



Board Agenda Item 7

DATE: June 2, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Nerland, County Administrative Officer
Rosemary Alanis, Chair, Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee

SUBJECT: Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee FY 2024- 2025 Annual Report

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Accept the Fresno County Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee Annual Report for activities from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025

The recommended action will present the Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee (FCSOC) Annual Report to your Board, in compliance with Management Directive 2700, section 2714.4. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There are no viable alternative actions

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended action.

DISCUSSION:

The Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee (FCSOC) was established by your Board in 2001. The Committee aims to strengthen the Child Welfare System (CWS) by ensuring adequate resources, improving communication with agency partners, and advancing recommendations that promote continuous, lasting system improvements for the well-being of the foster children and youth served in Fresno County.

The Committee's responsibilities include participation in lawfully constituted multidisciplinary reviews when system-wide issues or opportunities for improvement are identified. Through this process, the Committee evaluates the structures and functions of CWS and represents the public interest in the delivery of services.

Since its establishment in 2001, the FCSOC has expanded its role beyond its original purpose by facilitating enhanced interagency communication through regular subcommittee meetings. In the fall of 2021, the Committee convened a community forum with elected officials, community organizations and members of the public to address heightened public concern regarding "hard-to-place" children and youth within the child welfare system.

The Committee followed this effort with strategic planning sessions in 2022 and 2023, which allowed the Committee to reassess priorities and strengthen collaboration with the Department of Social Services (DSS). These efforts focused on supporting and monitoring systemic improvements, including those identified in the 2022 *Critical Needs* assessment and, a 2023 employee survey administered by two FCSOC ad hoc committees. The survey results have since undergone review to inform ongoing and future system enhancements.

As set forth in 2002, the Committee will continue efforts to advise and propose recommendations for lasting system improvement and provide a platform for community input. Continued improvement in communication through outreach efforts and coordination with other community groups serve as a key responsibility of the Committee.

Through the annual report, the FCSOC identifies issues and processes that warrant further review and analysis, with the goal of presenting your Board with recommendations to strengthen and improve the foster care system

FCSOC recommends that your Board:

The FCSOC respectfully submits the following recommendations to support the safety, stability, permanency, and well-being of children and youth involved in the Fresno County Child Welfare System. These recommendations are informed by the Committee's oversight responsibilities, review of Child Welfare practices and trends, and ongoing collaboration with the Department of Social Services and community partners. They focus on supporting system readiness and continuity of care during the statewide implementation of CWS-CARES, strengthening a Kin-First, family-centered approach, and advancing trauma-informed care through the Child Well-Being Continuum and the Neuro-sequential Model of Therapeutics.

1. *CARES Implementation*

The FCSOC recommends continued Board support for Fresno County's participation in the statewide transition to the CWS-CARES system. This recommendation emphasizes clear communication, state readiness, and continuity of care to ensure that services to children and families remain stable and uninterrupted during system readiness activities and statewide implementation.

2. *Kin-First, Family-Centered Care*

The FCSOC recommends continued Board commitment to a Kin-First, family-centered approach that prioritizes placement with relatives and trusted adults whenever safe and appropriate. Strengthening kinship care supports placement stability, preserves family connections, and promotes better outcomes for children while reducing reliance on congregate care.

3. *Trauma-Informed Care through NMT and the Child Well-Being Continuum*

The FCSOC recommends continued Board support for trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate care through the Neuro-sequential Model of Therapeutics (NMT). This approach helps to align services to children's developmental needs, strengthens caregiver support, and promotes stability, healing, and long-term well-being.

Together, these recommendations reflect the FCSOC's commitment to supporting a child-centered, family-focused, and trauma-informed Child Welfare system in Fresno County. By promoting a Kin-First culture, supporting trauma-responsive practices through the Child Well-Being Continuum, and ensuring clear oversight and continuity of care during the transition to CWS-CARES, the Committee affirms its role in advancing stability, safety, and positive outcomes for children and families. These priorities align local practice with statewide direction while reinforcing the shared responsibility of the County, community partners, and the Board of Supervisors to support children in foster care.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #10, March 25, 2025

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Foster Care Standards and Oversight Committee 2024-2025 Annual Report

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander