

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

DWAYNE B., a minor, by his
Next Friend, John Stempfle, et al,
for themselves and others
similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Hon. Nancy G. Edmunds
CIVIL ACTION
NO. 06-13548

RICK SNYDER, in his official
capacity as Governor of the
State of Michigan, et al,

Defendants.

_____ /

FIFTH REPORT ON THE STATE'S COMPLIANCE WITH CONSENT DECREE
before the Honorable Nancy G. Edmunds
United States District Judge

JUNE 25, 2012

APPEARANCES:

MS. SARA BARTOSZ, ESQ.
MS. ELIZABETH PITMAN GREYER, ESQ.
In behalf of Plaintiffs.

MR. JOSEPH E. POTCHEN, ESQ.
In behalf of Defendants

ALSO PRESENT:

DHS Director Maura Corrigan	Mr. Kevin Ryan
Mr. Michael Gadola	Ms. Eileen Crummy
Mr. Steve Yager	Ms. Peggy McHale

- - -

Suzanne Jacques, Official Court Reporter
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June 25, 2012

1 Detroit, Michigan

2 Monday, June 25, 2012

3 2:00 p.m.

4 - - -

5 LAW CLERK: Court calls the case of Dwayne B, et al,
6 versus Snyder, et al, Case 06-13548. Counsel, please state your
7 appearances for the record.

8 MS. BARTOSZ: Good morning, Your Honor, or good
9 afternoon, Sara Bartosz from Children's Rights on behalf of
10 plaintiffs.

11 MR. POTCHEN: Good morning, Your Honor. Joseph --
12 go ahead please.

13 MS. GRETTER: Elizabeth Gretter, Your Honor,
14 Children's Rights, also on behalf of plaintiffs.

15 MR. POTCHEN: Morning, Your Honor, Joseph Potchen on
16 behalf of defendants.

17 DIRECTOR CORRIGAN: Maura Corrigan, DHS director.
18 Good to see you, Judge.

19 MR. GADOLA: Mike Gadola, legal counsel to Governor
20 Snyder.

21 MR. YAGER: Steve Yager, DHS director of Children's
22 Services Administration.

23 THE COURT: Nice to see you all, and the record
24 should reflect that I had a brief meeting with Mr. Ryan and
25 Ms. Crummy and Ms. McHale before we came into court today, and

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1 so why don't you put your appearances on the record, too.

2 MR. RYAN: Kevin Ryan with Public Catalyst Group as
3 part of the monitoring team.

4 MS. CRUMMY: Eileen Crummy with Public Catalyst
5 Group also.

6 MS. McHALE: And Peggy McHale, Public Catalyst
7 Group, also with the monitoring team.

8 THE COURT: And before I hear from the parties, how
9 about if I hear from Mr. Ryan.

10 (2:07 p.m.)

11 MR. RYAN: Good afternoon, Your Honor. This
12 afternoon, we are submitting to the Court the monitor's fifth
13 report in the matter of Dwayne B. versus Snyder.

14 Today's report is the first the monitors have
15 submitted under the parties' modified settlement agreement which
16 was filed with the Court nearly one year ago on July 18, 2011.
17 This report to the Court reflects the efforts of the new
18 leadership team and the status of Michigan's reform efforts as
19 of December 31, 2011, reflecting progress for the last three
20 months of 2011 defined as Period 1 in the Modified Settlement
21 Agreement. Future reports will be structured into six-month
22 periods with public reporting by the monitoring team following
23 each period.

24 The Modified Settlement Agreement reflects the
25 parties' joint desire to improve outcomes for children and

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1 families in Michigan's child welfare system. The Modified
2 Settlement Agreement provides the plaintiff class relief in the
3 form of immediate action steps and strategies to bring attention
4 and improvement to critical areas, embed the new case practice
5 model designed by the current DHS management in consultation
6 with the monitors and the plaintiffs, and establishes benchmarks
7 and performance targets that the new administration is committed
8 to meet in order to realize sustainable reform.

9 The new administration, led by Michigan Governor
10 Rick Snyder and DHS Director Maura Corrigan, has assembled an
11 experienced executive team to lead the state's child welfare
12 reform efforts, including Steve Yager, the director of the DHS
13 Children's Services Administration, and Scott Parrott, the
14 director of field operations. The Children's Services
15 Administration is responsible for implementing the commitments
16 of the Modified Settlement Agreement.

17 Your Honor, as we relayed to you previously, the
18 monitors have been impressed by the level of focus and
19 commitment to the current DHS leadership team under Director
20 Corrigan. The challenges that they face along with their
21 community partner agencies are formidable, but they appreciate
22 how vital success is for children and families, and they bounded
23 out of the gates with a seriousness of purpose that rejuvenated
24 the reform effort. Following statewide recruitment efforts that
25 launched almost as soon as Director Corrigan unpacked her new

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1 office -- in fact, I think it actually occurred before she had
2 fully unpacked her new office -- DHS hired over 700 child
3 welfare workers since the last monitoring report was issued.

4 MS. CRUMMY: There were several other significant
5 accomplishments made by the administration during the period we
6 reviewed.

7 In November 2011, Governor Rick Snyder signed into
8 law the Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Act which extends
9 foster care to age 21, and offers young people the safety net of
10 core services and financial benefits during the critical
11 transition to adulthood. For the first time since the reforms
12 got under way in this matter, the Michigan Department of Human
13 Services ensured that virtually every eligible youth received
14 health insurance upon exiting foster care. In six counties, DHS
15 successfully piloted a 24/7 centralized hotline to receive and
16 manage calls alleging child maltreatment. The Department
17 committed to finalizing 150 juvenile guardianships for calendar
18 year 2011, and to their great -- they should be commended
19 because they exceeded this target, finalizing actually 192
20 guardianships.

21 And while much has been accomplished in this very
22 brief initial period, DHS does face challenges in meeting its
23 commitments in important areas as they move forward. Some of
24 those include achieving purchase of service caseload standards,
25 ensuring all staff participation in training that was committed

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1 to in the agreement, and in meeting various caseworker and child
2 and parent visitation standards.

3 The monitoring team will report on DHS's progress in
4 meeting those commitments in future reports. There is very
5 important work under way at DHS, and our next report to the
6 Court will cover many new areas of performance commitments. It
7 will also cover a longer period, January to June of 2012, and
8 therefore offer the Court a more comprehensive view of the
9 Department's progress.

10 Thank you, Your Honor.

11 THE COURT: Thank you.

12 Ms. Bartosz.

13 (2:11 p.m.)

14 MS. BARTOSZ: Thank you, Judge. Good afternoon.
15 It's nice to be back here in Michigan.

16 THE COURT: I'm glad you could make it. It was a
17 little rocky.

18 MS. BARTOSZ: It was tricky, Judge, but we're very
19 happy to be here, and we were happy to arrive 15 minutes early
20 even. We didn't know that was going to work out.

21 We're particularly pleased to be here today, Judge,
22 because I think as these sorts of hearings go in the cases we
23 have active across the country, this is a hearing where I can
24 say there's more good news than bad news.

25 Since the Modified Settlement Agreement was approved

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1 by this Court last July, we've seen the leadership of DHS under
2 Director Corrigan and Director Yager act with the same sense of
3 focus and commitment and energy that we saw occurring during the
4 negotiation of that Modified Settlement Agreement, and of course
5 reform won't happen without leadership, key ingredient. It is
6 in evidence, and the plaintiffs are pleased to be able to offer
7 their impression about that to the Court.

8 And it's manifested itself, Judge, in the last few
9 months with some major strides towards fulfilling the promise of
10 the consent decree. Some structural pieces have been put into
11 place that we think will make good things, better things happen
12 for kids going forward. I won't touch on them all, but a few
13 that I think are noteworthy.

14 One, as Ms. Crummy pointed out, the state has rolled
15 out its centralized hotline, intake. This is going to bring a
16 level of focus and consistency and expertise to the receipt and
17 handling of intakes of abuse and neglect that has been badly
18 needed. This is a function that used to be spread across 83
19 county offices. This is a major point of embarkation towards
20 much better consistent practice on basic safety, so we're very
21 pleased to see that.

22 The Court in earlier monitoring periods had paid
23 attention to training, understanding that nothing good is going
24 to happen in a child welfare agency if the frontline workforce
25 isn't trained, experienced, and up to the task. A

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1 university-based child welfare training curriculum is being
2 developed in coordination between DHS and several schools. Gary
3 Anderson at Michigan State has been key in that process, and
4 strides are being made. Only good things can come from that,
5 and it's -- the capacity is still being built, but the good news
6 is a promise was made, action's being taken, and that is coming
7 together.

8 Finally, I would just like to point out I think
9 there was an article in the paper here, actually, in the last
10 week about the issue of psychotropic medications and how they're
11 administered across this country to children in foster care,
12 often without the kind of oversight you'd want to see where a
13 parent isn't their front line to provide consent or seek answers
14 from the doctor. Under the consent decree, over this last
15 reporting period, the Department has developed a plan for
16 providing improved, enhanced monitoring of the administration of
17 these medications to children in its care and custody. The
18 monitors have reviewed that, and we're pleased to note that that
19 issue is front and center on the radar of this leadership and
20 something that the kids will benefit from as that plan is
21 implemented.

22 All those goods things being said, Judge, there's
23 still some sobering evidence in the files of this agency when
24 the monitor looks at them that tell us there's challenges that
25 still have to be met. I have no doubt that this leadership is

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1 committed to meeting those challenges. A couple pieces that I
2 would like to alert the Court to that we're going to be watching
3 closely as plaintiffs counsel. One is Michigan is reporting
4 right now, Judge, a rate of substantiated abuse or neglect
5 occurring to children in foster care custody that places the
6 Department in the bottom quarter of states nationally reporting
7 on that figure. That is a number that has actually gone up
8 since the decree was put in, and I would like to be clear that I
9 don't think that means that the system has necessarily become
10 less safe, it's a matter that data that wasn't able to be
11 accurately captured over time is being looked at better. We
12 have a better sense of the baseline and the challenge, and
13 that's a good thing, but we see an important challenge that must
14 be focused upon with a real vigor and rigor. So I point that
15 out.

16 And secondly, the monitor worked together with DHS,
17 Judge, to set baselines on what does performance look like
18 currently in relation to the provision and delivery of medical,
19 mental health, dental services to youth under the provisions of
20 the EPSDT Medicaid program. Those numbers are lower than anyone
21 would like to see them in terms of the percentage of children
22 who are receiving these screenings timely and consistently.
23 There have been benchmarks set up to take that performance up
24 over time to 95 percent which we think is a nice, appropriate,
25 but also appropriately ambitious goal that's going to take some

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1 time to reach, but we'll be watching that. Of course, that's a
2 very, very important area in terms of the wellbeing of the kids.

3 All that said, Judge, thank you for your time. We
4 are pleased to see the reform going forward, and no doubt
5 there's going to be slips and falls along the way because this
6 is a difficult undertaking, but right now the momentum is
7 trending in a way that the kids should be pleased about.

8 THE COURT: Thank you.

9 (2:17 p.m.)

10 DIRECTOR CORRIGAN: Good afternoon, and may it
11 please the Court, Maura Corrigan. It is my privilege and joy to
12 direct the Michigan Department of Human Services, Your Honor.

13 THE COURT: It is our privilege to have you in that
14 position. I just can't say enough good things.

15 DIRECTOR CORRIGAN: Thank you.

16 THE COURT: Go ahead.

17 DIRECTOR CORRIGAN: I will never stop being a
18 lawyer, though, Judge. I understand -- I think of the
19 Department as my client. I also think I have other clients, and
20 those are the private agencies who are here today represented by
21 Janet Snyder, and also the courts of Michigan. I consider that
22 we advocate and are partners with them, and really the people of
23 Michigan are my client, as well, in this job.

24 You've already heard from or been introduced to our
25 team. Especially, it's important that Mike Gadola is here on

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1 behalf of the governor, because as busy as our governor is,
2 success in this lawsuit is of high importance to him, so I'm
3 grateful for Mr. Gadola being here.

4 I'm going to speak briefly, Judge, and then Joe
5 Potchen will follow me, and then Steve Yager will follow with a
6 few comments.

7 I understand and know that this Court has a most
8 excellent grasp of the principles of federalism and of the
9 issues surrounding class action constitutional litigation, and
10 knowing that, I would like the Court to understand that my goal
11 as director of this department is an order of dismissal from
12 this Court at the end of 2014. My dream is that the plaintiffs
13 will stipulate to that order, and that will be because the
14 monitors will have found in every successive reporting period
15 after today that Michigan has satisfied the federal standards
16 for settlement agreements.

17 I believe that this report displays that we are well
18 on the way towards substantial compliance. The report reflects
19 that. I have that goal and dream knowing that we are a very
20 large ship to turn around, as the seventh largest child welfare
21 system in the nation, but I hope that the Court will find it
22 evident on every single page of the monitoring report, this one
23 and the ones to follow, that we own the reform.

24 There will not be perfection, and never will be, in
25 the administration of a child welfare system by the state, but

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1 we are leading, we are implementing, and we are faithfully
2 executing our constitutional responsibilities to the children in
3 Michigan's care. As the monitor and the plaintiffs have stated,
4 I believe that the report before you reflects our extraordinary
5 focus, the focus of our Children's Service Administration's
6 leadership, Steve Yager, Wendy Campau who is in the back, that
7 they have been laser focused, and we have, on developing a
8 vision for child welfare in Michigan that extends well beyond
9 the parameters of this Modified Settlement Agreement. What is
10 in the MSA is a blueprint for reestablishing Michigan as a
11 national leader in progressive and outcome-driven child welfare
12 policies and practices. We are also well on the road to
13 ensuring that we meet the varied and urgent needs of the
14 children in our care one child at a time, 24/7. In brief, that
15 we have internalized the standards of performance that are in
16 the MSA and beyond.

17 The report before you, Judge Edmunds, measures the
18 development stage of our reinvention of child welfare.

19 Subsequent reports are going to reflect the implementation of
20 that vision.

21 From the private agencies to the DHS local offices,
22 our front-line workers have demonstrated their passion for the
23 children in our system every day, but particularly as they
24 embrace the new vision that we are setting forth. We have made
25 extraordinary progress in the last 18 months, including the

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1 period established by the report. We are in the process of
2 building in controls to ensure legal compliance and
3 sustainability post the MSA. We can measure the report in
4 months, but we will note that what we accomplish means positive
5 outcomes for future generations of innocent children. We
6 understand that every child in our state of Michigan is
7 precious, and the children in our care will remain our first
8 priority.

9 Thank you, Judge Edmunds, and at this time, I will
10 turn to my colleague, Joe Potchen.

11 THE COURT: Thank you.

12 Mr. Potchen.

13 (2:22 p.m.)

14 MR. POTCHEN: Good afternoon, Your Honor.

15 THE COURT: Good afternoon.

16 MR. POTCHEN: As this Court can tell from
17 Director Corrigan's remarks, DHS is moving forward toward
18 meeting its constitutional responsibilities and the goals set
19 out in the Modified Settlement Agreement, not just by measuring
20 each detailed requirement, but also through organizational
21 priorities. It's Michigan's goal to move forward through a
22 vision which focuses on the fundamental child welfare outcomes
23 and complying with the law, areas that the federal government,
24 the plaintiffs, the monitors and the Department can all agree on
25 should be the primary focus of any child welfare program. Those

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1 areas include safety, well being, permanence, and we also
2 recognize that to achieve true reform, a fourth area of service
3 delivery is critical for achieving and maintaining improvement
4 and meeting the legal requirements set forth in the Modified
5 Settlement Agreement.

6 Obviously, Your Honor, this group, Michigan under
7 the leadership of Governor Snyder, Director Corrigan, Steve
8 Yager, is very proud of the momentum it's gained during -- in
9 these four areas, and during the time that we're here before you
10 today and the first report.

11 It's proud to have complied with or substantially
12 have complied with just about every target set out in the first
13 period report, and through the continued leadership and
14 innovation within the Department and the partner agencies, we
15 are confident that you will be satisfied with the Department's
16 successful reform efforts. As you can see, the pressure that
17 we're under not only by this Court, but also by the director, to
18 get out of this reform in time.

19 We recognize it's a large task, and we recognize
20 there may be some bumps along the way. We may need to alter our
21 focus, make some adjustments, and Steve Yager will address those
22 when he gives his remarks. I truly believe, Your Honor, this is
23 an excellent leadership team, and they're up to the task, and I
24 feel proud to be up here representing them. They're always
25 looking to move forward in a positive direction.

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1 I'm going to be going over some of the highlights as
2 it relates to the Period 1 report, and you've already heard some
3 of the comments from the monitors and the plaintiffs. I may
4 repeat some of those just because we're quite proud of the
5 progress we've made, so I'll do so.

6 In the four areas I've mentioned, the first, in the
7 area of child safety, the Department has instituted a host of
8 new actions to improve child safety, to reduce maltreatment in
9 care and the reoccurrence of abuse. For example, you've already
10 heard about the state-wide centralized intake system, the 24/7
11 call center that replaces those 83 individual county-driven
12 intake processes. The system is going to allow for more
13 consistency across the state and for the assignment of
14 investigations. Also, DHS has begun implementing its continuous
15 quality improvements model and started specialized reviews in
16 maltreatment in care cases. This quality assurance process will
17 allow DHS to obtain data on MIC cases and identify those trends
18 that will result in improved safety for children in foster care.

19 Second, Your Honor, in the area of well being, the
20 Department recognized that older foster care youth have unique
21 challenges as they make their way into adulthood. To address
22 these issues, Michigan has taken several actions. You've
23 already heard from the monitors the fact that Governor Snyder
24 had signed into law the Young Adult Voluntary Foster Care Act.
25 Through this law, DHS has implemented or begun implementing the

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1 extension of foster care to age 21, and by extending the foster
2 care, it offers a safety net of supportive services and
3 financial benefits during the critical transition to adulthood.
4 DHS is also focusing on education and health, two other key
5 areas for well being of youth.

6 As to education, DHS has worked with partners to
7 develop the Seita scholars program which provides a support
8 network, full tuition scholarships, and year-round housing for
9 students who have aged out of foster care and are pursuing
10 college degrees. This program has over 130 foster youth
11 enrolled at Western Michigan this year alone.

12 As to healthcare, Your Honor, DHS has instituted its
13 Health Oversight and Coordination Plan to address specific
14 health needs of foster children in Michigan. DHS has also hired
15 a medical consultant, a board certified physician with
16 experience in child and adolescent mental health issues who will
17 serve as an adviser to provide consultation in specific cases,
18 mental health policies, and the use of psychotropic medications.

19 One area during this period that Michigan is
20 extremely proud to point out is that 95.4 percent of all
21 children entering care from October to December of 2011 had
22 access to medical coverage within 30 days of entry into care.

23 The third area, Your Honor, is permanency and
24 quality placements. DHS has placed great emphasis in this area
25 because they recognize it as a significant marker of success for

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1 any child welfare program. In particular, as to adoptions and
2 guardianships, you've heard this term before, but DHS has a
3 laser focus on those areas. During 2011, DHS finalized over 190
4 juvenile guardianships, and they are committed to reaching a
5 permanency through adoption of over 2,100 children by September
6 of 2012.

7 And Your Honor may not be aware of this, but they
8 even have a big board in the director's conference area where
9 they mark it and do a chalk-up to every one that they reach.
10 They have a running tally of these goals. That's how committed
11 they are.

12 THE COURT: Well, I know you substantially exceeded
13 the goal. I think the goal was 150, and you're well beyond
14 that. I mean, lots of great achievements here, but that's
15 certainly one of the most notable.

16 MR. POTCHEN: Also, Your Honor, while not exactly in
17 Period 1, but something that occurred March of 2012 which will
18 lead to greater success, is that DHS held a faith-based
19 initiative summit to build on the concept of having faith
20 organizations help increase the numbers of foster parents and
21 adoptions in Michigan. More than 100 religious leaders, private
22 agencies, and community organizations participated in this
23 summit. DHS has even hired a faith-based recruitment specialist
24 who will work as a liaison between the faith communities and
25 DHS.

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1 Finally, in the area of service delivery, DHS has
2 begun the implementation of its MiTEAM family engagement model.
3 This model follows the Department's commitment to a unified
4 approach that involves families, children, youth and caregivers
5 in key areas. Michigan has also implemented eight regional
6 post-adoption resource centers throughout the state to assist
7 adoptive families. These resource centers provide case
8 management and crisis intervention, coordination of community
9 services, information and referral, support groups, and training
10 opportunities for adoptive families.

11 DHS also, through agreement with the plaintiffs and
12 counsel and the monitors, has implemented a new consolidated
13 monitoring process for its foster homes. This model combines
14 licensing and contract evaluations into a single inspection
15 model which will provide for greater consistency.

16 They have also partnered with Michigan universities
17 to create the Michigan social work child welfare certificate
18 program. This program is targeted to prepare social work
19 students to provide effective child welfare services, and it's
20 hoped that this program will assist local offices and partner
21 agencies to officially fill vacancies with qualified
22 individuals.

23 As you can see, Your Honor, DHS is focused on
24 meeting its legal obligations under the terms of the Modified
25 Settlement Agreement and in compliance with the federal law. We

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1 appreciate your time, Your Honor, and thank you for this
2 opportunity. Now Steve Yager is going to discuss some of the
3 Department's challenges and some of the future plans.

4 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Potchen.

5 (2:31 p.m.)

6 MR. YAGER: Good afternoon, Your Honor. It's a
7 privilege to be here today. I'm humbled to have the opportunity
8 to serve in this capacity and to participate in moving Michigan
9 forward with child welfare reform.

10 You have heard about some of our successes measured
11 in this monitoring period. This week will mark the close of our
12 second monitoring period, and as the director of Children's
13 Services Administration, I would like to take this opportunity
14 to commend our staff, public and private, for their tremendous
15 efforts.

16 That said, child welfare reform is not an event, it
17 is a transition, one that requires detailed planning,
18 prioritization, and effective implementation. As we move from
19 Period 1 to Periods 2 and beyond, the breadth of our
20 requirements grows significantly, and with that growth,
21 challenges emerge. As we identify challenges, we must have the
22 capacity to continually assess our progress and to adjust to
23 ensure that we're meeting the needs of families that we serve.

24 DHS fully accepts this responsibility and embraces
25 the opportunities we will have to the development of our

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1 continuous quality improvement model and implementation
2 strategies. This period of growth will require us to model
3 change in how we deliver child welfare services through more
4 than 2,000 child welfare staff, public and private. Our
5 capacity to assess and respond to what we learn through this
6 process will improve our ability to lead Michigan forward to
7 improve the outcomes for those families we serve. Additionally,
8 we have contracted with the Center for Supportive Families to
9 utilize their national expertise to provide an objective
10 internal and systemic assessment of DHS child welfare reform.

11 I want to take a moment to address some of the
12 challenges that lie ahead.

13 Measuring and reporting on performance remains a
14 challenge. While we continue to dedicate substantial resources
15 to the development of MiSACWIS system which will roll out by
16 October of 2013, managing the measurement and reporting barriers
17 that exist in our current system is significant for DHS. We
18 have made a great deal of progress in development of information
19 and tools that assist us in managing the positive outcomes, but
20 data delays and efficient reporting mechanisms will most
21 certainly remain evident in the next several monitoring periods.

22 Our capacity to monitor and manage staff caseload
23 sizes continues to be challenging. Front-line supervisors
24 struggle to manually manage complex worker-to-case ratios
25 especially for mixed caseloads. We are currently developing an

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1 internal automated tool that will assist managers in balancing
2 cases. This will be released to the field in the coming weeks.

3 Monitoring the frequency of child visits and health
4 and dental examinations are also perfect examples of areas
5 critical to child safety and wellbeing. These are also areas
6 where measuring performance is onerous and complicated. In
7 those instances, we have already taken initiative to ensure we
8 can evaluate performance in meaningful ways rather than through
9 mechanisms that absorb a large amount of resources and with
10 little validity.

11 Lastly, there are a number of process measures, such
12 as placement exception requests which rely heavily on
13 documentation of actions taken, yet our SWSS system, our current
14 system, does not support reporting on these measures.

15 Despite our challenges, the top priority is ensuring
16 the staff has sufficient face time with parents and their
17 children to properly engage them in planning for their success.
18 We want our workers spending time with families.

19 In closing, we have made significant reform efforts
20 in the last year. We understand we must be deliberate in how we
21 move forward. We must be strategic and target high impact
22 changes. It is critical that Michigan stages the initiatives
23 and establishes priorities so the reform can take root, and
24 real, sustainable change occurs. To that end, DHS looks forward
25 to continued collaboration with the monitors to ensure that

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1 planning, implementation, and monitoring of child welfare
2 practice in Michigan is staged in a manner that will result in
3 our capacity to create positive outcomes for children and their
4 families.

5 Thank you, Your Honor.

6 THE COURT: Thank you, Mr. Yager.

7 Well, it sure is a different day and a different
8 mindset and a different atmosphere here in the courtroom as we
9 talk about this. I just can't say enough good things about how
10 Governor Snyder and the team that Justice Corrigan has put this
11 together to tackle this issue. It is really, really gratifying
12 to see how much progress has been made. And I say that
13 recognizing, and I think everyone acknowledges that there are
14 still challenges ahead. You've talked about challenges in areas
15 of abuse and neglect, the screenings for medical, mental health
16 and dental services, caseload problems still remain to some
17 extent. There's still some issues with respect to training and
18 adoptions, but all of those are areas in which there have been
19 very significant progress made, and I have no doubt that
20 Justice Corrigan's team is up to the challenge especially with
21 the cooperation and hard work of the plaintiff's team, and the
22 supervision of the monitors who are every bit as engaged as the
23 principals in this, and it seems to me like everyone involved in
24 this effort at this time feels the urgency, feels the priority,
25 and feels -- and is able to commit the focus that is necessary,

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1 the time, the energy, and the money.

2 Everyone from Governor Snyder on down, and of course
3 the plaintiff and the monitors and their representatives, are to
4 be commended on this. I look forward to the first full
5 reporting period, and you know that if there's any question or
6 problem in the interim, that you can contact me and I'll be
7 happy to try to help if I can.

8 Thank you so much for all this hard work. And I
9 hope you're right, that we do get a dismissal in 2014, or maybe
10 before. Thank you.

11 LAW CLERK: All rise. Court is adjourned.

12 (Proceedings concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Suzanne Jacques, official court reporter for the United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, appointed pursuant to the provisions of Title 28 United States Code Section 753, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript of the proceedings in the above-entitled cause on the date hereinbefore set forth.

I do further certify that the foregoing transcript has been prepared by me or under my direction.

Suzanne Jacques
Official Court Reporter

6/27/2012

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