that will improve child and family outcomes.

The findings for Delaware are based on:

- The statewide assessment prepared by the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families (DSCYF), and submitted to the Children's Bureau on March 17, 2015. The statewide assessment is the state's analysis of its performance on outcomes, and the functioning of systemic factors in relation to title IV-B and IV-E requirements and the title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan
- The state's performance on national standards for 7 statewide data indicators
- The results of case reviews of 86 cases (52 foster care and 34 in-home) conducted via a "State Conducted Case Review" process at Kent, New Castle, and Sussex counties, Delaware, between April 1, 2015, and July 24, 2015.
- Interviews and focus groups with state stakeholders and partners, which included:
    - Attorneys
    - Child welfare caseworkers and supervisors and contract caseworkers and supervisors
    - Child welfare program managers, program administrators, and the state child welfare director
    - Foster and adoptive parents
    - Law enforcement representatives
    - Information system staff
    - Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) staff
    - Parents served by the agency
    - Quality assurance staff

- Representatives from child care licensing
- Representatives from the court system, Court Improvement Project, and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Representatives from the entities administering the state's child support, Social Services Block Grant, and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) programs
- Service providers
- Training staff
- Tribal representatives
- Youth served by the agency

Background Information

The Round 3 CFSR assesses state performance with regard to substantial conformity with 7 child and family outcomes and 7 systemic factors. Each outcome incorporates one or more of the 18 items included in the case review, and each item is rated as a Strength or Area Needing Improvement based on an evaluation of certain child welfare practices and processes in the cases reviewed in the state. With two exceptions, an item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90% or more of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength on that item. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies to those items. For a state to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. Two outcomes—Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1—also are evaluated based on state performance with regard to statewide data indicators. For a state to be in substantial conformity with these outcomes, both the national standards for each relevant statewide data indicator must be met or considered no different than the national standard, and 95% of the applicable cases must be rated as having been substantially achieved.

Eighteen items are considered in assessing the state's substantial conformity with the 7 systemic factors. Each item reflects a key federal program requirement relevant to the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) for that systemic factor. An item is rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement based on how well the item-specific requirement is functioning. A determination of the rating is based on information provided by the state to demonstrate the functioning of the systemic factor in the statewide assessment and, as needed, from interviews with stakeholders and partners. For a state to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factors, no more than 1 of the items associated with the systemic factor can be rated as an Area Needing Improvement. For systemic factors that have only 1 item associated with them, that item must be rated as a Strength for a determination of substantial conformity.

The Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round of reviews and in response to feedback from the child welfare field. As such, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSRs is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round. Appendix A provides tables presenting Delaware's overall performance in Round 3. Appendix B provides information about Delaware's performance in Round 2.

I. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Delaware 2015 CFSR Assessment of Substantial Conformity for Outcomes, Systemic Factors, and Performance on Statewide Data Indicators

The following 1 of 7 outcomes was found to be in substantial conformity.

- Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs

The following 3 of 7 systemic factors were found to be in substantial conformity:

- Statewide Information System
- Agency Responsiveness to the Community
- Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The state's results met or were no different than the national standards for the following 7 of 7 statewide data indicators:

- Maltreatment in foster care pertaining to Safety Outcome 1
- Recurrence of maltreatment pertaining to Safety Outcome 1
- Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1
- Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12 to 23 months pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1
- Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or longer pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1
- Re-entry to foster care in 12 months pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1
- Placement stability pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1

Children's Bureau Comments on Delaware Performance

The following are the Children's Bureau's observations about cross-cutting issues and Delaware's overall performance:

As reported in the statewide assessment, Delaware partnered with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to examine the state's child welfare practice and identify areas for improvement, resulting in the system transformation initiative *Outcomes Matter*. The state also contracted with the Children's Research Center (CRC) of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency to implement structured decision making® (SDM). The Division of Family Services (DFS) enacted an array of strategies under the umbrella of *Outcomes Matter*, including the incorporation of Safety Organized Practice (SOP), team decision making (TDM) and SDM assessments, with the goal of increasing the skills of staff and enhancing practice. A differential response system, *Family Assessment and Intervention Response* (FAIR), was also developed and implemented. DFS trained caseworkers, supervisors, and agency leadership from DFS and DFS's differential response partner agency, Children and Families First (CFF), in these methods and techniques. DFS also arranged for training in facilitative supervision and for additional coaching for DFS and DFS provider supervisors.

The results of the cases reviewed from April 2015 through July 2015 suggests that the state's strategies had the most positive impact at the time of case opening, in foster care cases, and in the engagement of children and foster parents. However, the engagement of

parents, particularly fathers, and ongoing positive practice in treatment (in-home) cases, remain challenges. We encourage the state to examine to what extent these results reflect the variation in the fidelity to implementation of the *Outcomes Matter* strategies in these areas and what additional improvements in practice may be anticipated as DFS continues with full implementation of the *Outcomes Matter* strategies.

The Children's Bureau saw positive results on safety outcomes, specifically on the provision of services to protect children in their homes and prevent removal because of accurate assessments of risk and safety. We think it will be important for the state to determine whether the increased accuracy in safety and risk assessments, an improvement in practice since the 2007 CFSR, may be attributed to the implementation of SDM in determining the referral path, and an understanding of the related practice principles.

While DFS continues to fully implement strategies to engage parents, this review indicated that child and family involvement in case planning continues to be a challenge. However, key participants interviewed, including parents and youth, reported that parents have been more actively involved in case planning because of the TDM process. Results of cases reviewed showed that the agency is more effective in engaging parents of children in foster care than parents in in-home cases. In foster care cases, caseworkers are more likely to involve parents in case planning and to have visits that are of sufficient frequency and quality to achieve case goals and to address the reasons for agency involvement.

Results of case reviews showed that there was a difference in the engagement of mothers and fathers. For both foster care and in-home cases, caseworkers were more likely to visit with mothers and more likely to involve mothers in case planning. The state may want to consider whether the staged implementation of TDMs throughout the period under review accounts for this difference. In addition, the use of TDMs for in-home cases, and the engagement of fathers and non-custodial parents, should be specifically considered for training and supervision purposes.

Improvements in practice that support stable placements for children in foster care are having a positive effect on permanency and well-being outcomes. The agency's practices that support placement stability include ensuring that an appropriate setting is initially selected for the child, and that services that meet the identified needs of foster parents during a child's placement are provided. Interviews with foster and adoptive parents, however, identified that improvements were needed because of inconsistency in the quality of foster and adoptive training. Delaware was determined to be fully functioning in the systemic factor area of foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention because of the consistency of licensing staff and focused efforts in diligent recruitment.

DFS was also found to be effective in identifying and preserving the important connections in a child's life at the time the child entered foster care. Here, case reviews identified that foster parents played an important function in maintaining a child's connection to neighborhood, friends, church, and other activities. Expanded efforts to select an initial foster care setting that best meets the needs of a child; to recruit, train, and support foster parents; and to encourage the role of foster parents in preserving the connections of the children in their care are needed.

Delaware reported in its statewide assessment that across the state, Family Court convenes frequent permanency hearings. The case review results confirmed that permanency hearings typically occurred every 3 to 6 months. Key participants interviewed also reported that regular, timely periodic reviews and permanency hearings are held for children in foster care. However, in Delaware, only the court formally establishes the child's permanency goal. Although caseworkers may determine that a goal change is appropriate, it was not clear that concerted efforts are consistently made toward achieving the new goal before the permanency hearing that sanctions the change. Key partners interviewed reported that several weeks or months may elapse before the recommended goal change is formally established. As DFS leadership strives to further strengthen its partnership with the Family Court and the court improvement program, the agency is encouraged to jointly consider policies that may at times be affecting efforts to achieve permanency for children in foster care.

Under its current leadership, DFS has engaged in a positive, collaborative child-serving network of state agencies, private providers, courts, and agencies administering other federal programs. This open partnership includes a sharing of resources and opportunity for input into the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) and updates. Representatives of this network that were interviewed shared their positive engagement by the agency. Key partners, however, reported systemic challenges to engaging parents, foster parents, and DFS staff in different roles of the agency in this process. More intentional and meaningful parental, resource parent, and staff engagement in the CFSP process would provide a critical perspective on the needs of children and families served by DFS and on the functioning of the agency. We encourage Delaware to work better with these groups to understand the gaps in service array and develop a more strongly functioning system that will meet all of the families' needs.

Delaware designed and implemented a case review process in preparation for the CFSR, but had not intended for that process to replace its former quality assurance system. As reported in the statewide assessment and in interviews with key participants, that prior process lacked several elements of a fully functioning quality assurance system. Only a review of the agency's record in the state's Family and Child Tracking System was conducted. Key case participants with knowledge of the agency's service to the family, including the parents, age-appropriate children, and caseworkers, were not interviewed. There were no established standards to evaluate the quality of service delivery in the state. DFS did not consistently produce relevant reports, and there were no procedures to systematically use results to develop program improvement measures and evaluate the impact of those efforts. Additionally, the state had suspended the review of open treatment (in-home) and permanency cases; only investigation cases were reviewed on an ongoing basis. DFS made significant gains in its design of an effective case review system for the purpose of the CFSR. We encourage the state to consider sustaining these efforts as part of the development of a more robust continuous quality improvement system.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

For each outcome, we provide performance summaries from the case review findings and statewide data indicators (when relevant). The CFSR relies upon a case review of an approved sample of foster care cases and in-home services cases. Delaware provides an alternative/differential response to, in addition to a traditional investigation of, incoming reports of child maltreatment or children in

need of services. Where relevant, we provide performance summaries that are differentiated between foster care, in-home services, and in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

This report provides an overview. Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Details on each case rating are available to DSCYF. The state is encouraged to conduct additional item-specific analysis of the case review findings to better understand areas of practice that are associated with positive outcomes and those that need improvement.

Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Item 1 and on two statewide data indicators related to safety.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 81% of the 37 applicable cases reviewed. The state's performance met or was no different than the national standards for both of the applicable statewide data indicators.

Safety Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether responses to all accepted child maltreatment reports received during the period under review were initiated, and face-to-face contact with the child(ren) made, within the time frames established by agency policies or state statutes.

State policy requires that accepted Investigation or Alternative Response reports be assigned for a Priority 1, 2, or 3 response. Priority 1 reports must be responded to within 24 hours, Priority 2 reports must be responded to within 72 hours, and Priority 3 reports require a response within 10 calendar days.

Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 1 because 81% of the 37 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Safety Statewide Data Indicator Performance

Recurrence of Maltreatment

The indicator is described as: Of all children who were victims of a substantiated or indicated report of maltreatment during a 12-month reporting period, what percent were victims of another substantiated or indicated maltreatment allegation within 12 months of their initial report?

Delaware met this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 4.8%, which met the national standard of 9.1%.

Maltreatment in Foster Care

The indicator is described as: Of all children in foster care during a 12-month period, what is the rate of victimization per day of foster care?

- Delaware met this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 10.41 victimizations per 100,000 days in care, which is considered no different than the national standard of 8.50 victimizations per 100,000 days in care.

Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Safety Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 2 and 3.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2.[1]

The outcome was substantially achieved in 91% of the 86 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 94% of the 52 foster care cases, 83% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Safety Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 2. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-Entry into Foster Care
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to provide services to the family to prevent children's entry into foster care or re-entry after a reunification.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 2 because 96% of the 28 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 2 was rated as a Strength in 100% of the 11 applicable foster care cases, 93% of the 15 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 2 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 3. Risk and Safety Assessment and Management
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess and address the risk and safety concerns relating to the child(ren) in their own homes or while in foster care.

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[1] Although Items 2 and 3, which comprise Safety Outcome 2, were each rated as a Strength, 95% or more of the cases reviewed must be rated as having been substantially achieved for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 3 because 91% of the 86 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 3 was rated as a Strength in 94% of the 52 foster care cases, 83% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 4, 5, and 6, and on 5 statewide data indicators related to permanency.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 56% of the 52 applicable cases reviewed. The state's performance met or was no different than the national standards for 5 of the 5 national standards for the applicable statewide data indicators.

Permanency Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 4. Stability of Foster Care Placement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the child in foster care is in a stable placement at the time of the onsite review and that any changes in placement that occurred during the period under review were in the best interests of the child and consistent with achieving the child's permanency goal(s).

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 4 because 90% of the 52 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 5. Permanency Goal for Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether appropriate permanency goals were established for the child in a timely manner.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 5 because 75% of the 51 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 6. Achieving Reunification, Guardianship, Adoption, or Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether concerted efforts were made, or are being made, during the period under review to achieve reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 6 because 83% of the 52 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Permanency Statewide Data Indicator Performance

Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care

This indicator is described as: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of entering foster care? Permanency, for the purposes of this indicator and the other permanency-in-12-months indicators, includes discharges from foster care to reunification with parents or primary caregivers, living with other relatives, adoption, and guardianship.

- Delaware's performance was no different than this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 41.6%, which is considered no different than the national standard of 40.5%.

Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12 to 23 months

This indicator is described as: Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) between 12 and 23 months, what percent discharged from foster care to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the period?

- Delaware's result was no different than this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 40.7%, which is considered no different than the national standard of 43.6%.

Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months or longer

This indicator is described as: Of all children in foster care on the first day of a 12-month period who had been in foster care (in that episode) for 24 months or more, what percent discharged to permanency within 12 months of the first day of the 12-month period?

- Delaware's performance was no different than this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 31.1%, which is considered no different than the national standard of 30.3%.

Re-entry into foster care in 12 months

This indicator is described as: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period who discharged within 12 months to reunification, living with a relative(s), or guardianship, what percent re-enter foster care within 12 months of their discharge?

- Delaware met this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 4.6%, which met the national standard of 8.3%.

Placement stability

This indicator is described as: Of all children who enter foster care in a 12-month period, what is the rate of placement moves per day of foster care?

- Delaware's performance was no different than this national standard. The state's risk-standardized performance on this indicator was 4.17, which is considered no different than the national standard of 4.12 moves per 1,000 days in care.

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Permanency Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Items 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 81% of the 52 applicable cases reviewed.

Permanency Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 7. Placement With Siblings

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that siblings in foster care are placed together unless a separation was necessary to meet the needs of one of the siblings.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 7 because 88% of the 25 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 8. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to ensure that visitation between a child in foster care and his or her mother, father,[2] and siblings is of sufficient frequency and quality to promote continuity in the child's relationship with these close family members.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 8 because 77% of the 43 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 100% of the 12 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation with a sibling(s) in foster care who is/was in a different placement setting was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

[2] For Item 8, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification. The persons identified in these roles for the purposes of the review may include individuals who do not meet the legal definitions or conventional meanings of a mother and father.

- In 81% of the 37 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her mother was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.
- In 67% of the 21 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of visitation between the child in foster care and his or her father was sufficient to maintain and promote the continuity of the relationship.

Item 9. Preserving Connections
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to maintain the child's connections to his or her neighborhood, community, faith, extended family, Tribe, school, and friends.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 9 because 94% of the 52 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 10. Relative Placement
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to place the child with relatives when appropriate.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 10 because 84% of the 50 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 11. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made to promote, support, and/or maintain positive relationships between the child in foster care and his or her mother and father[3] or other primary caregiver(s) from whom the child had been removed through activities other than just arranging for visitation.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 11 because 78% of the 41 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- In 84% of the 38 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her mother.
- In 71% of the 21 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to promote, support, and otherwise maintain a positive and nurturing relationship between the child in foster care and his or her father.

[3] For Item 11, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification.

Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 using the state's performance on Items 12, 13, 14, and 15.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 70% of the 86 cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 87% of the 52 foster care cases, 34% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 1 Item Performance

Item 12. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency (1) made concerted efforts to assess the needs of children, parents,[4] and foster parents (both initially, if the child entered foster care or the case was opened during the period under review, and on an ongoing basis) to identify the services necessary to achieve case goals and adequately address the issues relevant to the agency's involvement with the family, and (2) provided the appropriate services.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12 because 73% of the 86 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12 was rated as a Strength in 87% of the 52 foster care cases, 45% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

[4] For Sub-Item 12B, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

Item 12 is divided into three sub-items:

Sub-Item 12A. Needs Assessment and Services to Children

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 12A because 91% of the 86 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12A was rated as a Strength in 94% of the 52 foster care cases, 83% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Sub-Item 12B. Needs Assessment and Services to Parents

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 12B because 71% of the 72 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 12B was rated as a Strength in 84% of the 38 applicable foster care cases; 48% of the 29 applicable in-home services cases; and 100% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 84% of the 70 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to both assess and address the needs of mothers.
- In 49% of the 37 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to both assess and address the needs of fathers.

Sub-Item 12C. Needs Assessment and Services to Foster Parents

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 12C because 98% of the 45 applicable foster care cases were rated as a Strength.

Item 13. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, concerted efforts were made (or are being made) to involve parents[5] and children (if developmentally appropriate) in the case planning process on an ongoing basis.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 13 because 75% of the 83 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 13 was rated as a Strength in 86% of the 49 applicable foster care cases, 55% of the 29 applicable in-home services cases, and 80% of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

[5] For Item 13, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "mother" and "father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable "mothers" and "fathers" for the period under review in the case.

- In 78% of the 51 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve child(ren) in case planning.
- In 90% of the 70 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve mothers in case planning.
- In 62% of the 34 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to involve fathers in case planning.

Item 14. Caseworker Visits With Child
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the child(ren) in the case are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 14 because 86% of the 86 cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 14 was rated as a Strength in 98% of the 52 foster care cases, 62% of the 29 in-home services cases, and 100% of the 5 in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Item 15. Caseworker Visits With Parents
Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the frequency and quality of visits between caseworkers and the mothers and fathers[6] of the child(ren) are sufficient to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child(ren) and promote achievement of case goals.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 15 because 68% of the 72 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 15 was rated as a Strength in 76% of the 38 applicable foster care cases, 52% of the 29 applicable in-home services cases, and 100 of the 5 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.
- In 76% of the 68 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with mothers were sufficient.
- In 52% of the 33 applicable cases, the agency made concerted efforts to ensure that both the frequency and quality of caseworker visitation with fathers were sufficient.

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[6] For Item 15, in the in-home cases, "Mother" and "Father" are typically defined as the parents/caregivers with whom the children were living when the agency became involved with the family and with whom the children will remain (for example, biological parents, relatives, guardians, adoptive parents). In the foster care cases, "Mother" and "Father" is typically defined as the parents/caregivers from whom the child was removed and with whom the agency is working toward reunification; however, biological parents who were not the parents from whom the child was removed may also be included, as may adoptive parents if the adoption was finalized during the period under review. A rating could consider the agency's work with multiple applicable mother and fathers for the period under review in the case.

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 2 using the state's performance on Item 16.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 98% of the 55 applicable cases reviewed.

Well-Being Outcome 2 Item Performance

Item 16. Educational Needs of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To assess whether, during the period under review, the agency made concerted efforts to assess children's educational needs at the initial contact with the child (if the case was opened during the period under review) or on an ongoing basis (if the case was opened before the period under review), and whether identified needs were appropriately addressed in case planning and case management activities.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 16 because 98% of the 55 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 16 was rated as a Strength in 98% of the 52 applicable foster care cases, and 100% of the 3 applicable in-home services cases. None of the in-home services alternative/differential response cases were applicable for assessment on this item.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

The Children's Bureau calculates the state's performance on Well-Being Outcome 3 using the state's performance on Items 17 and 18.

State Outcome Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 83% of the 71 applicable cases reviewed.

The outcome was substantially achieved in 85% of the 52 applicable foster care cases, 75% of the 16 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 3 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

Well-Being Outcome 3 Item Performance

Item 17. Physical Health of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the physical health needs of the children, including dental health needs.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 17 because 86% of the 59 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 17 was rated as a Strength in 90% of the 52 foster care cases, and 57% of the 7 applicable in-home services cases. None of the in-home services alternative/differential response cases were applicable for assessment on this item.

Item 18. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child

Purpose of Assessment: To determine whether, during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the children.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 18 because 91% of the 58 applicable cases were rated as a Strength.
- Item 18 was rated as a Strength in 91% of the 43 applicable foster care cases, 92% of the 12 applicable in-home services cases, and 100% of the 3 applicable in-home services alternative/differential response cases.

III. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

For each systemic factor below, we provide performance summaries and a determination of whether the state is in substantial conformity with that systemic factor. In addition, we provide ratings for each item and a description of how the rating was determined. The CFSR relies upon a review of information contained in the statewide assessment to assess each item. If an item rating cannot be determined from the information contained in the statewide assessment, the Children's Bureau conducts stakeholder interviews and considers information gathered through the interviews in determining ratings for each item.

Statewide Information System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 19.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Statewide Information System Item Performance

Item 19. Statewide Information System

The statewide information system is functioning statewide to ensure that, at a minimum, the state can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 19 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information on its data integrity process for conducting case reviews that included a review of the required information and distribution of reports to supervisors for verification. Additional information received from stakeholders during stakeholder interviews revealed that Delaware's information system was current and accurate.

Case Review System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Case Review System. Three of the 5 items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Case Review System Item Performance

Item 20. Written Case Plan

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a written case plan that is developed jointly with the child's parent(s) and includes the required provisions.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 20 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided recent data showing that case plans were in place in 85% of cases and that mothers were involved in case planning 77% of the time and fathers were involved in case planning 71% of the time. Additional information received from stakeholders during stakeholder interviews indicated that the case planning process is routinely functioning to involve the active participation of parents in the development of case plans for children in foster care.

Item 21. Periodic Reviews

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that a periodic review for each child occurs no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 21 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information from a recent time period on the number of periodic reviews held. Information received from stakeholders during stakeholder interviews confirmed that periodic reviews routinely occur statewide at least every 6 months, and in many cases every 3 months, either by the courts, the Child Placement Review Board, or Permanency Planning Committee. Stakeholders also reported that the periodic reviews cover the required elements.

Item 22. Permanency Hearings

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that each child has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body that occurs no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 22 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected through stakeholder interviews indicated that initial and subsequent permanency hearings addressing the required elements occur routinely every 12 months for children in foster care, and often more frequently. When court continuances do occur, they do not affect the timeliness of permanency hearings. Stakeholders clarified that the Court Improvement Project (CIP) data from 2014 cited in the statewide assessment, showing that children's initial permanency hearings were timely 72% of the time, was for a cohort of older children and not all children, and that since that time, the state has improved performance to ensure that permanency hearings are timely and functioning as required.

Item 23. Termination of Parental Rights

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning statewide to ensure that the filing of termination of parental rights proceedings occurs in accordance with required provisions.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 23 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware reported that although it has a report for tracking the timelines for termination of parental rights, a forum (permanency placement committee meeting) for discussing the need to file for termination of parental rights, and a process for caseworkers to notify the agency attorney of a change in plan goal, the requirement to file a petition for termination of parental rights is not routinely met. Recent data from the agency indicated that termination of parental rights petitions were filed timely in 62% of the applicable cases. Data from the CIP indicated that filings were timely in 79% of a sample of cases and that some cases within the sample had exceptions to filing noted. Stakeholders clarified that there was not a consistent statewide process for tracking the need to file termination of parental rights timely or an established process for documenting compelling reasons not to file.

Item 24. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The case review system is functioning to ensure that foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care are notified of, and have a right to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 24. Findings were determined based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

- In the statewide assessment, Delaware described the process caseworkers used to give the Deputy Attorney General and Child Placement Review Board administrative office the lists of the resource parents who should be notified of upcoming reviews and hearings. The statewide assessment also provided information from foster parent focus groups indicating that foster parents were more commonly notified of reviews and hearings directly by their caseworkers. During stakeholder interviews, stakeholders clarified that caretakers are often notified of reviews and hearings but there is variation in how this occurs. Stakeholders stated that caregivers are not consistently informed of their right to be heard.

Quality Assurance System

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Item 25.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The one item in this systemic factor was rated as an Area Needing Improvement.

Quality Assurance System Item Performance

Item 25. Quality Assurance System

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The quality assurance system is functioning statewide to ensure that it is (1) operating in the jurisdictions where the services included in the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP) are provided, (2) has standards to evaluate the quality of services (including standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect their health and safety), (3) identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, (4) provides relevant reports, and (5) evaluates implemented program improvement measures.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 25 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected through stakeholder interviews indicated that the state has implemented a case review process to support qualitative information on strengths and needs of services in preparation for Round 3 of the CFSR but had not intended for that process to replace its former quality assurance system. That prior case review process is missing several elements of a quality assurance system. Delaware has not implemented established standards to evaluate the quality of service in the state, and the state does not produce relevant reports. Delaware is not operating a process to evaluate planned program improvement measures. Before Round 3 of the CFSR, the state had suspended the review of open treatment and permanency cases; only investigation cases were reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Staff and Provider Training

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 26, 27, and 28.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Staff and Provider Training. One of the items in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Staff and Provider Training Item Performance

Item 26. Initial Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that initial training is provided to all staff who deliver services pursuant to the CFSP that includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 26 based on information from the statewide assessment.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information showing that pre-service core training is offered on a monthly basis and is attended by new workers, supervisors, managers, and in-home service providers. New workers must complete initial training within 6 months. Supervisors track and verify attendance. In addition, new workers are consistently shadowed and mentored. Evaluations of pre-service core training show that participants indicate that the training provides them with the skills needed to do their jobs.

Item 27. Ongoing Staff Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that ongoing training is provided for staff[7] that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 27 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.

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[7] "Staff," for purposes of assessing this item, includes all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP. "Staff" also includes direct supervisors of all contracted and non-contracted staff who have case management responsibilities in the areas of child protection services, family preservation and support services, foster care services, adoption services, and independent living services pursuant to the state's CFSP.

- Information in the statewide assessment and collected through stakeholder interviews indicated that agency staff were required to obtain 18 hours of job-related training annually and that private agency staff were required to obtain 40 hours of job-related training annually. General supervisory training is available through a supervisory development certificate program. During interviews, stakeholders clarified that worker and staff training was tracked regularly, and training on the state's new safety practice model was provided monthly. However, key elements of this systemic factor are not routinely functioning. There are no ongoing training requirements or trainings designed specifically for child welfare supervisors and the skills needed to supervise in a child welfare setting.

Item 28. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The staff and provider training system is functioning statewide to ensure that training is occurring statewide for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of state licensed or approved facilities (that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E) that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 28 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information stating that resource parents approved by DSCYF must attend 30 hours of pre-service training. Pre-service training requirements for families licensed by private agencies are in flux because new regulations are being promulgated to align DSCYF requirements. During interviews, stakeholders reported that the state's licensing division monitors initial and ongoing training required for staff of residential facilities. Stakeholders said that there was variation in the availability of quality training for private agency foster and adoptive parents and noted that training on caring for children with behavioral challenges was needed.

Service Array and Resource Development

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 29 and 30.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array and Resource Development. None of the items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Service Array and Resource Development Item Performance

Item 29. Array of Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning to ensure that the following array of services is accessible in all political jurisdictions covered by the CFSP: (1) services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, (2) services that address the needs of families in addition to individual

children in order to create a safe home environment, (3) services that enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and (4) services that help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 29 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected through stakeholder interviews indicated that although a number of services are available in the state, these services are not sufficient to meet the needs of children and families. Notable gaps in services include functional family therapy, pre-school and after-school programs, transportation, quality mental health services for children, and affordable housing. Information collected indicated that gaps were more prevalent in the southern part of the state, noting that the waiting list for mental health services was 8 to 12 weeks.

Item 30. Individualizing Services

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The service array and resource development system is functioning statewide to ensure that the services in Item 29 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 30 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware described its ability to individualize services through DSCYF's flexible spending accounts. Delaware discussed its enhanced ability to understand families' service needs after the adoption of the Structured Decision Making (SDM) *Child and Family Strengths and Needs Assessment* and the use of a screening and consultation unit that provides recommendations for the development of children's case plans. Delaware was unable to demonstrate that these were functioning statewide. During interviews, stakeholders reported challenges in accessing flexible funding for in-home services cases, insufficient support for individualizing services, and challenges in servicing non-English-speaking families.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 31 and 32.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. One item in this systemic factor was rated as a Strength.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community Item Performance

Item 31. State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that, in implementing the provisions of the CFSP and developing related Annual Progress and Services Reports (APSRs), the state engages in ongoing consultation with Tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court,

and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals, objectives, and annual updates of the CFSP.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 31 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information describing its consulting with and engaging the Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services, the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services, the Family Court, the CIP, and community service agencies in the development of the CFSP. However, during interviews, stakeholders reported systemic challenges in engaging minorities, birth parents, foster parents, and internal staff.

Item 32. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The agency responsiveness to the community system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 32 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided information demonstrating that its services under the CFSP are functioning to support coordinated services and benefits with other federal or federally assisted programs serving the same populations. Delaware noted memoranda of agreement (MOA) with education, law enforcement, Division of Developmental Disabilities, substance abuse, mental health, the courts, child support enforcement, and others. During interviews, stakeholders shared that these efforts to coordinate services resulted in greater access to services for families.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The Children's Bureau assesses the state's performance on this systemic factor using the state's performance on Items 33, 34, 35, and 36.

State Systemic Factor Performance

Delaware is in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. Three of the four items in this systemic factor were rated as a Strength.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention Item Performance

Item 33. Standards Applied Equally

Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 33 based on information from the stakeholder interviews.
- During interviews, stakeholders provided information describing how this item is routinely functioning statewide to ensure that state standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-B or IV-E funds. The state has 12 licensing specialists who ensure consistency and compliance with the state's standards.

Item 34. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks
Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning statewide to ensure that the state complies with federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 34 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware provided data suggesting that fingerprint background checks were conducted for prospective resource families. During interviews, stakeholders confirmed that all resource families and facility staff routinely undergo criminal record checks. Information collected also revealed that subsequent arrest information is immediately provided to the agency, where it is reviewed and acted upon. The annual re-approval of foster homes also ensures that homes continue to meet safety requirements for ongoing planning purposes.

Item 35. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes
Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families who reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed is occurring statewide.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Strength for Item 35 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- Information in the statewide assessment and collected through stakeholder interviews indicated that the state routinely uses data to guide its recruitment efforts and has successfully recruited resource families to match the race and ethnicity of children in need of care. Delaware has institutionalized recruitment efforts by employing a full-time statewide recruiter in addition to local coordinators. The state continuously adjusts its recruitment plans using monthly reports of child demographics. The state has successfully used partnerships with faith-based organizations in diligent recruitment. The state is providing focused recruitment efforts for those families willing to provide care to the populations the state has determined to be most in need, specifically older youth, sibling groups, and children with special needs.

Item 36. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements
Description of Systemic Factor Item: The foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention system is functioning to ensure that the process for ensuring the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children is occurring statewide.

- Delaware received an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement for Item 36 based on information from the statewide assessment and stakeholder interviews.
- In the statewide assessment, Delaware reported that in a recent year there was a timely response to ICPC requests 89% of the time and that the state uses the ICPC to request placements for children in other states. Delaware also reported that it uses local and national adoption exchanges to recruit adoptive families. However, there was no additional information in the statewide assessment or obtained during stakeholder interviews that could demonstrate that the state was effective in using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely permanency for children statewide.

Appendix A

Summary of Delaware 2015 Child and Family Services Review Performance

I. Ratings for Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being Outcomes, Items, and Performance on Statewide Data Indicators

Outcome Achievement: Outcomes may be rated as in substantial conformity or not in substantial conformity. 95% of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the state to be in substantial conformity with the outcome. For Safety Outcome 1 and Permanency Outcome 1, the state's results must also meet or be considered no different than all of the associated national standards for the statewide data indicators.

Item Achievement: Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement. For an overall rating of Strength, 90% of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of Item 1 and Item 16) must be rated as a Strength. Because Item 1 is the only item for Safety Outcome 1 and Item 16 is the only item for Well-Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95% Strength rating applies.

Statewide Data Indicator Achievement: The state's performance is measured against the national standard for each statewide data indicator. State performance may meet the national standard, not meet the national standard, or be considered no different than the national standard. If a state did not provide the required data or did not meet the applicable item data quality limits, the Children's Bureau did not calculate the state's performance for the statewide data indicator.

SAFETY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN ARE, FIRST AND FOREMOST, PROTECTED FROM ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 1 Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	Not in Substantial Conformity	81% substantially achieved
Item 1 Timeliness of investigations	Area Needing Improvement	81% strength
Statewide Data Indicator Recurrence of Maltreatment	Met the national standard of 9.1%	Risk-Standardized Performance: 4.8%

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Statewide Data Indicator Maltreatment in Foster Care	Met (Is considered no different than the national standard of 8.50 victimizations*)	Risk-Standardized Performance: 10.41 victimizations*

* per 100,000 days in care

SAFETY OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE SAFELY MAINTAINED IN THEIR HOMES WHENEVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Safety Outcome 2 Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	Not in Substantial Conformity	91% substantially achieved
Item 2 Services to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	Strength	96% strength
Item 3 Risk and safety assessment and management	Strength	91% Strength

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE PERMANENCY AND STABILITY IN THEIR LIVING SITUATIONS.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 1 Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	Not in Substantial Conformity	56% Substantially Achieved
Item 4 Stability of foster care placement	Strength	90% Strength
Item 5 Permanency goal for child	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Item 6 Achieving reunification, guardianship, adoption, or other planned permanent living arrangement	Area Needing Improvement	83% Strength
Statewide Data Indicator Permanency in 12 months for children entering foster care	Met (Is considered no different than the national standard of 40.5%)	Risk-Standardized Performance: 41.6%
Statewide Data Indicator Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 12-23 months	Met (Is considered no different than the national standard of 43.6%)	Risk-Standardized Performance: 40.7%
Statewide Data Indicator Permanency in 12 months for children in foster care 24 months and longer	Met (Is considered no different than the national standard of 30.3%)	Risk-Standardized Performance: 31.1%
Statewide Data Indicator Re-entry into foster care in 12 months	Met the national standard of 8.3%	Risk-Standardized Performance: 4.6%
Statewide Data Indicator Placement stability	Met (Is considered no different than the national standard of 4.12 moves*)	Risk-Standardized Performance: 4.17 moves*

* per 1,000 days in care

PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: THE CONTINUITY OF FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS IS PRESERVED FOR CHILDREN.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Permanency Outcome 2 The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children	Not in Substantial Conformity	81% Substantially Achieved
Item 7 Placement with siblings	Area Needing Improvement	88% Strength
Item 8 Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	Area Needing Improvement	77% Strength
Item 9 Preserving connections	Strength	94% Strength

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Item 10 Relative placement	Area Needing Improvement	84% Strength
Item 11 Relationship of child in care with parents	Area Needing Improvement	78% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: FAMILIES HAVE ENHANCED CAPACITY TO PROVIDE FOR THEIR CHILDREN'S NEEDS.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 1 Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	70% Substantially Achieved
Item 12 Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	Area Needing Improvement	73% Strength
Sub-Item 12A Needs assessment and services to children	Strength	91% Strength
Sub-Item 12B Needs assessment and services to parents	Area Needing Improvement	71%% Strength
Sub-Item 12C Needs assessment and services to foster parents	Strength	98%% Strength
Item 13 Child and family involvement in case planning	Area Needing Improvement	75% Strength
Item 14 Caseworker visits with child	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength
Item 15 Caseworker visits with parents	Area Needing Improvement	68% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN RECEIVE APPROPRIATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR EDUCATIONAL NEEDS.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 2 Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs	In Substantial Conformity	98% Substantially Achieved
Item 16 Educational needs of the child	Strength	98% Strength

WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN RECEIVE ADEQUATE SERVICES TO MEET THEIR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS.

[This cell intentionally left blank]	Overall Determination	State Performance
Well-Being Outcome 3 Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs	Not in Substantial Conformity	83% Substantially Achieved
Item 17 Physical health of the child	Area Needing Improvement	86% Strength
Item 18 Mental/behavioral health of the child	Strength	91% Strength

II. Ratings for Systemic Factors

The Children's Bureau determines whether a state is in substantial conformity with federal requirements for the seven systemic factors based on the level of functioning of each systemic factor across the state. The Children's Bureau determines substantial conformity with the systemic factors based on ratings for the item or items within each factor. Performance on 5 of the 7 systemic factors is determined on the basis of ratings for multiple items or plan requirements. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with these systemic factors, the Children's Bureau must find that no more than one of the required items for that systemic factor fails to function as required. For a state to be found in substantial conformity with the 2 systemic factors that are determined based on the rating of a single item, the Children's Bureau must find that the item is functioning as required.

STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 19 Statewide Information System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Case Review System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not In Substantial Conformity
Item 20 Written Case Plan	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 21 Periodic Review	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 22 Permanency Hearing	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 23 Termination of Parental Rights	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 24 Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not In Substantial Conformity
Item 25 Quality Assurance System	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

STAFF AND PROVIDER TRAINING

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Staff and Provider Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not In Substantial Conformity
Item 26 Initial Staff Training	Statewide Assessment	Strength
Item 27 Ongoing Staff Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 28 Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

SERVICE ARRAY AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Service Array and Resource Development	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Not In Substantial Conformity
Item 29 Array of Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 30 Individualizing Services	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 31 State Engagement and Consultation With Stakeholders Pursuant to CFSP and APSR	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement
Item 32 Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength

FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Data Element	Source of Data and Information	State Performance
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	In Substantial Conformity
Item 33 Standards Applied Equally	Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 34 Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 35 Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Strength
Item 36 State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Statewide Assessment and Stakeholder Interviews	Area Needing Improvement

Appendix B

Summary of CFSR Round 2 DELAWARE 2007 Key Findings

The Children's Bureau conducted a CFSR in Delaware in 2007. Key findings from that review are presented below. Because the Children's Bureau made several changes to the CFSR process and items and indicators relevant for performance based on lessons learned during the second round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a state's performance in the third round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to its performance in the second round.

1. Identifying Information and Review Dates

General Information
Children's Bureau Region: 3
Date of Onsite Review: March 5–9, 2007
Period Under Review: October 1, 2005, through March 5, 2007
Date Final Report Issued: June 6, 2007
Date Program Improvement Plan Due: September 4, 2007
Date Program Improvement Plan Approved: October 1, 2008

2. Highlights of Findings

Performance Measurements
A. The state met the national standards for **five** of the **six** standards.
B. The state achieved substantial conformity for **none** of the **seven** outcomes.
C. The state achieved substantial conformity for **five** of the **seven** systemic factors.

3. State's Conformance With the National Standards

Data Indicator or Composite	**National Standard**	**State's Score**	**Meets or Does Not Meet Standard**
Absence of maltreatment recurrence (data indicator)	94.6 or higher	97.1	Meets Standard
Absence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care (data indicator)	99.68 or higher	99.88	Meets Standard
Timeliness and permanency of reunifications (Permanency Composite 1)	122.6 or higher	128.6	Meets Standard
Timeliness of adoptions (Permanency Composite 2)	106.4 or higher	100.5	Does Not Meet Standard
Permanency for children and youth in foster care for long periods of time (Permanency Composite 3)	121.7 or higher	137.1	Meets Standard
Placement stability (Permanency Composite 4)	101.5 or higher	121.4	Meets Standard

4. State's Conformance With the Outcomes

Outcome	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity

5. State's Conformance With the Systemic Factors

Systemic Factor	Achieved or Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Statewide Information System	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Case Review System	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Quality Assurance System	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Staff and Provider Training	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Service Array and Resource Development	Did Not Achieve Substantial Conformity
Agency Responsiveness to the Community	Achieved Substantial Conformity
Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention	Achieved Substantial Conformity

6. Key Findings by Item Outcomes

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
1. Timeliness of Initiating Investigations of Reports of Child Maltreatment	Area Needing Improvement
2. Repeat Maltreatment	Strength
3. Services to Family to Protect Child(ren) in the Home and Prevent Removal or Re-entry Into Foster Care	Strength

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
4. Risk Assessment and Safety Management	Area Needing Improvement
5. Foster Care Re-entries	Strength
6. Stability of Foster Care Placement	Area Needing Improvement
7. Permanency Goal for Child	Area Needing Improvement
8. Reunification, Guardianship, or Permanent Placement With Relatives	Area Needing Improvement
9. Adoption	Area Needing Improvement
10. Other Planned Permanent Living Arrangement	Area Needing Improvement
11. Proximity of Foster Care Placement	Strength
12. Placement With Siblings	Area Needing Improvement
13. Visiting With Parents and Siblings in Foster Care	Area Needing Improvement
14. Preserving Connections	Area Needing Improvement
15. Relative Placement	Area Needing Improvement

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
16. Relationship of Child in Care With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
17. Needs and Services of Child, Parents, and Foster Parents	Area Needing Improvement
18. Child and Family Involvement in Case Planning	Area Needing Improvement
19. Caseworker Visits With Child	Area Needing Improvement
20. Caseworker Visits With Parents	Area Needing Improvement
21. Educational Needs of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
22. Physical Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement
23. Mental/Behavioral Health of the Child	Area Needing Improvement

Systemic Factors

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
24. Statewide Information System	Strength
25. Written Case Plan	Area Needing Improvement
26. Periodic Reviews	Strength

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
27. Permanency Hearings	Area Needing Improvement
28. Termination of Parental Rights	Strength
29. Notice of Hearings and Reviews to Caregivers	Strength
30. Standards Ensuring Quality Services	Strength
31. Quality Assurance System	Strength
32. Initial Staff Training	Strength
33. Ongoing Staff Training	Strength
34. Foster and Adoptive Parent Training	Strength
35. Array of Services	Area Needing Improvement
36. Service Accessibility	Area Needing Improvement
37. Individualizing Services	Strength
38. Engagement in Consultation With Stakeholders	Strength
39. Agency Annual Reports Pursuant to CFSP	Strength

Item	Strength or Area Needing Improvement
40. Coordination of CFSP Services With Other Federal Programs	Strength
41. Standards for Foster Homes and Institutions	Strength
42. Standards Applied Equally	Strength
43. Requirements for Criminal Background Checks	Strength
44. Diligent Recruitment of Foster and Adoptive Homes	Area Needing Improvement
45. State Use of Cross-Jurisdictional Resources for Permanent Placements	Strength