



STATE OF LOUISIANA

# Open Line with Secretary Nichols



**Kristy Nichols**

**DSS Secretary**

**Thursday, March 25,  
2010**



# Open Line with Secretary Nichols

## Agenda

**I. One DSS Reorganization**

**II. 2010 Legislative Session**

**III. DSS Budget**









**One Agency**  
**One Vision**  
**One DSS**

Working to keep children safe,  
helping individuals and families become  
self-sufficient, and providing safe refuge  
during disasters.



## The “One DSS” Model

- Realign the department into one agency that leverages all sources of funding and is organized in a way that is centered on the customer needs
- Redesign the work flow and processes of the department to create greater collaboration
- Identify methods and opportunities to reduce the workload and associated costs throughout the agency
- Expedite the service delivery and create greater efficiencies while simultaneously enhancing contact points with the customers/clients which would produce greater utilization of the services
- Utilize technology to improve business processes and service delivery
- Reduce the DSS footprint



## Consideration in designing “One DSS”

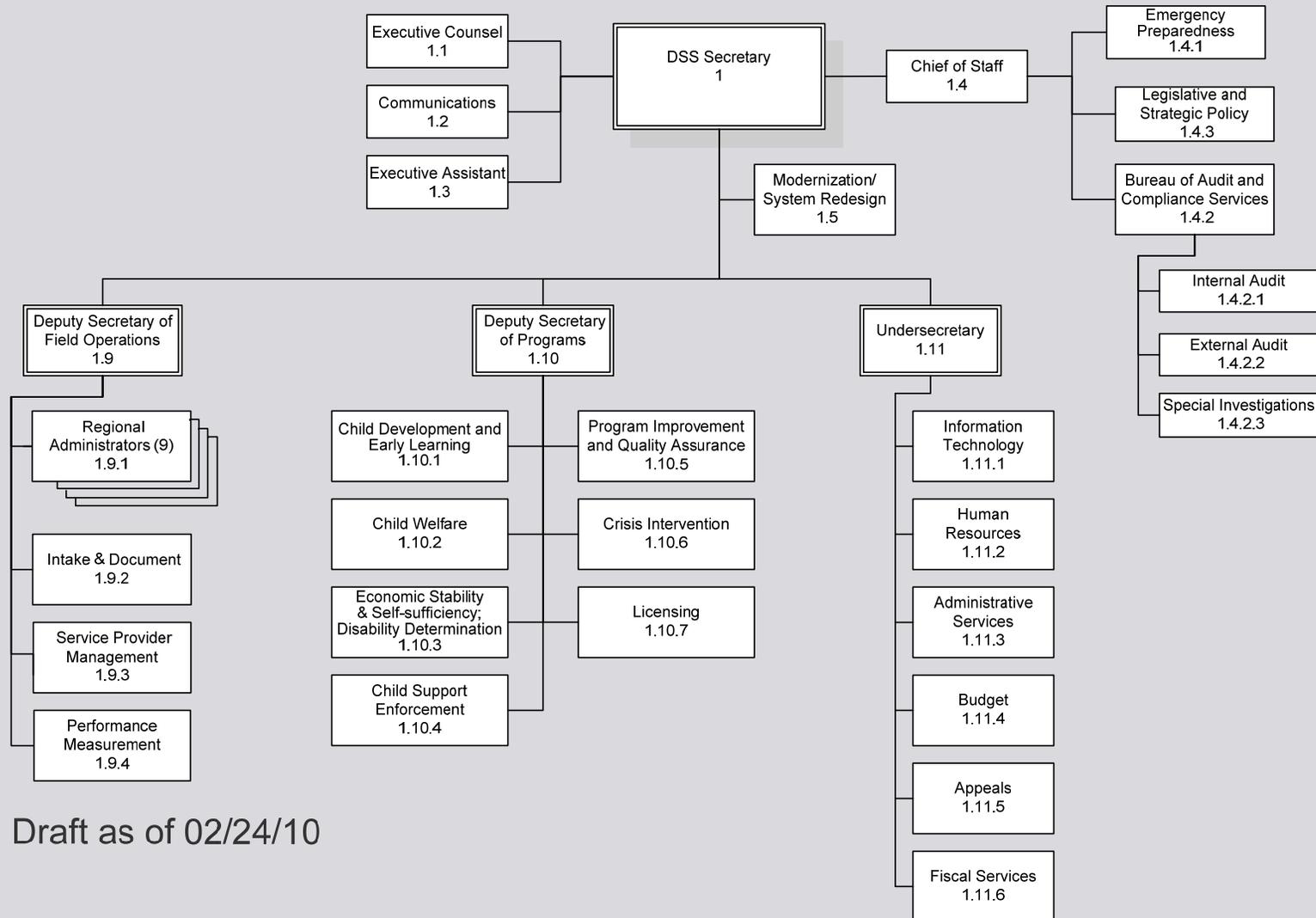
- The customer is the center of focus at all times: productivity does not just mean counting costs or resources
- There are common service points in the business processes in all of the agencies within the department
- The “ONE DSS” Model will utilize the business processes as its focal point and technology as the tool(s)

***One Agency, One Vision, One DSS***

*Unified as one agency working to keep children safe, help individuals and families become self-sufficient and provide safe refuge during disasters*



Department of Social Services



Draft as of 02/24/10



## Value of 4 agencies to 1

Collapse the existing agencies into a single entity & transfer LRS functions

Reorganization to Eliminate Silos/Maximize Resources

- Regional Consolidation of Service Delivery
- Unified Service Delivery
- Improved Customer Service

Strategic Alignment of Staffing

Streamlining DSS

- Re-engineering and streamlining business processes to eliminate duplicated effort
- Reduce mid-level management and support positions (1:8 ratio)
- More mobile workforce

Reduce DSS foot print

- Regional back-end processing
- Consolidation of offices/creation of regional service centers
- Use of community partners to increase access



## One DSS: Implementation

- ***Reduce the need for clients to have to physically be served in an office***
  - *Phone interviews for public assistance enrollment*
  - *Electronic applications*
  - *Single call center*
  - *Electronic case records*
- ***Create multiple entryways to DSS within communities***
  - Statewide network of community partners and other state agencies
  - Utilize DSS District Service Centers and roving workers.
- ***Consolidate offices into integrated service centers***
  - Improve customer service
  - Produce cost-savings
  - 18 local and regional offices by July 1, 2010
  - Will vary in districts based on available office space, proximity to other DSS and state agency offices and participation of community partners.
- ***Explore other options***
  - Telecommuting for staff in field to reduce time spent in office.

A similar model was successful in Florida. They saw an expansion of service points across the state through community partners as they moved to consolidate offices. The end result for Florida was greater access and improved customer service.



## Community Partnerships

- Serve as a location site for clients to apply for DSS services in the communities where they live.
- DSS will work in partnership with community organizations such as:
  - Local Councils on Aging,
  - Family Resource Centers
  - Workforce Commission offices,
  - faith-based organizations,
  - non-profit organizations

### Community Partners will:

- Give clients the opportunity to apply for services at one location, instead of through DSS' current outdated process.
- No longer will clients have to travel to multiple offices in a parish to wait in line to apply for different services.
- DSS will co-locate staff at partner sites on a scheduled basis to accept applications and assist clients.
- DSS will provide partners on-going training about DSS programs



## One DSS: National 1:8 Supervisor-Employee Ratio

- Reorganize the entire department
- 1:8 ratio across the board, with exception of specialized positions and child welfare case management
- Partner with community-based organizations to maintain or increase current client access
- Already reorganized the Office of Management and Finance, eliminating twenty-six positions
- Most downsizing expected to come from natural attrition, separations and eliminating vacant positions

***Projected Savings –\$1.91 million and 30 positions in FY10.  
In FY11, overall savings of \$10.86 million and 142 positions will be realized.***



## One DSS: Improving Customer Service

### Planned Improvements:

- Call Center with a single toll-free phone number serving all clients and providers
- Web-based Enrollment to provide single point of access through the Internet for clients to apply, maintain and inquire about available services and active cases.
- Electronic Case Records
- Provider Payment Management Systems
- Agency-wide document imaging system
  - Digital copies of all key documents
  - Can be reviewed from anywhere in the state





## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

### HB1198 – LRS Transition

- Transfer components of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to LWC
  - Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living, Randolph Sheppard, Blind Services
- Transfer components of Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to DHH
  - Personal Care Assistant Services, Independent Living and Community and Family Support Programs, Commission for the Deaf, Traumatic Head and Spinal Cord Injury Trust Fund



## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

### HB615 – DSS Sunset

### SB257 – One DSS Reorganization and Redesign

- Properly restructure the DSS' organizational operations
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Modify positions and responsibilities of Assistant Secretaries, eliminating one appointed position



## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

### **SB634 – Licensing Fines**

- Gives DSS non-compliance sanction authority for licensing
- Further enhances DSS capacity to protect health, welfare and rights of children in out-of-home care, receiving services from Child Care and Child Placing Agencies
- Civil money fines for repeated or severe non-compliance
- Current authority limited to application denial, non-renewal or revocation or license or continued citing of non-compliance



## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

### **SB644 – Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children**

- Authorize and provide structure and governance regarding the placement of children in state custody across state lines
- Ensure timely and appropriate placement of children
- 35 states need to enact new ICPC
- Currently, ten including Alaska, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Maine, Florida, Delaware have enacted the compact
- Introduced in Arizona, Passed the Kentucky chamber



## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

**DSS is working with the Department of Education on a resolution regarding child readiness standards that ensure all children are ready to enter Kindergarten**

The resolution will:

- Provide a comprehensive definition of school readiness
- Assess current activities, resources and funding across state agencies promoting school readiness,
- Promote diverse delivery and
- Hold state agencies accountable

Potential Stakeholders

- Early Childhood Advisory Council (BrightStart)
- Children's Cabinet Advisory Council
- Education's Next Horizon
- Local school systems
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- DoE, DSS, DHH



## 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

### **SB647 – Child Welfare Training Continuum: New Child Welfare Workers**

- Louisiana Child Welfare University Alliance
- Allows newly hired child welfare workers who have successfully completed course in core competencies of effective child welfare practice begin exercising responsibility for cases under appropriate supervision
- 32 hours of specific training
- Recognizes foundation of child welfare education/training of graduates of participating Schools/Department of Social Work and enhance their value as prospective employees of DSS



# 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

## Support Enforcement Services

- **SB130 – Private Collections Agencies**
  - Prohibits wage garnishment through employers unless ordered by court
  - Prohibits collecting fees from collects by state agency and from current support
  - Fees could only be collected from past-due support
- **HB964 – Medical Support-Definition**
  - Defines “cash medical support” and “health insurance” and “reasonable” cost for medical insurance (5% of gross income)
  - Defines “accessible” insurance (no more than 50 miles from domicile of child)



# 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

## Support Enforcement Services

- **HB741 – Direct Levy**
  - Allows other states to place liens against property located in Louisiana without assistance of SES
- **SB322 – Paternity Acknowledgement**
  - Requires both parents and two witnesses before a notary public
  - Current law requires fathers signature only
  - Change puts DSS in compliance with federal mandate



# 2010 Legislative Agenda Highlights

## Support Enforcement Services

- **SB53 – Casino/Gaming**
  - Allows casinos to withhold winnings of more than \$1200
  - Provides another enforcement/collection tool to reduce more than \$1 billion owed in past due child support
- **SB323 – Standing Visitation**
  - Amends existing law, DSS can seek to establish visitation/parenting plan in court through Federal Access and Visitation Grant
  - Brings families together emotionally and financially by producing more consistent support for families



## DSS Budget FY 2011

- Budget developed in response to current and future budget pressures
- Need to do business better and more efficiently for clients and taxpayers
- Aggressive plan to preserve core services according to priorities



## DSS Budget Changes

- Transfer functions of LRS to the Louisiana Workforce Commission and DHH:
  - Movement of 333 positions, \$69.7 million
- 197 positions lost due to mid-year cuts, freeze & reorganization
- 3 Adult Residential Licensing positions move to DHH

## DSS Operating Budget Shortfall

- Loss of approx. \$205 million federal funds for LRS transfer, stimulus/recovery funds, excess federal authority
  - \$33 million recurring expenditures
- \$13.2 million in annualized mid-year cuts
- \$9.5 million SGF reduction in FY 2011 continuation budget



## DSS Critical Budget Priorities

- Meeting the growing demand for public assistance
  - Modernization
  - Reorganization
  - Prioritized front line staff
  - Identification of efficiencies
- Poverty reduction interventions
  - Early childhood development & interventions
  - Improving high school graduation rates
  - Workforce development
  - Asset development for low income families



## DSS Critical Budget Priorities

- Child Welfare Services
  - Workforce development and training for front line child welfare workers and supervisors
  - Foster care services
    - Residential and therapeutic foster care, building a system of care
  - Adoption services
  - Child protection investigations
    - Effective risk assessment
    - Centralized intake



## Shortfall Mitigation

- \$40 million federal TANF emergency fund will mitigate budget shortfalls
  - \$32.5 million in LA4, used as means of finance swap for SGF
  - \$2 million for Office of Community Services
  - \$5.5 million in TANF

## DSS Savings

- Thorough internal review identified efficiencies, cost savings:
  - \$11 million savings from 197 positions and reduced leases
  - \$10 million savings from Child Care Development Fund automation, fraud reduction
  - \$1.1 million Medicaid funds for child behavioral health services



## TANF Initiatives

- TANF shortfall in addition to core operating budget shortfall
- TANF Initiatives
  - Focus poverty reduction best practices: early childhood interventions, high school graduation & diploma, workforce, asset development to provide economic, education, family supports
  - TANF expenditures & program evaluated based on outcomes, poverty reduction, budget needs for core services
  - 24 initiatives reduced to 13



## Cost Savings for Future Shortfalls

- With federal funds shrinking & demand increasing, DSS must work to:
  - Continue cost savings through reorganization & modernization
  - Maximize efficiency in service delivery
  - Integrate with other state agencies to maximize resources
    - Coordinated System of Care – DSS, OJJ, DHH, DOE
      - Pool collective resources/leverage financing
      - Address comprehensive needs of children with severe behavioral, emotional health needs
      - Children with highest level need receive services in less-restrictive community-based settings proven to improve outcomes
    - Louisiana Workforce Commission
      - Coordinated and targeted workforce development for our clients
    - Department of Revenue
      - Arrears
      - Tax assistance



## Existing Operating Budget VS Recommended

MEANS OF FINANCING	EXISTING OPERATING BUDGET	RECOMMENDED	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
STATE GENERAL FUND	186,879,223	187,674,987	795,764	0.43%
INTERAGENCY TRANSFER	115,526,937	54,151,436	(61,375,501)	-53.13%
FEES AND SELF GENERATED	16,940,123	17,464,798	524,675	3.10%
STATUTORY DEDICATIONS	9,355,394	2,123,398	(7,231,996)	-77.30%
FEDERAL FUNDS	933,407,096	727,866,181	(205,540,915)	-22.02%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,262,108,773</b>	<b>989,280,800</b>	<b>(272,827,973)</b>	<b>(1)</b>
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS	4,928	4,395	(533)	-10.82%

**Note: LRS transferred to DHH and LWC. LRS accounts for 6% of the Existing Operating Budget and 7% of the decrease in FY11 Recommended funding.**

LOUISIANA REHABILITATION SERVICES				
MEANS OF FINANCING	EXISTING OPERATING BUDGET	RECOMMENDED	DIFFERENCE	% CHANGE
STATE GENERAL FUND	9,400,214	9,262,066	(138,148)	-1.47%
INTERAGENCY TRANSFER	10,000	10,000	-	0.00%
FEES AND SELF GENERATED	7,231,996	7,272,002	40,006	0.55%
STATUTORY DEDICATIONS	-	-	-	-
FEDERAL FUNDS	53,280,197	53,186,841	(93,356)	-0.18%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>69,922,407</b>	<b>69,730,909</b>	<b>(191,498)</b>	<b>(0)</b>
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS	363	333	(30)	-8.26%



# Thank you for attending today's Open Line with the Secretary!



We now will field any additional questions from participants using the Webex Question and Answer feature.



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