

# **DFPS CPS Operational Review**

## **Phase 1: Recommendations**

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### A Culture of Change with a Clear Vision of Success

Texas' Child Protective Services (CPS) within the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is awash in change. The numerous initiatives driven by shifting laws, policies, technologies and best practice models leave the agency at a constant crossroads to achieve its mission – promoting the safety, well-being and permanence of children across the state. Couple this with a tremendous rate of employee turnover, and the only constant is change.

The missing key ingredient in CPS' change culture is a unifying vision that clearly defines success and demonstrates how to get there. Instead of the shifting sands of a new mandate to implement, the organization needs a bottom up approach where everyone is focused on easily understood key goals and supported by a state leadership committed to supporting these efforts with a big-picture policy direction.

CPS needs to move away from an ad hoc approach to meeting ever-changing goals to a sure focus on meeting a vision of success and giving staff tools to get there. The findings from The Stephen Group's (TSG) operational review make clear the direction where the CPS vision should aim:

- Maximizing the time spent between field staff and children and families;
- Creating an environment where staff want to come and grow their skills;
- Building a culture of excellence that is focused on quality;
- Empowering staff with the responsibility, tools and accountability for success;
- Ensuring that CPS communicates clearly about keeping children safe, and
- Showing maximum dignity and respect to families involved in the system by delivering timely and high-quality results.

This means focusing on moving towards excellence for an agency whose mission is critical to lives of Texas' children. It also means stripping away the layers of policies that have taken CPS' focus in different directions.

CPS is filled with talented people who are utterly committed to the children and families of the state. It's time to let them do their jobs with the tools and empowerment they need. While our

investigation found numerous areas for improvement, we came away with the overwhelming sense of optimism that the potential in the organization is outstanding when all of CPS' energies are focused in the same direction for a clear goal. While the challenges will be great, real change in CPS – change for the better that everyone understands and supports – is within reach. The goal of the recommendations in this report is to set the clear direction and remove obstacles to getting there. These will make CPS a model organization and will accomplish this goal quickly.

## **Recommendations Derive from a Comprehensive Review of CPS**

The recommendations are the byproduct of TSG's findings associated with a thorough, comprehensive operational assessment of CPS. That companion volume demonstrates the significant need for change and outlines numerous findings from across the state, based upon several hundred meetings with staff and stakeholders, looking at every aspect of the agency. To fully understand the necessity and nature of these recommendations, it is critically important to absorb the findings of that review.

Without the advantage of that evaluation, the deep background of the reasons that require these changes is challenging. We recommend using the Recommendations and Implementation Planning document for reference, and that readers also refer to the Assessment Report of the operational review.

## **Make sure that CPS Staff's Time is Spent with Children and Families Enhancing Safety, Well-being and Permanency**

Among the most critical of the TSG's findings in our operational review was only 26% of CPS field staff's time is actually spent with children and families<sup>1</sup>. That means that nearly three quarters of time frontline workers are on the clock is spent away from individuals they are charged to protect and help. Our top recommendation is to take steps to significantly improve that figure.

Some of the time away is unavoidable. There is no way to work around the realities of travel and court time. However, the loss of time to data entry, document recovery, staffings and other administrative tasks not only means that families are poorly served, but also undermines morale,

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<sup>1</sup> The 26% finding came from TSG's survey data of over 3000 employees and was validated during interviews and focus groups. See TSG Assessment/Findings Report (April 2014).. TSG did not conduct a time study

which results in higher turnover. The less time staff is spending working with the individuals involved with a case, the less connected they feel not only to those people, but toward the mission that brought them to CPS in the first place.

Throughout our review, we saw how much field staff wanted to be more engaged with their cases. They feel that face-to-face time with these children and families is a critical component to improving quality outcomes. We believe that the figure should rise to over 30% within the next six months and close to 40% as the final outcome, with a goal of reaching it in one year.

To get there, we make the following recommendations:

- **Implement Structured Decision Making and put a 24-hour safety assessment in place** – This will shorten the seven-day safety assessment to expedite intervention, if necessary, and provide an actuarially sound assessment to improve decision-making through a structured process designed to put the right tool in the hands of the caseworkers. (See recommendation 3, 7)
- **Develop a case guide (checklist) for each case to ensure that time spent with children and families is used wisely** – While the facts will change for every case, caseworkers should build a plan for each case that supports their decision-making and ensures that they gather the critical information to make an assessment. A case guide is a road map that directs the collection of the right data. (See recommendation 47)
- **Develop metrics and a management process to measure how much time each caseworker is actually spending with children and families** – The agency has a number of tools to measure the time that field staff spends working directly with the subjects of cases. These need to be used to create metrics to assess the performance of workers and to create a strong incentive for direct care time. (See recommendation 50)
- **Streamline and reduce duplication of work** – Documentation requirements and work requirements often create redundant layers of work. Creating a workflow that eliminates this will free up more time for field staff to spend with children and families. (See recommendations 47-67 and 107-109)
- **Improve functionality of child welfare data warehouse and interface (IMPACT) to reduce delays and to align with caseworker needs** – Every minute that a field staffer needs to get a paper document scanned, re-enter data into the same system, or sort through countless data screens is time not spent with children and families. Aligning these resources would make workers more productive and improve outcomes. (See recommendations 75-76, 78)

- **Integrate CPS systems with other State systems to reduce time to find children and adults** – Field workers spend an inordinate amount of time attempting to locate families because of poor ability to identify their home or school. However, there are frequently other state databases that have collected recent data. Integrating them will allow for caseworkers to use their time more efficiently. (See recommendation 70, 77)
- **Enhance process to support mobility to reduce office and administrative time** – While CPS has spent considerable resources building out mobile devices for the staff, the policy and process still creates delays, such as the printing of a form back at the office to be picked up and then returned to the home for signature. Making the technology and the process work together better will mean that caseworkers spend more time with families and less time on administrative tasks. (See recommendation 79)

### Reduce Staff Turnover by Making CPS a Place People Want to Stay and Grow

A well-known concern across CPS that was reinforced by TSG's operational review was the issue of turnover. Annual turnover rates in some regions exceeded 40% for direct care staff, putting enormous pressure on staff, supervisors and groups that work with CPS to keep children safe.

The benefits of lowering turnover are enormous. Having more experienced staff improves quality, leads to closing investigations and cases faster, and saves money as veteran field workers can cover more cases, thus requiring a smaller workforce. Moreover, reducing turnover removes stress from the organization, which makes individuals more likely to stay – the virtuous circle in full effect.

Ultimately, direct care workers need to identify CPS as a place to stay and grow if they are going to remain employed with the agency. They need to know that they will get the training, support and opportunity to advance their careers to make CPS (or the Department if DFPS) a place to plant roots.

At the same time, DFPS should do a better job identifying prospective candidates who are committed to the mission of delivering safety, well-being and permanency to children. These new recruits must be given a realistic vision of what the job entails and the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits from working for CPS.

One area that we regularly observed during our ride-alongs is the issue of worker safety and the appropriate concern that caseworkers have being in contact with families at times when adult or

children may be in crisis or in emotionally charged situations. DFPS leadership has gone to great lengths to ensure the safety of its workers and remains committed to protecting its staff, but additional training and resources may be required to make workers feel safe. Beyond the current training in dealing with these situations, DFPS should consider additional safety equipment, training for personal protections, continuing to maximize opportunities to work with law enforcement, and most importantly, providing appropriate support for workers who have been involved in such incidents. Knowing that these resources are there will help make staff feel that CPS is fully dedicated to their employees and will build loyalty.

Currently, CPS has seen over one-third of its frontline staff turning over each year. Commissioner Specia has set a targeted goal of 23% annual turnover, and we concur with that goal. However, as turnover is often a lagging indicator, that goal will likely take more than a year to achieve.

To meet these aggressive goals for reducing turnover, we recommend:

- **Ease new workers onto the job with strong mentoring** – New workers are frequently overwhelmed with the responsibilities they absorb, and experienced workers are not given a break from their workload to help new staff get up to speed. Creating a mentoring environment in which more experienced staff are given time to coach younger workers will help these newer staff get acclimated and make them more comfortable, reducing the number of employees who quit within the first 12 months. (See recommendation 10)
- **Make turnover levels a responsibility of the regional director** – The regional director sets the tone for the regional workplace and must take personal responsibility for creating a supportive environment where people want to stay and grow. If they are accountable for turnover, they will have a vested interest in making sure younger staff are comfortable and feel supported. (See recommendation 13)
- **Hire to a staffing model** – Building a clear staffing model that informs future CPS needs will enable DFPS to better identify the number of workers who need to be recruited. This will allow better planning at the state and regional level to anticipate agency needs. (See recommendation 16)
- **Make realistic job previews** – Child protective work is not for everyone. It is much better if an individual self-selects out of employment with CPS than goes through training, starts work and then leaves a hole to fill. Online videos, marketing materials

and personal accounts should make clear exactly what one might expect as a CPS employee. (See recommendations 19-20)

- **Improve profiling of potential applicants** – Through outreach and marketing, CPS needs to identify the right type of applicants before the vacancy becomes open. This involves working with colleges and universities to find the right type of candidates and cultivating a strong relationship. (See recommendations 25-26)
- **Enhance on the job training capabilities** – New workers should start their careers by joining experienced workers on cases, even while they are going through the training process. Child protection workers can only learn so much in a classroom and need to couple that with real-world experience. (See recommendations 33)

### Focus on the Big Picture Goals and Take a “Time Out” from Tasks that are Non-Critical

Both the Sunset Advisory Commission and TSG found that CPS staff spends an inordinate amount of time working to implement initiatives, policies and studies that are not critical to its mission. This is time that many workers could otherwise spend providing services to children and families.

TSG’s review found many tasks that were duplicative, unrelated to care or unlikely to yield a significant benefit relative to the work involved. These should all be paused immediately and the resources involved should be reallocated to delivering or supporting direct care operations. Moreover, there are some proposals that would provide some benefit, but are simply a lower priority than other more pressing matters, and these too should receive a “time out” until greater concerns are met.

In all, we recommend suspending over a dozen of these initiatives. The energies that can be transferred from these programs will offer a major benefit to transforming CPS.

- **Immediately implement Sunset Advisory Committee recommendations to stop non-essential tasks** – Working with staff, TSG identified a number of non-critical projects and initiatives that drain staff resources and keep staff from the goal of spending time with children and families. CPS should immediately stop work on these efforts to redeploy these assets back to serving the public. (See recommendation 1)

## Realign Resources across CPS to Meet Critical Goals

In TSG's review of CPS capabilities, our analysis reveals that the program has sufficient resources, but needs to reallocate these much more efficiently to deliver the type of organizational change to improve areas that are critical to the mission. There should be a reorganization of staff responsibilities to remove obstacles, which must also be coupled with above-mentioned reduction in turnover to boost productivity. The goal must be consistent with a focused approach of reclaiming the fundamental mission of CPS.

At the same time, to make sure that resources are balanced effectively, regional leadership needs the flexibility to shift staff to meet local demands. At that level, even an illness running through an office can bog down staff, and regional directors do not have the authority to move people to ensure the work is done effectively. The power cannot come only from state office or higher; it needs to be put in the hands of the managers on the ground.

Hand-in-hand with the ability to realign resources, CPS needs to carefully re-examine its policies to ensure that it is producing the most value and is in sync with the goals of increasing staff time with children and families, accelerating the time for decisions on cases, empowering workers, and delivering a culture of quality. Where these policies are out of alignment, the policy must change to harmonize with the big-picture objectives – everyone needs to be pulling in the same direction toward a common goal.

Similarly, CPS should work with the Legislature to identify areas where family law is creating barriers to critical objectives and work to streamline state law to ensure that children are safe while giving the agency the flexibility to meet its mission. Legislators and staff we spoke to made clear that their interest is the safety, well-being and permanency of children, not an effort to micromanage the agency through the huge array of existing laws, and they would welcome a chance to simplify the Family Code to get back to the basics of meeting CPS' fundamental purpose.

To accomplish this task, we recommend:

- **Manage investigators to accelerate case closure time once a thorough investigation is complete** – Currently, the agency measures how many investigations are completed within 60 days, but this provides little incentive to close cases as soon as all the relevant facts are collected, leaving the family in limbo. CPS should shift its resources to closing

cases quickly, and make its metric for performance the average time for case closure. (See recommendation 51)

- **Shift Conservatorship (CVS) resources to accelerate the time to permanency for children** – The focus of CVS staff should be getting children in conservatorship to permanency quickly. Accordingly, the metrics and resources should be shifted to align with a goal of measuring the days to permanency and shortening that time frame. (See recommendation 52)
- **Encourage and incentivize workers to work as a team and to cover each other's workload when they can do so more efficiently** – Staff should be encouraged to shift their time to cover others' cases if they, for example, have a case in a similar area that is far from the regional office. When they act in a team manner to assist other staff, they should be recognized, not risk being penalized in their performance reviews. (See recommendation 53)
- **Expand management tools in IMPACT and Mobility to find bottlenecks** – IMPACT and Mobility offer the prospect for supervisors to review the workflow of individual employees and to identify where the bottlenecks are, so that resources can be reallocated more productively. (See recommendations 68, 75)
- **Give regional directors the flexibility to redeploy staff to balance workload issues** – Presently, shifting regional staff resources requires state office and even HHSC approval to make moves. This might take longer than a potential problem exists. Giving regional directors the tools to move staff, even for a brief period, would take tremendous stress off the workers there and allow greater performance. (See recommendation 83)
- **Enhance communication of budget numbers with regional offices** – Regions are often left in the dark relative to their current budget situation. Giving them the tools to help them plan, and allowing them to produce a budget plan based on their needs will expand regional accountability. This also will cause regional leadership to consistently focus on meeting their budget targets while understanding how their budgets are derived. (See recommendation 120)
- **Improve data collection and integration to determine if families are using services and track the impact on recidivism** – Caseworkers should be able to identify, in real time, what services that individuals associated with a case are actually using so they know how closely they are maintaining a service plan. Furthermore, the data collection should track how likely those who received services were to re-offend. (See recommendations 122-123)

- **Pay for performance among vendors for lower recidivism** – Today, vendors of purchased services from CPS are paid the same regardless of the outcomes of the work they do. Under a pay-for-performance model, vendors whose services directly correlate with recidivism would be paid more if they can demonstrate that their outcomes result in lower re-offense among those involved in a case. (See recommendation 126)
- **Increase prevention and wellness among children under state care** – Texas became a national leader in better managing psychotropic medications for children under state care in 2008. CPS should work with HHSC/Star Health to build upon this success to assure child wellness screenings, chronic care, mental health care and other prevention services. This will help identify health issues early among a vulnerable population. (See recommendation 127)

### Moving from a Culture of Compliance to a Culture of Excellence

Compliance is an absolutely critical element to any public entity, particularly one that is charged with the awesome responsibility of protecting children. With that in context, compliance should only be a minimum baseline level of expectation, and the real focus should be on achieving excellence. However, when workers are flooded with an onerous combination of a bulky Family Law, streams of new CPS policy and an array of internal initiatives, the best many can accomplish is just meeting the rules that are laid out for them.

While our earlier recommendations emphasize lifting these burdens off field staff, the next step must be to instill a concentration on quality and continuous improvement. CPS workers need to get away from “checking the boxes” and put their talents to work on ensuring the best possible outcomes for families. The benefits to the families will be shorter times for investigations, faster action on permanence and lower recidivism – goals that everyone wants to see.

This starts with a reorganization of CPS to put the focus on quality. That must involve a complete rethink on the quality management and quality assurance functions within CPS. There needs to be an assessment process and metrics that center on improving performance of both workers and the entire organization towards clearly defined goals that will lead to excellence, benefitting all families involved with the agency.

When an entire organization (public, private or non-profit sector) embraces quality, the results are often stunning. That said, many groups say they are committed to excellence but don't make the changes to get there. The following recommendations are designed to build a framework for

continuous improvement, but ultimately the success will be determined by whether CPS builds a true culture of quality in its DNA.

Accordingly, we recommend:

- **Develop and implement a practice model** – Currently, CPS does not have a model to standardize and implement best practices. Putting a practice model in place will give field workers a clear decision-making process in working cases. (See recommendation 2)
- **Create a learning organization** – Training cannot be something that staff receives when they start their careers at CPS, and then it stops. Instead, employees should always be learning best practices, new ideas and ways to improve their performance. This means giving the tools and the opportunity for staff to share information and receive ongoing training. (See recommendation 27)
- **Provide improved management training for supervisors and managers** – Managers in CPS often receive little continuing education after the move into a leadership role. Given that exit interviews often cite supervisors as the reason workers leave the agency, giving supervisors ongoing training should be a top priority to ensure they have the tools to be effective and can lead successfully. (See recommendations 37-40)
- **Reorganize CPS operations to focus on continuous improvement, financial integrity, improved communications and streamlined policy** – The current organizational structure is not optimized for top performance, with similar operations unconnected, so the benefits of integration cannot be realized. Reorganized, the setup will create numerous synergies that will improve performance and result in efficiencies. (See recommendation 88)
- **Add a significant quality management (QM) approach to support quality assurance (QA) work** – While QA is about testing the work of existing staff, QM revolves around building an organization that is continually working to build a structure of improving quality. This process will dramatically reduce errors and improve outcomes. (See recommendation 107)
- **Move QA to a centrally managed, regionally staffed model** – The QA function should be diffused into the regions, constantly doing case reads and taking other steps to evaluate quality across CPS. Getting this work into the local areas will send a clear message to the entire staff about commitment to quality work. (See recommendation 108)
- **Develop an executive dashboard that provides meaningful data for key decisions** – CPS is awash in data, but actual meaningful data is harder to identify. Accordingly, the

agency should build an executive dashboard that includes the figures that can truly be used to manage CPS. (See recommendation 110)

**Improve transparency in budget figures** – The lack of transparency in budget figures has left CPS with a degree of mistrust from legislative budget writers. The agency needs a cultural change to engage leaders to make sure that they are aware of budget figures in real time and can act accordingly. (See recommendation 116)

## Empowering Staff with the Tools for Success

Throughout TSG’s operational assessment, one of the key takeaways for our team was the lack of empowerment among CPS staff. Decision-making is pushed up to supervisors to avoid the possibility of punishment for a poor choice. This is a sign that there needs to be a major shift in decision rights back to the field workers, while giving them the tools and training to succeed.

Fundamental with this decentralization is the creation of a culture of learning. That means line staff need to consistently make decisions and understand the consequences of those choices and learn both the good and bad that results. Even when they fail, they must “fail forward” and embrace the opportunity that failure has created. This will mean that every day they make decisions, they grow from the experience and are better prepared for the next case.

Consistent with the model of staff empowerment must be a training framework that demonstrates real-world experiences accurately and the consequences of CPS engagement for families and children. While this training starts in a classroom for new employees, it should continue in the field with strong mentoring from experienced staff who can assist new employees as they find their way into the field.

While CPS has invested heavily in technology over the past few years, field staff still spends enormous time away from families and children on tasks like data entry, accessing databases and administrative tasks like scanning and copying documents. They need technology that functions well, supports their efforts seamlessly and makes their time more valuable.

In the same vein as shifting decision-making from supervisors to field staff, CPS must begin to transfer many decision rights from state office to the regions. TSG’s review found tremendous variation across the regions and that a one-size-fits-all approach limits the effectiveness of regional staff to do their job. Giving the regions the empowerment and the accountability to

implement strategies is a critical piece to delivering a true bottom-up organization that reinforces culture and puts the focus on quality.

For these reasons, we recommend:

- **Push decision-making to the field level** – Today, caseworkers frequently push most decisions on their cases to supervisors. This must shift to a process where the field staffer – the person with access to the best information about the case at hand – makes the decision with the support of a strong assessment tool. (See recommendation 8)
- **Expand access to Spanish language forms, court documents and other materials in IMPACT** – Giving caseworkers the ability to work with families in their native tongue removes what is often a significant barrier that currently exists. This would make staff more effective and reduce tension from what are often challenging interactions. (See recommendation 72)
- **Develop a new policy strategy and separate policy from practice** – Build a policy development process that is fast, collaborative, separated from practice, reviewed for effectiveness periodically and which sunsets every five years. Opening the policy process to CPS field staff will ensure much better understanding of why new rules are necessary and if they should be kept around. (See recommendation 89, 92)
- **Rewrite entire policy handbook consistent with this new strategy** – After CPS implements the new process for newly created policies, rewrite all existing policies to conform to this new, open and effectiveness-based process. (See recommendations 90-93)
- **Improve distribution of policy** – When policy is poorly disseminated, it is unlikely to be followed rigorously. New policy should be placed on as many mediums as possible with the opportunity for all staff to seek clarification easily. (See recommendations 97-98)
- **Assign cases to field staff based on judgment and match** – Not all cases are alike and not all caseworkers are alike. Some staff may have bilingual skills, while some might relate well to teenagers. Instead of assigning cases on a round robin, purely on caseload or a “next one up” model, supervisors should understand the strengths and capabilities of their staff and assign cases to those individuals who are most likely to achieve the highest quality outcome. (See recommendation 156)

## Improving the Ability to Communicate to the Public and Stakeholders

The staff of CPS works diligently to keep children safe, but the best way to protect children is to make sure the public is aware of child abuse and neglect, knows what to do when they see it and understands the community resources for families that need support, including child protective services. At the same time, key stakeholders, from the Legislature to providers to community groups, need to know what's going on within CPS.

For this to happen, DFPS should rethink how it engages all external groups, and across all communications platforms – including working with the media, the agency's website, social media, marketing materials, government relations and customer service. This needs to be a unified process where people should hear a consistent message regardless of how they interact with CPS or with DFPS.

At the same time, DFPS must significantly enhance its community engagement. Instead of being reactive to the public, the Legislature and other stakeholders, the Department should be looking for proactive opportunities to explain more about abuse and how to stop it, about adoption and why it is important and about how families can find help. No one should ever wonder what they should do if they see a child in danger and no family should question where they can get assistance if their situation is spiraling out of control. Moreover, every legislator needs to know how they can make sure the tools are there for their constituents to ensure children are safe. No senator or representative or their staff should wonder who or how they should contact CPS. They should know what is going on in their district and where the hard-earned taxpayer dollars are being spent on child protection.

Finally, stakeholders should feel engaged constantly about what changes are coming in the future from CPS and what they can expect. They shouldn't feel blindsided about decisions or question how their voice can be heard. They should be an active part of the discussion in their region about opportunities for improvement and how they can help.

To get there, we recommend:

- **Consolidate all DFPS communications functions under one staffer** – Right now, not all DFPS employees engaged in communication functions are consolidated, and some are spread across several areas in DFPS. These should all be consolidated under one senior staffer who is a member of the Management Team. This will ensure that there is

consistency across the various messaging functions of the agency. (See recommendation 129)

- **Relocate all media managers to state office to deliver work balancing and specialization** – DFPS should centralize its media function in state office to balance the work load and to allow for specialization in the various aspects of the agency functions. This will lead to greater efficiencies and a more consistent message for the Department. (See recommendation 130)
- **Provide media training to DFPS and CPS state and regional leadership** – The media want to hear from true professionals working the program areas. However, these workers need to be given training to develop confidence to accurately articulate the agency message. (See recommendation 131)
- **Improve coordination between the Legislature and CPS budget staff** – The Legislature frequently feels they aren't getting up to date information from CPS on budget matters. There should be improved coordination and communication among these groups to enhance a critical working relationship. (See recommendations 139-140)
- **Develop a key set of metrics for the Legislature** – The Legislature feels that CPS provides a "data dump" as opposed to easily understandable metrics to assess agency performance. This should be pared down to a limited number of critical facts that are useful for making policy decisions. (See recommendation 143)
- **Make sure all legislative requests receive a timely response** – Legislative responses often come from various directions that aren't necessarily connected to Government Relations. All requests should be forward to or coordinated with GR, so that they can ensure that legislative offices receive a timely, helpful response. (See recommendations 141-142)
- **Ensure all legislators receive consistent, direct interaction from CPS** – Every legislator should know what CPS is doing in their district. GR should take the opportunity to reach out to each legislator regularly and share information, media clips and opportunities to meet with key staff. (See recommendations 142, 145)

## Building a Positive Vision for the Future of Texas' Children

CPS is an organization that is committed to change, but one that wants to see that the future will be brighter. Too often change initiatives have been ad hoc and piecemeal and simply meant a greater administrative burden on staff. TSG believes that for a true cultural shift to take place, the change needs to be both comprehensive and dedicated to action, not aspiration.

The recommendations in this document are designed to be implemented in short order across all of CPS. While not all of them can be fully completed in a short time period, the process to begin them all must start quickly. Not only will starting immediately ensure buy-in from staff across the agency, it will help them all begin to shape the vision of where CPS must go to build a culture of success.

What separates this change initiative from prior ones is that it fully embraces a bottom up approach specifically designed to engage workers at all levels pulling in the same direction. Their expanded empowerment is central to both the implementation of these recommendations as well as the long-term success of a new CPS.

TSG is highly confident that Texas' children and families will see tremendous benefits from this work. The success of this will be measured not in new organizational charts, but in healthier, safer children who have achieved permanence and well-being. Given the outstanding talent across CPS and the commitment of strong leadership at CPS, DFPS and HHSC to accomplishing this task, we believe that a brighter future is within reach.