Children and Youth Cabinet Information Sharing System Workgroup
Draft Notes

Meeting Date and Time: January 19th, 2012, 1:30p.m. to 4:00p.m.

Address: Agency for Persons with Disabilities, 4030 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee, FL 32311

Participants:
Director Mike Hansen, Chair
Meagan Dougherty, AHCA
Joe Vastola, DCF
Michele Watson, FOEL
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After reviewing the background information and a demonstration of the system by Northwest Regional Data Center (NWRDC) staff, the workgroup discussed the following:

I.   Fiscal Impact:

The team discussed financial issues associated with upcoming rules and due to the age of the software:

- Application will have to be written with advanced authentication
- Each Agency will have staff that will need to be trained once the system is updated, which will require resources for such training
- New rules that will be going into effect soon will require, background checks by FDLE for all users and only people who receive a very high clearance will be able to access the data – this restriction limits the practicality of the tool

II.   Financial Status of the Contract with Metatomix:

The total costs of the system to date are $1,100,000 for licensing and professional services.

The total recurring costs are $400,000 which is split among eight agencies. The maintenance fee for fiscal year 2011/2012 has not yet been paid to the vendor; however, the money has been collected by NWRDC.

If the state cancels the contract, $100,000 will roll back to the agencies for unspent maintenance fees. Approximately $150,000 will roll back to the agencies for NWRDC support and services. We will be saving money for the state, and since there were not any federal dollars involved, we will not lose federal money.

III.   Contract Terms:

The current contract covers yearly maintenance for the data sharing solution and includes software upgrades provide by the vendor. The contract is currently in force with the fiscal year maintenance fees pending payment. The state owns a license for the current version of the product which would allow the current data sharing environment to remain operational; however, if the contract is cancelled, no additional software maintenance or updates will be received. If the state decides to suspend payment until a decision is made, the fiscal year maintenance payment will be due.

IV.   Issues:

- The initiative showed that technology is not the barrier; the question is: what do our agencies want to integrate operationally?
- No cross-agency Master Data Agreement which results in significant duplication of effort as agencies revisit the legal and operational requirements at the onset of the development of every data sharing agreement.
- Agencies have reflected two perspectives for usage of a data sharing solution and architecture in support of either "Business Operational" or "Service Provision" based functions. The current approach has not been developed to a point where either perspective is effectively supported.
- It is premature to make a decision on the current system until we have more consensuses on what data we want, whether it is available, and how it can be used.
- What may have appeared as unwillingness to share information is now understood to be an inability to share data between agencies due to legal barriers or technological realities.
- The access is limited to bits of information in the system and it cannot be used as official data. This limits its value tremendously.
- While the technology has the ability to connect agency systems and link data across systems, other data sharing challenges and barriers limit the potential benefit of a solution.
- There is nothing to "connect the dots" with regard to the data source, its validity, and more specifically, its value for an intended purpose.

V.   Findings:

- The work that has already been done has been truly valuable. The representatives who met to develop Phase I worked hard to get the system up and running and we should not ignore the hard work that they put into this effort.
- There have been a number of elements that were not realized in the beginning:
  - There are local and federal restrictions on data that may not be able to be overcome.   For example, educational records are confidential under federal law and current data is housed at the local district level, not at the state level.
  - Participating agencies may have outdated internal systems that are not capable of connecting with other agencies' systems. Each agency establishes, modifies, and updates their own systems, and often must interface with many other systems outside the circle of the participating agencies.
- This system is not designed to help agency staff to manage day to day operations.

- Agency staff approved for usage are not actively utilizing the system

VI.   Recommendations:

- That Children and Youth Cabinet recognize the team that implemented and supported the data sharing initiative as a success given the results achieved to date that show the technical ability to identify, link, and share data across disparate systems.
- Consider creation of General Agency Data Sharing Agreements so that agencies staff can focus on the data element requirements when creating data sharing agreements.
- Request validation of the actual amount of available funds for Fiscal Year 2011/12 and close –out the data sharing project.
- Continue to explore the potential value of a data system by taking the following steps:

  - Decide if the system is for Business Operations or Administrative
  - Research systems that will work
  - Understand what data each agency has
  - Understand what data can be shared and what cannot
  - Understand what data each agency needs

- If available, repurpose funds on initiatives that advance the definition of Cabinet data sharing goals, scope, and requirements.
- Recover the funds available this year and repurpose them. The committee can best use the time to determine the path forward using data either agency to agency or across agencies. And, give this workgroup another opportunity to prepare alternative recommendations. If we can get to the core of the issue, it will be a huge win.
- Consider assigning the Children and Youth Cabinet (CYC) Technology Subcommittee the task to prepare alternative recommendations for data sharing goal, scope, and requirements.

Notes were edited by Joe Vastola, DCF and Carolyn Horwich, DOE